



THE
COLUMBUS
REGION

MINIMALLY INVASIVE DEVICES, INC.

INTRODUCTION

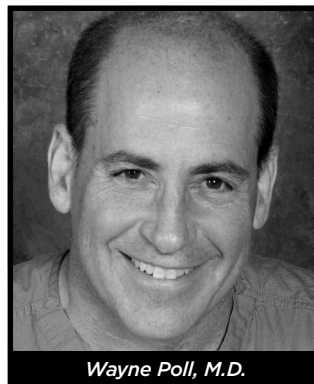
Home to the headquarters of 15 Fortune 1000 companies, the largest university in North America and nearly 300 internationally owned companies, the Columbus Region is an ideal place to start, run and grow a business. Columbus is the 15th largest city in the U.S. and is one of the fastest growing major metropolitan areas in the Midwest. The Region's strong entrepreneurial spirit and support system are the catalysts behind countless business success stories. This is one of many.

BACKGROUND

Although Wayne Poll, M.D., started his laparoscopic surgery practice in Columbus in 1990, he always wanted to be an inventor. As a practicing surgeon, he had a knack for identifying a surgical issue and figuring out an effective solution, but didn't have any experience transforming a concept into a tangible product.

Poll's product concept - which essentially uses an air shield to defog the laparoscopic lens and deflect debris, resulting in a clearer view - addressed a longtime need in the medical industry. Laparoscopic surgeons had to remove and clean the lens approximately 10 times during the average surgery, adding time (and costs) to the procedure. Additionally, fog and debris resulted in a lower-quality image, making the procedure less effective.

Poll tried for a decade to patent his product concept and pitch it to medical manufacturing companies. He was caught in a frustrating cycle of identifying the right contact at each company and generating understanding and excitement about the concept, only to start over as staff turned over or he was directed to someone else. It was a time-consuming process for a practicing surgeon, and a hurdle that nearly pushed Poll to give up on his dream. The entrepreneurial support system in Columbus would not allow it.



Wayne Poll, M.D.

ABOUT MINIMALLY INVASIVE DEVICES, INC.

Started in 2006 by a former Columbus-based surgeon, Minimally Invasive Devices, Inc. (MID) manufactures a line of laparoscopic medical products designed to eliminate or greatly reduce the need to remove the laparoscope for cleaning during surgery. The company, which employs 14 full-time staff members, currently distributes its four FDA-approved products to 35 hospitals nationwide through the V. Mueller Division of CareFusion, Inc.

WHY COLUMBUS?

In 2006, Poll received a call from TechColumbus. The organization had heard about his product concept and wanted to help him secure funding to make it a reality. He was able to officially launch Minimally Invasive Devices, Inc. (MID) after entering and winning the Ohio State Business Plan Competition. He secured additional funding through the Ohio TechAngel Funds and the Ohio Capital Fund, and grants from the Innovation Ohio Loan Fund (IOLF) and the Global Cardiovascular Innovation Center (GCIC).

“Instead of being a big fish in a big pond, my little company got a lot of attention from organizations like TechColumbus and Ohio TechAngels,” said Poll. “I’ve found Columbus to be an extremely nurturing environment for start-ups like MID. [The organizations] make you feel like a valued member of the entrepreneurial community.”

Because Poll had been a practicing surgeon for more than 20 years, not an entrepreneur, he needed guidance to make his startup successful. In addition to helping him develop a coherent business plan and navigate the funding process, TechColumbus helped connect Poll with Ward Engineering. Another local company, Ward was integral in taking Poll’s idea from a concept to a product and helping him understand and comply with FDA regulations. Ward also manufactured MID’s Generation I product line. For Poll and MID, having local access to both funding resources and engineering/manufacturing companies was vital. Instead of being a phone call away, collaborating with local resources enabled him to easily sit down, face-to-face, with the people who could shape an idea into a business. That element of proximity boosted both the efficiency and energy of the start-up process.

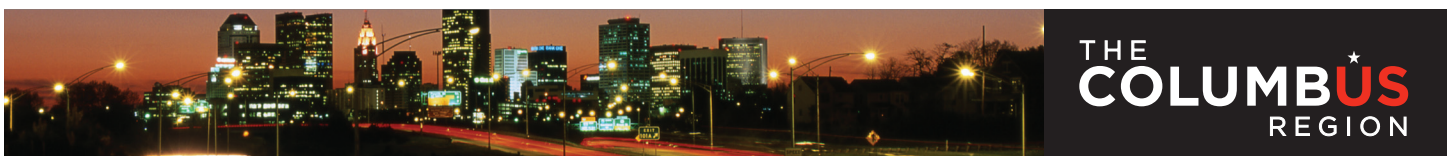
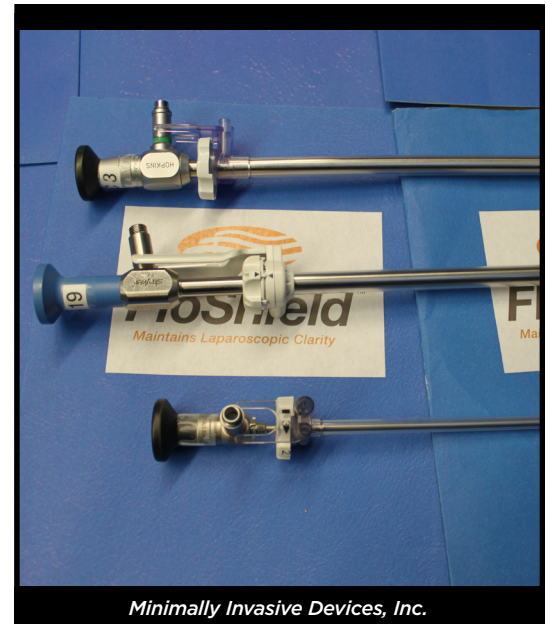
After spending two years in the product reiteration phase, testing and perfecting the product line, Poll was contacted by the V. Mueller Division of CareFusion, Inc. The company was looking for something unique – and exclusive – to supplement its existing line of clinical products. From that relationship, the FloShield™ brand of laparoscopic products was born.

The products defog the laparoscopic lens, deflect floating debris from energy sources and prevent trocar smudging, and are the first of their kind in the medical industry. They take less than a minute to set up and result in a 95 percent reduction in the need for surgeons to interrupt a laparoscopic procedure to clean the lens. The products are used in procedures ranging from bariatric surgery to hysterectomies – anything in which a laparoscope is inserted into the abdomen.

Now, Poll employs 14 full-time employees through MID, with positions ranging from a regulatory consultant to tech support. The company manufactures its four, FDA-approved products in a facility just south of Dayton. The FloShield™ products are sold in 40 hospitals nationwide in states including Ohio, California, Florida and Michigan, and will soon be approved for sale internationally.

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- Wayne Poll, M.D.





LOOKING FORWARD

Poll sees growth in MID's future and plans on expanding the existing FloShield™ product line. The company already is working on a Generation II product that further optimizes airflow management in the laparoscopic devices. The current FloShield™ products – FloShield 5 mm, FloShield 10 mm, FloPort Access Canula and Flo-X Lens Wash – have a 100 percent reorder rate from customers.

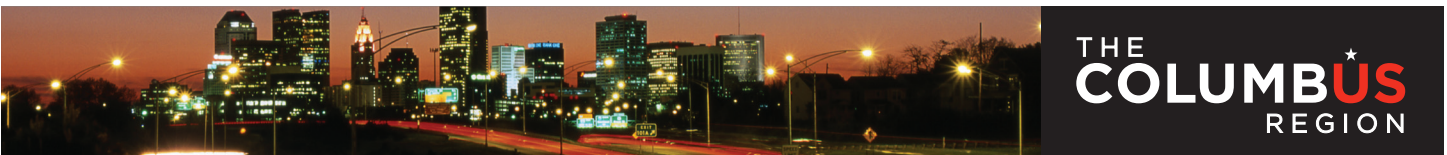
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Poll's efforts also extend to assisting other medical-related start-up companies with navigating the market and getting operations off the ground. Through his affiliation with OhioHealth, he is working to forge relationships among all of the region's hospital systems to simplify the purchasing and testing process so new medical products are more efficiently launched.

Having gone through the process himself, Poll emphasized that there are a number of passionate end-users – like doctors, nurses and other medical professionals – that have creative ideas but lack the business knowledge to turn concepts into tangible products. Columbus has become particularly good at turning these passionate end-users into entrepreneurs.

“We want to make Columbus a destination for new products and biomedical entrepreneurship,” said Poll. “Companies can do research and development anywhere, but we want Columbus to set the standard when it comes to spearheading new medical technologies.”

To read about more businesses that are thriving in the Columbus Region, visit columbusregion.com



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