



## **Umoja Biopharma Launches with \$53M Series A Financing to Develop Fully Integrated, Scalable, *In Vivo* Immunotherapy Platform**

*Umoja's platform addresses key limitations of existing engineered immunotherapies*

*Company backed by prominent life science investors MPM Capital, DCVC Bio and Qiming Venture Partners USA and led by an experienced team of scientist/entrepreneurs.*

Seattle, Wash., November 18, 2020 – Umoja Biopharma, a biotechnology company pioneering an integrated *in vivo* immunotherapy platform, today announced the completion of its \$53 million Series A financing led by MPM Capital and Qiming Venture Partners USA. Umoja was founded by a team of leading scientists and researchers with the vision of creating an entirely new approach to engineered immunotherapies. Umoja's suite of innovations will re-engineer a patient's own immune system to attack and destroy both hematologic and solid organ-based tumors with a simplicity and cost that enables widespread implementation.

"Umoja has already made significant progress on its goal of delivering technologies that will address the limitations of current engineered immunotherapies," said Andy Scharenberg, M.D., co-founder and CEO of Umoja. "Our *in vivo*-based approach is scalable while also providing control, safety, and highly effective anti-tumor activity; our goal is to improve both access and outcomes."

Umoja's platform incorporates three core components: the VivoVec delivery platform, RACR/CAR payload architecture, and the TumorTag platform. The VivoVec delivery platform acts *in vivo* to generate a population of cancer fighting cells, VivoCAR T cells, which can be exquisitely controlled by the RACR/CAR control system using exogenously administered, FDA approved drugs. TumorTag molecules can be used in combination with the VivoCAR T cells to direct cancer-killing T cells to the tumor and the critical supporting cells of the tumor.



“This represents an important step forward in delivering on a shared vision to develop transformational therapies for patients who need them, including the most vulnerable population affected by debilitating diseases – children,” said Michael Jensen, M.D., co-founder, Umoja Biopharma, vice president, Seattle Children's Therapeutics and chief therapeutics officer, Seattle Children's. “We now have the opportunity to combine forces and move at light speed, eclipsing what could have been accomplished singularly or in a normal academic manner.”

Umoja Biopharma was founded through an initial seed investment by MPM Capital and DCVC Bio, and its scientific founders from Seattle Children's Research Institute and Purdue University, based on pioneering work in the laboratory of Philip Low, the Presidential Scholar for Drug Discovery and the Ralph C. Corley Distinguished Professor of Chemistry. The Series A financing will enable Umoja to advance its platform and therapeutic programs to early clinical development, attract talent and invest in research.

“Umoja is comprised of a highly skilled and passionate team that brings together a unique complement of expertise with *in vivo* gene transfer, drug development and oncology,” said Luke Evnin, Ph.D., co-founder and Managing Director of MPM Capital. “We believe that Umoja's approach represents the future of cancer treatment.”

“Umoja is working to create an entirely new approach to engineered immunotherapies that can pave the way for cancer therapies that are more accessible and effective for patients around the world,” said John Hamer, Managing Partner, DCVC Bio. “We look forward to continuing to work with the exceptionally skilled Umoja team to support the development of their integrated and scalable VivoVec and TumorTag technology.”

“We believe that the combination of deep technical experience and integrated technology platform will put Umoja at the forefront of *in vivo* T cell engineering,” said Anna French, Partner at Qiming Venture Partners USA. “Umoja's universal CAR approach supports multi-antigen targeting which will be required for the development of solid tumor therapeutics.”

## **About Umoja Biopharma**



Umoja Biopharma, Inc. is a pre-clinical stage biotechnology company located in Seattle WA. Founded based on pioneering work performed at Seattle Children’s Research Institute and Purdue University, Umoja is advancing an entirely new approach to immunotherapy designed to retool a patient’s immune system *in vivo*. Umoja’s novel approach is powered by an integrated cellular immunotherapy platform comprising VivoVec *in vivo* delivery, RACR/CAR synthetic receptor payload and TumorTag targeting technologies. Designed from the ground up to work together, these platforms create and harness a powerful immune response in the body to directly, safely and controllably attack cancer. Umoja believes that its approach can provide broader access to the most advanced immunotherapies and enable more patients to live better, fuller lives. To learn more visit <http://umoja-biopharma.com/>.

#### **About MPM Capital**

MPM Capital is a healthcare investment firm with over two decades of experience founding and investing in life-sciences companies that seek to translate scientific innovations into cures for major diseases. With its experienced and dedicated team of investment professionals, entrepreneurs, and advisors, MPM strives to power novel medical breakthroughs that transform patients' lives. For more information, visit: <https://www.mpmcapital.com/>.

#### **About Qiming Venture Partners USA**

Qiming Venture Partners was founded in 2006 and has over \$5.5 billion in total assets under management. In January 2017, Qiming launched its first US-based fund, focused on early-stage healthcare opportunities in the United States and Europe. Qiming Venture Partners USA invests in highly disruptive platforms and products addressing significant unmet medical needs, driven by passionate and committed teams with the depth and experience to succeed. For more information visit <https://www.qimingvcusa.com/>.

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