



## Fannin Awarded \$1 Million NIH Grant For Continued Development of Asthma Drug

Houston, TX (August 20, 2019) – The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has awarded Fannin Innovation Studio® a \$1 million grant to continue development of PM-43I, the company’s anti-asthma drug, in collaboration with portfolio company Atrapos Therapeutics, LLC., as a more effective alternative to steroids.

Atrapos is focused on developing targeted therapeutics that modulate the body’s allergic immune response in specific diseases by inhibiting the intracellular signaling pathways controlled through the transcription factors STAT5 and STAT6. These proteins are downstream of the IL-2/IL-5/GM-CSF and IL-4/IL-13 signaling pathways that have long been known to be drivers of the inflammatory cascade characteristic of both asthma and atopic dermatitis. Recent approval and ongoing development of drugs such as Dupixent® (Regeneron and Sanofi Genzyme’s dupilumab), an antibody that binds to the IL-4/IL-13 receptor, has validated the concept of clinically targeting this and related signaling pathways in asthma and atopic dermatitis.

PM-43I was invented in the labs of the late John McMurray, Ph.D., Associate Professor in Experimental Therapeutics at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, and David Corry, M.D., Professor and Vice Chair for Immunology in the Department of Pathology & Immunology at Baylor College of Medicine. Atrapos has an exclusive license to the technology from MD Anderson and Baylor College of Medicine, and it continues to develop the technology in collaboration with Dr. Corry.

“Biologic agents such as dupilumab and others have proven to be game-changers in the management of asthma and related conditions, but issues such as cost, side effects, difficulty in administration, and loss of activity over time due to neutralizing responses against the drugs put these agents out of reach of many who might benefit. PM-43I has the potential to overcome all of these limitations, positioning it to become the standard of care for diverse allergic disorders. We are very excited to move forward with our research thanks to this outstanding grant,” said Dr. Corry.

In partnership with MD Anderson and Baylor College of Medicine, Fannin and Atrapos will use the NIH grant to further develop the company’s lead molecule, PM-43I, which has demonstrated encouraging activity in mouse models of allergic asthma including a significant reduction in airway hyper-responsiveness. “As a small molecule delivered via inhalation, PM-43I offers several potential advantages when compared to the monoclonal antibody biologics currently targeting this pathway, including its simpler route of administration, a more complete blockade of key asthma-related pathways, and targeted activity which is expected to reduce the risk of toxicity,” says Dr. Atul Varadhachary, Managing Partner at Fannin. PM-43I is also being evaluated in other therapeutic settings where the STAT5 and STAT6 pathways are activated, including as a treatment for chronic sinusitis, idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) and atopic dermatitis.

## About Fannin Innovation Studio

*Houston-based Fannin Innovation Studio is an early-stage life sciences development group focused exclusively on commercializing biotech and medtech technologies. Fannin partners with life science innovators to create startup companies, providing management, funding, and business development. To further bridge the commercialization gap, Fannin’s fellowship and internship programs provide aspiring entrepreneurs with hands-on development experience with its portfolio companies. For more information, visit [www.FanninInnovation.com](http://www.FanninInnovation.com), come by the Studio at 3900 Essex Lane -- Suite 575 in Houston, or email us at [innovate@fannininnovation.com](mailto:innovate@fannininnovation.com).*

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**For More Information:**

**Serena Miggins**

Fannin Innovation Studio

[innovate@fannininnovation.com](mailto:innovate@fannininnovation.com)

713.966.5844

**Dana Summers**

Penman PR

[dana@penmanpr.com](mailto:dana@penmanpr.com)

334.663.4424