

IES Life Sciences to Develop First of Its Kind Early Detection Assay for Ovarian Cancer · BioBuzz

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IES Life Sciences to Develop First of Its Kind Early Detection Assay for Ovarian Cancer

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IES Life Sciences is a small biotechnology start-up on the Eastern Shore with a mission to create an early detection technology for ovarian cancer and other rare diseases. Their portfolio focuses on diseases that are traditionally difficult to diagnose or are hard to catch early such as Lyme Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, and Rheumatoid Arthritis. Armed with the help of leading FDA scientists via a licensing agreement with the NIH, IES has developed the first and only comprehensive test to identify the Interferon Signature pattern for a disease.

Their patented technology uses the human immune system to diagnose diseases and ultimately will assist in drug development and personalized treatment for the patient. The test is a simple blood analysis that yields results in one hour, saving time and frustration for the patient and reducing healthcare costs. The assay is capable of detecting and measuring the unique combination of antigens, called interferons (INF), released by a diseased human cell.

INFs are released every time a disease or cancer takes hold in the body. These INFs are released in a pattern specific to that particular disease and create an "Interferon Expression Signature". Once the signature is known it can be used to identify the disease and the stage or severity, which will allow doctors tailor treatment to this specific patient.

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However, since their focus is rare diseases there aren't a lot of data points readily available. To combat this, their platform uses machine learning and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to rapidly solidify data so these signature patterns can be learned and logged. Repeat testing of these INF Signatures will aid in future drug development. Most importantly, it will help physicians adjust treatment to optimal levels, giving the patient the best clinical benefit with the fewest side effects, at the lowest cost.

Patients are often subjected to multiple doctor visits and diagnostic tests before they get answers, if they ever get any at all. IES Life Sciences CEO, David Spiegel, explains, "A man suffered with Lyme disease for two years before they could diagnose him. All this time he couldn't drive and his vision went. He was incredibly frustrated without any answers, he thought he was going crazy. We could have diagnosed him in an hour. And that's what we're here to do, resolve patient issues quicker and get them treated."



The local community has been very excited that IES chose to start their incubator on the Eastern Shore. They specifically moved to the eastern shore to provide jobs, utilize the Maryland startup ecosystem, and to tap into the local talent pool at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) "IES has been using the Pharmaceutical Sciences department to help their company get off of the ground. Both of our institutions are benefiting from the relationship," explains Associate Dean for the School of Pharmacy UMES.

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Many local officials have given their praise to IES joining the eastern shore, and investors are definitely paying attention. They have been awarded a MIPS grant, and have also been recognized by a crowdfunding charity organization, **Sound Affects**, that runs campaigns for biotech startups. Sound Affects founder Mona Jhaveri explains, "We are very careful with who we bring on to our platform. We have realized that some companies want to come on, but are hesitant to do their part when it comes to rallying the crowd. But we felt differently about IES Life Sciences. They really rose to the occasion to do this and that is what needs to be coupled with the online crowdfunding model."

Sound Affects has helped IES reach **30% of their ongoing campaign goal** to help them take their technology to the next phase of development. It is clear that the IES Life Sciences founders are passionate about their mission to change patient lives with a novel technology that is based on the body's immune system.

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Alexis Taylor is the Science & Biotechnology Writer for BioBuzz, the Scientific Copywriter for Workforce Genetics and a Baltimore native. Alexis' content delivers the latest complex scientific ideas and concepts in a simple yet interesting way. Since graduating from North Carolina State University with a BS in Microbiology, she has worked in a variety of healthcare sectors including clinical research, biomanufacturing, regulatory compliance and has earned the Executive Certificate in Health Care Leadership and Management



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