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Program that Accelerates Drug Discovery Receives \$400,000 Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Grant

Milwaukee, July 12, 2019 – The Therapeutic Accelerator Program (TAP) at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) recently received funding from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to support the program’s collaborations with other regional biohealth institutions and companies to accelerate drug discovery by translating research into therapies.

TAP, within the MCW Department of Pharmacology & Toxicology’s Drug Discovery Center, takes a pioneering approach to developing new therapeutics in order to reduce risk and increase the value of the project for commercialization. Upon completion of milestones in a funding cycle, TAP plans the next critical steps and goals until there is sufficient data, information and value for a therapeutic to be licensed, partner with a biotechnology company or launch a startup.

With a \$400,000 grant from the WEDC’s Targeted Industry Projects (TIP) program, TAP will not only continue accelerating discoveries from academic scientists from concept to commercialization, it will also work to cultivate the next generation of southeastern Wisconsin biohealth workers through pioneering training and educational experiences, and enhance the region’s innovation ecosystem by fostering academic industry collaborations.

“We are extremely excited about the new partnership between TAP and the WEDC,” said John D. Imig, PhD, director of the Drug Discovery Center and professor of pharmacology and toxicology at MCW. “This partnership will further enable TAP to make a major impact in southeastern Wisconsin by developing drugs and therapeutics for improving health and quality of life.”

By utilizing the existing infrastructure and resources at MCW and other regional academic institutions and biotechnology companies, TAP ensures a zero expenditure on infrastructure.

The WEDC’s TIP program supports industry cluster and sector development in Wisconsin. The program offers a continuum of services that advance targeted, high-growth business consortia and industry culminating over time in the development, diversification and growth in sectors that provide sustained high-quality jobs, continued innovation and increase in GDP in the state.

“WEDC’s investment in MCW’s TAP program is a significant gain for southeast Wisconsin,” said Vincent Rice, vice president of sector strategy development for WEDC. “The fund will allow MCW’s program and facilities to reach a larger education community while enabling growth of the entire state’s drug discovery capabilities. This is a major expansion of Wisconsin’s biohealth footprint.”

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About the Medical College of Wisconsin

With a history dating back to 1893, The Medical College of Wisconsin is dedicated to leadership and excellence in education, patient care, research and community engagement. More than 1,200 students are enrolled in MCW’s medical school and graduate school programs in Milwaukee, Green Bay, and Central Wisconsin in 2016. MCW’s School of Pharmacy opened in 2017. A major national research center, MCW is the largest research institution in the Milwaukee metro area and second largest in Wisconsin. In FY2016, faculty received more than \$184 million in external support for research, teaching, training and related purposes. This total includes highly competitive research and training awards from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Annually, MCW faculty direct or collaborate on more than 3,100 research studies, including clinical trials. Additionally, more than 1,500 physicians provide care in virtually every specialty of medicine for more than 525,000 patients annually.

About the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) leads economic development efforts for the state by advancing and maximizing opportunities in Wisconsin for businesses, communities and people to thrive in a globally competitive environment. Working with more than 600 regional and local partners, WEDC develops and delivers solutions representative of a highly responsive and coordinated economic development network. Visit wedc.org or follow WEDC on Twitter @WEDCNews to learn more.