Leidos Health Life Sciences Receives Patent for Novel Peptide-Class of Checkpoint Inhibitors

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Patented peptides could be used to treat cancer and infectious diseases

RESTON, Va., Jan. 3, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Leidos (NYSE: LDOS), a FORTUNE® 500 science and technology leader, has announced that the United States Patent and Trademark Office has issued Leidos Health Life Sciences a U.S. Patent covering methods for novel peptide-based PD-1 checkpoint inhibitors. The patent was fast-tracked under the United States Patent and Trademark Office's Patents 4 Patients program. This program provides an expedited review process of cancer immunotherapy-related patent applications.

The Leidos Health Life Sciences team set out to identify and develop alternatives to the prevailing monoclonal antibody molecule class of therapeutics in order to potentially improve the safety and cost profile of antagonists to the checkpoint receptors. Leidos focused on peptides as a therapeutic platform, which they mine from diverse sources including the microbiome, as they can be easily genetically engineered into vaccines (DNA and RNA), oncolytic viruses and cellular therapies for more targeted delivery. The inventors on the patent include Leidos employees Gabriel M. Gutierrez, Vinayaka Kotraiah, James Pannucci, and Ramses Ayala, who continue to identify novel, therapeutically active peptides to other targets for a wide range of disease indications including cancer, infectious diseases, and CNS.

"Through years of vaccine development experience, our team has seen firsthand how infectious pathogens hide in plain sight of our immune system, not unlike tumors," said Dr. Gutierrez, lead researcher. "Therefore, we wanted to translate the tools used to fight cancer, to fight infectious diseases such as malaria and HIV, which requires us to improve cost, safety and delivery. Peptides represented an ideal tool to achieve our goal and this patent represents an important milestone for us."

The Leidos Life Science team, led by Harold Modrow, maintains a portfolio of vaccine and bio-therapeutic programs in the public health space. Funding for the work supporting this patent was provided by Leidos' Internal R&D program and inspired by 18 years of managing large medical product development contracts from federal government agencies like the NIH, DoD and DHS. https://www.leidos.com/markets/science/life-sciences.

About Leidos

Leidos is a Fortune 500® information technology, engineering, and science solutions and services leader working to solve the world's toughest challenges in the defense, intelligence, homeland security, civil, and health markets. The company's 32,000 employees support vital missions for government and commercial customers. Headquartered in Reston, Virginia, Leidos reported annual revenues of approximately $10.17 billion for the fiscal year ended December 29, 2017. For more information, visit www.Leidos.com.

Statements in this announcement, other than historical data and information, constitute forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties. A number of factors could cause our actual results, performance, achievements, or industry results to be very different from the results, performance, or achievements expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. Some of these factors include, but are not limited to, the risk factors set forth in the company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the period ended December 29, 2017, and other such filings that Leidos makes with the SEC from time to time. Due to such uncertainties and risks, readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on such forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date hereof.

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