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San Diego Blood Bank spins off for-profit entity, CEO Wellis transitions to new company

- Community Bio secures financing from premier life science investor group

SAN DIEGO. (November 5, 2021) – The San Diego Blood Bank announced today the formal spinoff of Community Bio, Inc., a cell therapy Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization (CDMO). While Community Bio will be an independent company, the San Diego Blood Bank will retain a significant equity interest in Community Bio, and the two will maintain a strategic relationship to continue to advance the Blood Bank’s mission of improving the health and wellness of our community.

The new entity will supply cellular products and services, together with process development and manufacturing expertise, to scientists and clinicians working with cell, gene, and immunotherapies.

David Wellis, Ph.D., will lead Community Bio and transition to the company full time. Community Bio has secured funding for the new company from a venture capital firm dedicated to helping life science, medical device, and healthcare companies achieve their growth objectives.

“For the past several years, the San Diego Blood Bank broadened its scope toward ensuring a healthy community beyond blood banking while not drifting from its mission. “We’ve supported research and clinical trials for innovative cellular therapies for cancer, for personalized precision medicine, and other medical advancements,” said Wellis. “Creating this new, separate company gives both organizations significant opportunities with very low risk. We’re excited for what’s ahead for both the San Diego Blood Bank and Community Bio!”

Nonprofit educational institutions have spun off companies to leverage technologies for many decades. The San Diego Blood Bank is emulating this model to increase revenue and foster a culture of innovation.

Community Bio will operate out of the San Diego Blood Bank’s Gateway Center headquarters and reimburse the non-profit organization for space, raw materials, and laboratory services.

The market for cell therapy continues to grow exponentially. Start-up companies in this industry raised nearly \$20 billion in 2020, up 50 percent from the year prior. More than 1,200 cell therapy clinical trials took place in 2020, an increase of approximately 15 percent over 2019.

In addition to Wellis, San Diego Blood Bank's Chief Scientific Officer, Robert Tressler, Ph.D., and Chief Commercial Officer, George Eastwood, will also transition to Community Bio. Doug Morton, SDBB's current Chief Operating Officer/Chief Information Officer, will assume the role of Interim CEO while SDBB's Board of Directors conducts a search for a new SDBB CEO.

About San Diego Blood Bank

SDBB is dedicated to community health by providing a reliable supply of blood to patients in need. SDBB's vision is to further ensure the health of our community by simultaneously delivering related health and wellness education and services and extending into research. SDBB is an independent, 501(c)(3) non-profit that serves hospitals in San Diego, Orange, Imperial and Los Angeles counties with blood transfusion products and reference laboratory services. SDBB currently operates eight local donor centers and 10 bloodmobiles. For more information about SDBB, visit www.SanDiegoBloodBank.org or connect with us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About Community Bio, Inc.

Community Bio is a unique full-service provider of critical human cells and tissues to the cell and gene therapy industry. Built on the foundation of the San Diego Blood Bank, with over 70 years of experience in blood and tissue collection and handling, Community Bio is focused on supplying cGMP cellular products and services, together with process development and manufacturing expertise to scientists and clinicians working with cell and gene therapies.

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