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SW Michigan Life Science Fund Invests in Startup RealBio Technology

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By a GenomeWeb staff reporter

NEW YORK (GenomeWeb Daily News) – The Southwest Michigan First Life Science Fund said this week that it has invested an undisclosed amount in RealBio Technology to support the commercialization of its cell and tissue culture technology for drug discovery and life science research.

Other investors include stem-cell therapy firm Aastrom Biosciences and First Angels, a Kalamazoo-based angel investor group. RealBio also has received funding from the Michigan Pre-Seed Microloan Program.

RealBio's technology, called the Nth Degree system, creates an in vitro environment that mimics in vivo cell and tissue development, allowing researchers to study true organs and tissue in a laboratory setting, the company said. Applications of the technology include stem cell growth and collection, drug testing, and in vitro toxicology testing.

RealBio has a worldwide license to the patent-pending technology from Aastrom, which develops expanded autologous mixed-cell products for cardiac and vascular regeneration using its proprietary tissue repair cell technology platform. RealBio said that the licensed technology was developed by Aastrom researchers and is not competitive with the company's core cell therapy technologies.

In connection with the investment, Paul Neeb, executive in residence with the Southwest Michigan First Life Science Fund, has been named president and CEO of RealBio; while Lee Noll, who co-invented RealBio's technology while at Aastrom, has been named COO.