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By a GenomeWeb staff reporter

NEW YORK (GenomeWeb News) – Cancer diagnostics firm BioMarker Strategies today announced it has received a \$200,000 Small Business Innovation Research grant to develop a pathway-based companion diagnostic test for drug inhibitors targeting the ErbB signal transduction network.

The Baltimore, MD-based firm also disclosed that it raised \$2.3 million in equity financing last month.

BioMarker Strategies will use the Phase I SBIR grant from the National Cancer Institute to expand its predictive test development program using the company's SnapPath live tumor cell testing platform to include melanoma and breast cancer live tumor cells.

The platform stimulates live tumor cells from human biopsies to "evoke phosphoprotein-based functional signaling profiles (FSP) that are not possible in dead, fixed tumor tissue," BioMarker Strategies said. SnapPath combines an automated, live-tumor-cell processing device with functional, ex vivo biomarkers to create profiles that oncologists can then use to determine which drugs may be most beneficial to their patients.

SnapPath was developed with SBIR funding from NCI.

The ErbB signaling network includes "a large number of the targeted cancer drugs under development today," Douglas Clark, acting CEO of BioMarker Strategies, said in a statement, and the SBIR grant "signals the growing recognition that static, nucleic acid-based biomarkers will not be enough to predict patient response to drug therapies, and that new pathway-based approaches using living cells will be needed to enable personalized medicine for cancer."

If successful in carrying out the objectives of the Phase I grant, the company would be eligible to apply for Phase 2 funding of \$1.5 million.

Separately, BioMarker Strategies said in a document filed with the US Securities and Exchange Commission that it raised \$2.3 million in equity financing in August.

The company told *GenomeWeb Daily News* last month that it had [raised \\$1.1 million](#) in the round targeting \$4 million. The funds will be used to support first clinical use of the SnapPath platform in patients with advanced melanoma, President Scott Allocco said at the time.

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