

## Regenerative medicine startup Rodeo Therapeutics raises \$5.9M for drugs to regenerate tissue

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If you could write a medical wish-list of futuristic technologies, regenerating tissue would be pretty high up there. It could do things like treat a variety of inflammatory conditions and even help cancer patients regrow healthy cells.

A new Seattle-based biotech startup, **Rodeo Therapeutics**, is hoping its technology can make tissue regeneration a reality, and it has just raised a \$5.9 million Series A round from Seattle-based biotech fund **Accelerator Corporation** to make it happen.



Dr. Sanford Markowitz, founder of Rodeo Therapeutics. (Case Western Reserve University Photo)

The general idea is simple: Rodeo is hoping to use small-molecule therapies — a category most drugs fall into — that stimulate the body’s natural regeneration process, like when a skinned knee heals.

Its first focus is to develop a treatment for inflammatory bowel disease and one that can help cancer patients’ cells grow quickly following stem cell transplants.

But those goals are just the beginning.

“The ability to stimulate the body’s natural processes for tissue regeneration and repair has broad therapeutic potential in disease settings such as ulcerative colitis and in hemopoietic recovery following bone marrow transplantation,” said Rodeo Therapeutics founder and cancer researcher Dr. Sanford Markowitz. “Rodeo Therapeutics is focused on developing small-molecule therapies that stimulate these processes and enable new approaches to



Dr. Stanton Gerson. (Case Western Reserve University Photo)

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address serious medical conditions that today have a substantial unmet medical need.”

The company is currently working on drugs that inhibit an enzyme called 15-PGDH, which has been shown to speed up regenerative processes.

The startup was founded by Markowitz and Dr. Stanton Gerson, researchers at Case Western University, along with Dr. Joseph Ready, a researcher at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

Its technology is based on their work. Markowitz is an expert in **gastrointestinal cancers**, where inflammation can cause serious problems; Dr. Gerson specializes in **stem cell and genetic research** along with gene therapies and cancer drug development; and Dr. Ready works in **regenerative medicine** and cancer, specifically synthetic and medicinal chemistry.

The startup’s corporate office is currently in Accelerator Corporation’s facilities in Seattle, with its founders in Dallas and Cleveland. Rodeo’s early operations will be overseen by Accelerator, and the fund’s CEO Thong Le is currently serving as Rodeo’s CEO.



Thong Le, CEO of Accelerator Corporation and the acting CEO of Rodeo Therapeutics. (Accelerator Corporation Photo)



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