uBiome Awards Grant to the University of the West Indies to Study Gut Microbiota in Childhood Asthma

The leader in microbial genomics awards grant to team of researchers at the University of the West Indies to characterize the relationship between gut microbial diversity and asthma.

SAN FRANCISCO (PRWEB) January 23, 2019 -- Through its Microbiome Grant Initiative, uBiome, the leader in microbial genomics, has awarded microbiome research support in study design, planning, sample collection, and analysis to researchers at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Faculty of Medical Sciences, St. Augustine Campus in Trinidad led by Dr. Elaine Monica Davis, MBBS, MPhil, Lecturer of Physiology, and Mr. Cerano Da Silva, MPhil, graduate research student, and the Global Asthma Network representative to Trinidad and Tobago, to study the emergence of histamine-secreting gut microbiota as a factor in childhood asthma.

The goal of the study is to quantify any differences in histamine-secreting gut microbiota and dysbiosis of gut microbes between asthmatic and non-asthmatic children living in Trinidad, in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The researchers hope this study will lay the foundation for further research on how alteration of the gut microbiome might affect asthma and possibly provide new therapeutic avenues.

Data collected from the study will include microbiome composition from uBiome’s patented kits, the genetic tendency to develop allergic diseases, and lung function status. The team hypothesizes that these factors may contribute to the high prevalence and severity of allergic asthma in the Caribbean region.

“We are proud to support the University of West Indies in their investigation to better understand the relationship between asthma severity and microbial diversity, which has yet to be explored in children,” said Jessica Richman, PhD, co-founder and CEO of uBiome.

Dr. Davis is a lecturer of physiology in the Faculty of Medical Sciences and former Associate Dean of Communications, Public Relations and Special Projects at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus and Senior Lecturer in the MSc. Environmental Engineering program. Additionally, she is Dean of the Consular Corps of Trinidad and Tobago, chair of the World Federation of Consuls Caribbean Committee, co-chair of its Caribbean Membership Committee, and a member of its Charitable Agreements and Events, World and Regional Conferences Committee. Dr. Davis is supervising Mr. Cerano Da Silva for this study, who is pursuing a Master’s degree and has developed this investigative microbiome research for his thesis, which he proposes to continue to a Doctoral degree.

About the grant, Dr. Davis said, “We have been able to provide the means whereby asthmatic children in Trinidad will know which types of environmental allergens may be responsible for triggering an asthmatic attack. This will result in better asthma management through mitigation and will help determine the extent their lung function has been compromised. With the amazing help of uBiome, we now have access to advanced technological methods to determine whether the gut microbiome is potentially contributing to the increasing prevalence and severity of asthma in children in the Caribbean.”

Through its Microbiome Grant Initiative, uBiome has awarded millions of dollars in research support to hundreds of investigators around the world at renowned academic institutions and not-for-profit research organizations, including Harvard University, Stanford University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology
(MIT), University of California, San Francisco, Oxford University, and the University of Sydney. Awards include patented microbiome sequencing kits, as well as research support in study design, planning, sample collection, and analysis. To learn more about our award process or to submit a grant proposal, visit www.ubiome.com/microbiome-grant-initiative/.

About uBiome
Founded in 2012, uBiome is the leader in microbial genomics. The Company’s mission is to advance the science of the microbiome and make it useful to people. uBiome combines its patented proprietary precision sequencing™ with machine learning and artificial intelligence to develop wellness products, clinical tests, and therapeutic targets. uBiome has filed for over 250 patents on its technology, which includes sample preparation, computational analysis, molecular techniques, as well as diagnostic and therapeutic applications.

uBiome’s commercial products include SmartGut™, the world’s first sequencing-based clinical microbiome test, which identifies microbes in the gut for patients with chronic gut conditions such as IBD, IBS, Crohn’s Disease, and ulcerative colitis; SmartJane™, the first sequencing-based women’s health screening test, which genotypes all 19 clinically relevant strains of HPV, identifies four common STDs, and surveys more than 20 vaginal microbes associated with bacterial vaginosis and other conditions; and Explorer™, a health and wellness product to understand the role that food and lifestyle can play in wellness.

uBiome’s platform has been used by hundreds of thousands of consumers, patients, and doctors and more than 200 research institutions around the world, including the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC), US National Institutes of Health (NIH), Harvard University, Stanford University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), University of California, San Francisco, Oxford University, and the University of Sydney.

Since its launch, the company has received widespread recognition including CNN 10: Startups to Watch, the IVY Technology Award, CNN Future 30, and was named one of Fast Company’s Most Innovative Companies in Healthcare in 2016 and in Data Science in 2018, as well as a Technology Pioneer from the World Economic Forum in 2018. For more information, visit www.uBiome.com.
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