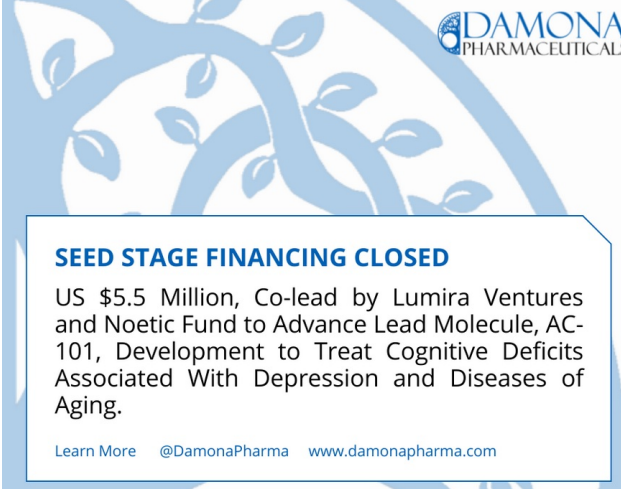




## On The Prowl: The Research Review

October 2022

### UWMRF Startups

The graphic for the DAMONA Pharmaceuticals announcement. It features a light blue background with a stylized tree branch and leaves. The DAMONA PHARMACEUTICALS logo is in the top right corner. A white box with a blue border contains the following text:

**SEED STAGE FINANCING CLOSED**

US \$5.5 Million, Co-lead by Lumira Ventures and Noetic Fund to Advance Lead Molecule, AC-101, Development to Treat Cognitive Deficits Associated With Depression and Diseases of Aging.

[Learn More](#)   [@Damonapharma](#)   [www.damonapharma.com](#)

On September 26th, DAMONA Pharmaceuticals secured seed stage financing to support the development of its lead therapeutic for the treatment of cognitive symptoms associated with depression and diseases of aging. The syndicated investment was co-led by the [Angelini Lumira Biosciences Fund](#) and [Noetic Fund](#) and included participation from [Toronto Innovation Acceleration Partners \(TIAP\)](#), and several family offices. In addition to the equity financing, the company has received significant financial support from the [Centre for Addiction and Mental Health \(CAMH\)](#) and the [Ontario Brain Institute](#) and additional early-stage development programs. Proceeds from these financings will support the development of the company lead compound, AC-101, which was licensed from CAMH, UWM Research Foundation Inc., University of Tours, and University of Belgrade-Faculty of Pharmacy, and additional early stage development programs.

DAMONA's mission is the discovery and development of first-in-class modulators of GABA neurotransmitters that target and restore impaired brain functions in patients suffering from cognitive symptoms.

"The Lumira team was first drawn to the DAMONA opportunity by the quality and depth of the science being generated by company founder Dr. Etienne Sibille, a world-leading scientist in the areas of neuroscience and neuropharmacology." Over the past several years, we built a strong working relationship with Dr. Sibille which enabled us to see the terrific progress culminating in the selection of its lead, AC-101, which the company now plans to take into IND enabling studies." said Jacki Jenuth, Partner and COO of [Lumira Ventures](#).

Dr. Aristotle Voineskos, Vice President of Research and Director of the Campbell Family

Mental Health Research Institute at CAMH added, “This investment brings us one step closer to helping the millions of people affected by cognitive symptoms associated with depression and diseases of aging.”

Stay up to date with more information about Damona Pharmaceuticals on their website.

For Full Press Release: [DamonaPharmaceuticals](#)

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## **UWMRF Welcomes New Team Members**

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Brian Walsh

### **Brian Walsh**

Brian Walsh joined the UWM Research Foundation team in September of 2022. In his role as Senior Technology Commercialization Manager, he encourages and evaluates invention disclosures from UWM faculty, staff and students, collaborates in developing plans for protecting intellectual property, and engages with inventors and businesses to execute licensing deals to bring promising UWM technologies to market. Brian is also involved with corporate partnering efforts, supporting faculty-based startup companies, and implementing UWMRF Catalyst Grant and Bridge Grant programs.

Brian earned a B.S. in bacteriology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and an M.B.A. in marketing from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. In addition, he served in the US Peace Corps as Biotechnology Commercialization Specialist for a nationally funded research center in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Previously, Brian has provided guidance to Wisconsin entrepreneurs on navigating the Federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program for accessing funds to research and develop early-stage technologies with commercial potential and managed pre-accelerator and investor readiness programs for startups. Brian’s technology transfer background also focused on commercializing inventions from UW System comprehensive campuses in Green Bay, Oshkosh and Stevens Point.

When not at work, Brian has developed a nerdy enthusiasm for landscape design with a mission to sneak native plants into the yards of everyone he knows. He also enjoys biking for both recreation and transportation, and activities in or on the water – swimming, kayaking, pontooning, or just floating.

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### **Dena Foster**

Dena joined the UWMRF part-time to aid in marketing, social media, program administration, and special events.

After Ms. Foster’s graduation from Angelo State

University with a bachelor's degree in history and English, she earned a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction in 2005 from Concordia University Wisconsin. In her full-time professional role as an instructor, she has lead teams, coached staff members, coordinated weekly newsletters, and is the go-to for troubleshooting individual and systemic issues with programs utilized within her district. She holds monthly training sessions for grade-level groups of educators all while teaching a full course load.



Dena Foster

Outside of school, Ms. Foster enjoys spending time with her children, and all of their pets. She loves to watch different sporting events and spending as much time outside as possible. Ms. Foster personally, loves to go swimming, drink hot tea, and read great literature.

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## Events and Deadlines

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### ENGAGE Early Stage Investor Panel for Milwaukee Entrepreneurs

**Panelists:** Israel Squires, Midpoint Ventures; Richelle Martin, Winnow Fund; Todd Sobotka, BrightStar Wisconsin Foundation, Inc.

**When:** October 19th

**Time:** 12:00-1:00 pm

**Where:** Lubar Entrepreneurship Center

[RSVP](#)

### Water Council Student Pilot Project

Applications are being accepted for the Future Water Leaders Fund Student Pilot Project, which gives students the opportunity to conduct in-field, proof-of-concept testing for water technologies at real-world demonstration sites. Deadline to apply is November 1.

[Information and application.](#)

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