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New Jersey Health Foundation Awards \$50,000 Innovation Grant to Develop Biochip for Simplified, Faster Disease Detection, Diagnosis & Monitoring

New Brunswick, NJ – New Jersey Health Foundation (NJHF) has awarded a \$50,000 Innovation Grant to Eon Soo Lee, assistant professor of mechanical and industrial engineering at NJIT (New Jersey Institute of Technology), to help advance the development of a microfluidic chip that provides instant diagnostic results, advancing earlier detection and diagnosis for patients, announced James M. Golubieski, the foundation’s president.

If successful, the biochip will expedite the diagnosis of many diseases including viral infections (HIV, sexually transmitted diseases and toxoplasmosis) and cancers (leukemia, ovarian, prostate, thyroid, liver and testicular).

“As we know, early detection can improve treatment outcomes for patients significantly,” explained George F. Heinrich, M.D., vice chair and CEO of NJHF. “Currently, doctors rely on diagnostic devices requiring a minimum of four hours of sample preparation through centralized diagnostic centers rather than their local offices. We are interested in Dr. Lee’s project because the biochip he is developing would provide instant results at a local office or point of care without needing sample preparation.”

In addition, Dr. Lee explained that the chip reduces the possibility of sample contamination by minimizing the need for flow control devices and connecting tubes.

"The partnership and support from the New Jersey Health Foundation is a critical component of our efforts to advance commercialization of early-stage life science technologies," said Judith Sheft, associate vice president for technology and enterprise development at NJIT's New Jersey Innovation Institute.

Ms. Sheft noted that Dr. Lee had previously won funding for his research from the National Science Foundation I-Corps program as an NJIT site team, and then from the agency's national program.

"The customer insights Dr. Lee gained through I-Corps provided market validation for the discussions with New Jersey Health Foundation that led to this project. We anticipate additional collaborations with NJHF that will leverage our respective capabilities to bring new technologies to the market," she added.

Faculty members at research organizations affiliated with NJHF – Kessler Foundation, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Princeton University, Rowan University, Rutgers University and Stevens Institute of Technology – are eligible for grants of up to \$50,000 each to advance projects headed toward commercialization. For more information about this project or New Jersey Health Foundation Innovation Grants, contact Mike Wiley, NJHF, at (908) 731-6612 or mwiley@njhf.org.

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About New Jersey Health Foundation

[New Jersey Health Foundation](#) is a not-for-profit corporation that supports biomedical research and health-related education programs in New Jersey through its Grants Program and its affiliate, [Foundation Venture Capital Group](#) which makes private equity investments in health-related start-up companies in New Jersey headed toward commercialization.