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5 local biotech firms get fed funds

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Five area biotechnology companies, all backed by BioAdvance, are on the list of companies to receive federal funding under the Qualifying Therapeutic Discovery Project grant program.

The five BioAdvance portfolio companies combined are getting more than \$2 million in grants under the program, which was part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act signed into law this year.

The provision was created to provide cash-strapped pharmaceutical companies with 250 or fewer employees up to \$5 million in tax credits or grants to cover 50 percent of the expenses they incurred in 2009 while developing therapies to prevent, treat or diagnose a variety of diseases and conditions.

Novira Therapeutics of Philadelphia received two grants totaling more than \$431,000 for its work on discovering antiviral therapeutics.

Midway Pharmaceuticals of Spring House, Pa., **Yaupon Therapeutics** of Radnor, Pa., and Immunome of Wynnewood, Pa., each received \$244,479.

Midway is working on developing new treatments for diseases of the gastrointestinal tract. Yaupon is getting ready to file a new drug application, the company's first, seeking approval for its experimental lymphoma drug Clearazide. Immunome is a discovery-stage antibody company focused on developing new treatments for life-threatening infectious diseases.

Marillion Pharmaceuticals of Malvern, Pa., received a \$172,820 grant to support its research into new cancer therapies.

Check back this week for more grant awards as the information becomes available.

BioAdvance, which operates the Biotechnology Greenhouse of Southeastern Pennsylvania, expects the number of grantees from this region to grow as it is still waiting to hear from other of its companies that applied for grants. Pennsylvania Bio is also compiling a list of its members who received grants or tax credits.