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## **Vigene Biosciences Plans Major Expansion in Montgomery County, Adding up to 245 New Jobs**

*Global leader in gene therapy and vaccine manufacturing taking additional space in Rockville*

**Rockville, MD** — Vigene Biosciences, a global leader in gene therapy development, has announced plans to expand into a new facility in Montgomery County to accommodate industry demand for its gene and cellular therapy products. In addition to its existing headquarters, R&D and manufacturing locations in Rockville, the company will lease 52,000 square-feet of manufacturing space at 14200 Shady Grove Road, bringing the total lab and manufacturing space of the company to 110,000 sq ft. Vigene will retain its current 125 employees and add up to 245 new jobs by the end of 2025.

“Vigene serves over 4,000 clients worldwide, including our recently announced collaboration with Gaithersburg’s Altimmune to manufacture its single-dose intranasal vaccine candidate for COVID-19,” said Dr. Zairen Sun, Vigene’s President and CEO. “This new facility will allow us to support our customers as they move beyond clinical development into commercial scale manufacturing.”

Founded in 2012, Vigene Biosciences’ mission is to make gene therapy affordable for patients with cancer and serious genetic disorders. The company develops, manufactures and distributes state-of-the-art adeno-associated viruses (AAV), lentivirus, retrovirus, adenovirus and plasmid viral vectors for gene delivery. In 2016, Vigene acquired Omnia Biologics with its significant clinical manufacturing experience to respond to growing product demand as gene therapy candidates progressed to clinical trials. The company’s global clientele includes pharmaceutical and biotech companies, governmental agencies, non-profit organizations and academic institutions.

“As the field of gene therapy continues to advance and becomes more affordable, we are pleased to support the expansion of Vigene Biosciences in Maryland and the addition of 245 new jobs,” said Governor Larry Hogan. “It is a testament to our state’s outstanding business climate and wealth of resources that we have seen so many life sciences companies expand and add thousands of new jobs in recent years.”

“Vigene Biosciences is known as an award-winning world leader in the life science industry, and contributes to Montgomery County’s ability to provide the entire spectrum of gene and cell capabilities,” said Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich. “We are so proud that this company started here and continues to commit to our community as it develops these life-saving products.”

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To assist with project costs related to the expansion, the Maryland Department of Commerce has approved a \$1,225,000 conditional loan contingent on job creation and capital investment. In addition, the state has approved a \$100,000 Partnership for Workforce Quality training grant, and the company is eligible for several tax credits, including the Job Creation Tax Credit and More Jobs for Marylanders. Montgomery County has approved a \$125,000 Economic Development Fund conditional grant contingent on job creation and capital investment.

"Vigene's expansion project shows once again why Montgomery County is a leading life sciences hub," Montgomery County Council President Tom Hucker said. "Only Montgomery County has the unique mix of federal agencies, the proximity to our nation's capital, the highly educated talent and the support that enables these mission-driven companies to achieve extraordinary things."

"Vigene is at the forefront of developing products for gene and cellular therapy for people around the world battling cancer and other life-threatening disorders, and we are very excited that they are continuing to do that important work right here in Maryland," said Maryland Commerce Secretary Kelly M. Schulz. "Together with our partners in Montgomery County, we look forward to working with Vigene to ensure they continue to grow and thrive here in our state."

"It was just a year ago that we cut the ribbon at Vigene's new custom-built headquarters and already the growing demand for its gene and cellular therapy products requires additional physical expansion," said Benjamin H. Wu, President and CEO of Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation. "Vigene's growth as a global innovation leader has been fueled by its local collaborations and access to a robust talent pipeline."

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### **About Maryland Commerce**

The Maryland Department of Commerce stimulates private investment and creates jobs by attracting new businesses, encouraging the expansion and retention of existing companies, and providing financial assistance to Maryland companies. The Department promotes the State's many economic advantages and markets local products and services at home and abroad to spur economic development and international investment, trade and tourism. Because they are major economic generators, the Department also supports the Arts, film production, sports and other special events. For more information, visit [commerce.maryland.gov](http://commerce.maryland.gov).

### **About MCEDC**

The [Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation \(MCEDC\)](http://www.mcedc.com) is the official public-private economic development organization representing Montgomery County, Maryland. Created in 2016, MCEDC is led by a Board of Directors of business executives. Its mission is to help businesses start, grow and relocate in Montgomery County by helping them gain access to top talent, business and market intelligence and prime locations. For more information, visit our [website](http://www.mcedc.com). Follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/mcedc), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/mcedc), and [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/mcedc).

### **About Vigene Biosciences**

Vigene Biosciences is an award-winning world leader in plasmid and viral vector development and manufacturing. Vigene features integrated plasmid and viral vector production and analytical service offerings from its 110,000 sq ft of state-of-the-art facility with over 15 GMP cleanroom suites. Vigene's mission is to make gene therapy affordable. On basic research side, Vigene is developing, manufacturing, and distributing state-of-the-art AAV, lentivirus, retrovirus, adenovirus, and plasmid-based reagents including HHMI/Janelia Research Campus AAV Biosensors. On the cGMP clinical production side, Vigene combines the proven production technologies with rigorous regulatory compliant cGMP production to meet the needs and expectations of clinical and commercial clients. Vigene offers FDA and EMA compliant cGMP production for AAV, lentivirus, adenovirus, retrovirus, and plasmids to global pharmaceutical and biotech companies, governmental agencies and non-profit organizations. For more information on Vigene, please visit [www.vigenebio.com](http://www.vigenebio.com).