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Team bios

Leadership team

John Coleman, PhD

President & Chief Executive Officer

John is an experienced biotechnology executive who brings more than 20 years of leadership, operational and commercialization experience to Avivo. Most recently, he co-founded and served as Chief Operating Officer, and then President, of Anandia Labs leading to the acquisition by Aurora Cannabis.

John also led Project Search for the Centre for Drug Research & Development, now adMare BioInnovations, in which he oversaw that organization's identification of academic drug discovery projects with exceptional therapeutic potential thus enabling their evaluation and development within CDRD for future commercialization

Linkedin - John Coleman

Peter Rahfeld, Dr. rer. nat.

Chief Scientific Officer

During his postdoctoral research at the University of British Columbia, Peter discovered enzymes from the human microbiome that can convert type-A red

blood cells to type-O, the universal blood group. This discovery inspired him to co-found Avivo with the vision of making ABO-blood types obsolete and converting all donated blood and solid organs to O. Peter completed his doctoral training at the prestigious Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology in Jena, Germany.

LinkedIn - Peter Rahfeld

Christopher Nguan, MD, FRCSC

Chief Medical Officer

Chris is a kidney transplant urologist, surgeon scientist, and medical technology innovator. He has operated at Vancouver General Hospital since 2006 where he is the Surgical Director of Renal Transplantation, as well as an Associate Professor at the University of British Columbia. His research interests include investigation into improved donor management in organ transplantation with an emphasis on improving preservation solutions, storage and reperfusion outcomes. He has authored over 90 peer reviewed publications and is named on six novel patents.

LinkedIn - Christopher Nguan

David Matthews

Chief Financial Officer

Dave is an experienced life sciences executive. In his 30+ year career, he has played an important role in the commercialization of five products. His roles have included Chief Business Officer and Chief Financial Officer, he has been involved in three IPOs, and he has also led numerous private and follow-on financings. In

total, Dave has raised over $500M in capital for his various companies. A number of these companies were also successfully acquired or achieved market values in excess of $1B. In addition, Dave has sourced, negotiated, and managed numerous partnerships with numerous large pharma and biotech companies.

LinkedIn - David Matthews

Spence Macdonald, PhD

Vice President, Product Development

Spence studied high-throughput enzyme discovery in the laboratory of Stephen Withers at the University of British Columbia. Spence was involved in various entrepreneurial endeavours while completing his PhD, such as the development of a plant extract as a natural health product to treat diabetes, obesity and irritable bowel syndrome. In addition to exploring potential commercialization pathways for the technology, Spence led the design and implementation of a medium-scale extraction process to produce the product, which was subsequently approved to meet GLP standards. Spence is a co-founder of Avivo.

LinkedIn - Spence Macdonald

John Barclay, MBA

Vice President, Business Development

John possesses over 18 years of progessive leadership experience in the life sciences, health care, and technology innovation ecosystem. In early 2020, he was connected to Avivo's scientific founders as a mentor through entrepreneurship@UBC's Lab2Launch venture incubator program and eventually became one of the company's co-founders. Most relevant to Avivo, he spent time

as the Executive Director of the American Society for Apheresis, thus providing the company with key knowledge of the US blood banking and transfusion medicine industry. John also held positions at Genome British Columbia, the Rick Hansen Institute (now the Praxis Spinal Cord Institute), and Malachite Management Inc, part of the STEMCELL Group of Companies.

LinkedIn - John Barclay

Board of Directors and advisors

Doug Buchanan, MBA, ICD.D

Chair, Board of Directors

Doug is an experienced board director and business leader with a wealth of experience in biotechnology and as a Partner at Price Waterhouse. Before retiring, he served as the CEO of BC Biomedical Laboratories Ltd for over twenty years. During his tenure, Doug oversaw several significant acquisitions, oversaw the development of a leading-edge laboratory and substantially strengthened the customer-culture of the organization, which consistently ranked among the '50 Best Employers in Canada' (1st for three years in a row).

LinkedIn - Doug Buchanan

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Bruce Cousins, CA

Bruce has more than 30 years life sciences company experience, in both financial and operational roles spanning organizations from large multinational corporations to emerging early phase companies. Currently, Bruce is the President and CFO of Eupraxia Pharmaceuticals (TSX:EPRX). Formerly, he was Executive Vice President & CFO at Arbutus Biopharma (NASDAQ:ABUS) from 2013 to 2018 and CFO of Aspreva Pharmaceuticals Corporation (NASDAQ: ASPV) from 2004 to 2008. Bruce started his life sciences career with Johnson & Johnson (NYSE: JNJ), where, from 1991 to 2004, he worked in a variety of franchises globally including Orthopedics and Wound Closure, completing his tenure with the Wound Management franchise.

LinkedIn - Bruce Cousins

Geoff Houlton, MBChB

Geoff, a physician by training, has an extensive career in the life sciences industry. He was the CEO of Heart Force Medical from 2009 to 2017, which developed nascent medical technology based on algorithmic analysis of sub-audible (seismocardiograph) frequencies emanating through the chest from the heart. He is experienced in venture capital and investment banking through positions at MDS Capital Corporation, Octagon Capital, Loewen Ondaatje McCutcheon and Union Securities Capital Markets Group. Geoff began his career in industry when he was recruited to Canada to lead the development of the Medical Affairs Department of Glaxo Canada Inc. now Glaxo SmithKline (GSK). He is also a co-founder and was the inaugural President and CEO of Avivo.

LinkedIn - Geoff Houlton

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Jayachandran (Jay) Kizhakkedathu, PhD

Jay is a professor in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and the Centre for Blood Research at the University of British Columbia and an expert in biomaterials science and engineering. Jay is a highly cited researcher with an H-index of 51, published in numerous leading basic science and clinical journals (>200), and named on 30 patents or patent applications. Jay's expertise and extensive background in translational blood research played a critical role in the development of Avivo's technology. He is a co-founder of Avivo.

UBC - Jayachandran Kizhakkedathu

Stephen G. Withers, PhD

Stephen is a professor in the Departments of Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of British Columbia, a Fellow of the Royal Society, London, and the primary scientific driver behind the development of the blood conversion technology. Stephen's distinguished career includes many notable and essential contributions to the field of Carbohydrate Enzymology. He is an author on over 500 publications in top journals, including over 20 in the Nature family journals, and named on over 35 issued patents in six families. Stephen is a co-founder of Avivo.

UBC - Stephen G. Withers