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Award Title: CCRI: Planning: Development of a Community Resource for Digital Image Research

Federal Award ID: 1925494

Report Submission Period: 01/01/2021 to 06/30/2021

This project has supported a community planning effort for digital pathology. Our goal has been to meet with colleagues from the digital pathology community to determine what types of tools and data would benefit the group. We have met with colleagues at a number of universities and for-profit businesses and have determined that there is an acute need for high-quality, high quantity digital pathology data (scanned pathology slides) which have been annotated (marked up with locations of healthy and abnormal cells). These data should be available with a minimum of legal and regulatory restrictions, which are universally acknowledged to be hurdles to the development of state-of-the-art research.

These findings have informed the process by which our group is collecting and releasing digital pathology slides to the research community. We have worked with regulators and legal counsel at our institution to enable us to release de-identified pathological scans to other researchers without the need for contracts or formal agreements. We have also created and released a suite of tools for manipulating the large number of pathology images in our database, most of which have file sizes in the range of 1-10 gigabytes. Our tools include software for annotating slides and for extracting important assets (features) that can be used for machine learning.

The outcome of this work is that we are able to produce data and tools that are responsive to the needs of the digital pathology community. Common tools can be used by everyone, which will accelerate discovery and innovation, both for digital pathology and for machine learning. Improved digital pathology can be expected to help doctors triage and inspect the high volumes of pathology data that are an integral part of hospital care, especially for cancers and melanomas.

Last Modified: 12/22/2021

Modified by: lyad Obeid

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