



Sheri Wilcox, Ph.D., Senior Director of Discovery Sciences  
Jennifer Bertino, Senior Director of Portfolio and Project Management

## SomaLogic's Team Unlocks the Potential of Proteins

MEET THE LEADERS WORKING TO DEVELOP A BREAKTHROUGH IN PRECISION MEDICINE



### COMPANY SNAPSHOT

LOCATION  
**BOULDER**  
COLORADO

FOUNDED  
**2000**

**200**  
EMPLOYEES

Sheri Wilcox has no regrets. As a post-doctoral research fellow in 2000, Wilcox was living in Michigan and on the verge of serious job-hunting. She had spent time in San Diego to complete her Ph.D., and was aware of the biotech industries emerging in Boston and San Francisco, but she and her husband, Jeremy, had another location in mind.

"We wanted to live in Colorado," said Wilcox, now the Senior Director of Discovery Sciences for Boulder-based SomaLogic.

She and Jeremy loved the mountains, where they could hike, bike and climb. The cost of living, much lower than the coasts, also appealed.

Wilcox started cold-calling Colorado biotech companies and discovered a close-knit community.

**"EVERYONE SEEMED TO KNOW EACH OTHER AND WHAT THE DIFFERENT COMPANIES WERE DOING. NO ONE CRITICIZED THE OTHER COMPANIES," SHE SAID. "MULTIPLE PEOPLE TOLD ME TO TALK TO LARRY GOLD, THE CEO AND FOUNDER OF SOMALOGIC, WHEN I DESCRIBED MY BACKGROUND."**

When she connected with Gold by phone, he shared his ambitious goal to revolutionize healthcare by measuring protein levels in people and monitoring changes over time that may indicate the onset of disease. At the time, the Human Genome Project was well underway. Despite the buzz about the potential of using genes to predict and treat disease, Gold believed that proteins would be critical.

Proteins were right in Wilcox's research sweet spot. She landed a position at the company and today oversees a team of scientists responsible for developing the molecules, called SOMAmer® reagents, that grab onto specific proteins in human blood or urine, so that they can be evaluated in light of that person's current health status. Today, Wilcox and her team have developed reagents that bind to more than 5,000 different proteins.

SomaLogic plans to develop "SOMAscan®," a single lab test to analyze thousands of proteins

in biological samples and provide a regular, inexpensive and personal profile of an individual's current state of health and wellness.

That vision of highly personalized medicine attracted others to SomaLogic, including Jennifer Bertino, the company's Senior Director of Portfolio and Project Management, who moved from upstate New York in 1996 to work in Colorado's biotech industry. She held positions at large pharmaceutical firms as well as small startups, all the while keeping her eye on SomaLogic. Being embedded in Colorado's bioscience sector made it easier.

"I think everyone in this sector likes to keep the pulse of what other companies are doing, to stay engaged in the latest technologies and innovations and also to keep tabs on talent movement and availability," said Bertino. "People maintain strong networks of colleagues."

When an opportunity opened up at SomaLogic, Bertino took it. She initially managed clinical discovery and diagnostic programs and collaborations, but soon led the build out of a critically needed project management framework. Today, Bertino oversees SomaLogic's 10 "mission critical" cross-functional project teams working to bring SomaLogic's powerful SOMAscan® technology into regular medical and consumer use.

Wilcox, an active member of a CU Boulder's Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) mentor program, says Colorado companies tend to support each other because most are not in strong direct competition.

"We each have our own niche and that helps us work together," said Wilcox.

Both employees said they enjoy the best of both worlds: developing a technology that they believe in and living in a state they love.

"The lifestyle here is so attractive that the folks who come here to work in the pharmaceutical or biotech industry end up staying," said Bertino.

"We're very happy to be in Colorado," said Wilcox. "No regrets."

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