

Applied Biomedical Science

# AUTOIMMUNE TECHNOLOGIES AND CORGENIX MEDICAL CORPORATION ANNOUNCE NIH GRANT ADDING EBOLA AND MARBURG VIRUSES TO COLLABORATIVE HEMORRHAGIC FEVER DIAGNOSTICS WORK

New two-year study will focus on development of novel, recombinant-based diagnostic tests for two important highly-pathogenic viruses

NEW ORLEANS, April 14, 2010 - Autoimmune Technologies, LLC, a New Orleans biomedical company, and Corgenix Medical Corporation of Denver, Colorado, today announced a major extension of the collaborative effort to combat important viral diseases.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has awarded a grant totaling \$600,000 to Corgenix for this twoyear study. Also collaborating with Corgenix and Autoimmune under this grant will be Tulane University and The Scripps Research Institute.

"We expect this study will result in specific, cost-effective, and easy-to-use tests for detecting Ebola and Marburg virus in the field," said Dr. Russell B. Wilson, Autoimmune's Chief Science Officer. "In addition, the resulting diagnostics will be critical for development of vaccines and other treatments for these currently incurable diseases."

This is the fourth major award given to these collaborative partners for virus research in the past five years. Under the previous three grants and contracts, the group has developed and patented new recombinant proteins for the Lassa fever virus and developed several viral detection products that have been deployed in Africa for clinical testing where most viral hemorrhagic fevers are endemic. The Lassa fever virus is an arenavirus and the Ebola fever and Marburg fever viruses are filoviruses.

"We are extremely pleased to have received this NIH grant, expanding our collaborative research to include the filoviruses," said Douglass Simpson, Corgenix President and CEO. "Building on our very successful Lassa virus program, this will enable the development of state of the art diagnostic tests for Ebola and Marburg viruses on multiple delivery platforms."

The Ebola and Marburg viruses are characterized as Biosafety Level 4 (BSL-4) agents. This category includes dangerous and exotic microorganisms that pose a high individual risk of aerosol-transmitted laboratory infections and agents which cause severe to fatal diseases for which vaccines or drugs are not available. Both viruses are indigenous to Africa and cause hemorrhagic fevers which often lead to death. Although outbreaks of the filovirus diseases in humans are rare, the need for rapid detection systems for these viruses is very great because of the potency of the viruses. Ebola fever virus, for example, has been reported to have a mortality rate ranging from 20% to 90%.

Dr. Robert F. Garry, Professor of Microbiology and Immunology at the Tulane University School of Medicine, added, "We have been very pleased with the results of our collaborative effort over the past five years. The diagnostic products for Lassa fever have been shown to be remarkably effective in clinical settings in Africa and will have a meaningful impact on healthcare in that part of the world. These diagnostics will also fill a critical gap in bioterrorism defense. Now, under the new NIH grant, we

will expand this program to address two additional infectious agents which have the potential to kill hundreds of thousands of people and are of concern to the public health and bioterrorism preparedness communities."

### About Autoimmune Technologies, LLC

Autoimmune Technologies is a privately held biomedical company. It has licensed several breakthrough research discoveries from Tulane University School of Medicine and has made exciting discoveries of its own. Autoimmune is working to offer new diagnostic tests and new anti-viral therapeutics to the medical community based on this proprietary research.

# **About Corgenix Medical Corporation**

Corgenix is a leader in the development and manufacturing of specialized diagnostic kits for immunology disorders and vascular diseases. Corgenix sells over 50 diagnostic products through a global distribution network for use in clinical laboratories worldwide. In addition, the Company is active in the development of technology and products for emerging pathogens such as these viral hemorrhagic fevers.

#### **About Tulane University**

Tulane University was founded in New Orleans in 1834. Tulane's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine is the oldest school of public health in the country and the only American school of tropical medicine. Tulane is one of the most highly regarded and selective research universities in the United States, and is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities. Tulane's schools and colleges offer undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees in the liberal arts, science and engineering, architecture, business, law, social work, medicine, and public health and tropical medicine.

## About The Scripps Research Institute

The Scripps Research Institute is one of the world's largest independent, non-profit biomedical research organizations, at the forefront of basic biomedical science that seeks to comprehend the most fundamental processes of life. Scripps Research is internationally recognized for its discoveries in immunology, molecular and cellular biology, chemistry, neurosciences, autoimmune, cardiovascular, and infectious diseases, and synthetic vaccine development. Established in its current configuration in 1961, it employs approximately 3,000 scientists, postdoctoral fellows, scientific and other technicians, doctoral degree graduate students, and administrative and technical support personnel. Scripps Research is headquartered in La Jolla, California with a second campus located in Jupiter, Florida. Research at Scripps Florida focuses on basic biomedical science, drug discovery, and technology development.

For further information, please visit www.autoimmune.com.

Contact: Autoimmune Technologies, LLC, 1010 Common Street, Suite 1705, New Orleans, Louisiana 70112 USA, 504-529-9944. Russell B. Wilson, Ph.D., Chief Science Officer, RBW@autoimmune.com, or Michael D. Charbonnet, CEO, MDC@autoimmune.com.

The information contained in this press release does not necessarily reflect the position or the policy of the United States Government and no official endorsement therefrom should be inferred.

###