NEWS RELEASE

LENTIGEN AWARDED PHASE I SBIR GRANT FOR HEPATITIS C VACCINE

Gaithersburg, MD, December 9, 2009 – Lentigen Corporation, a biotechnology company specializing in the development and manufacture of lentiviral gene delivery technologies, announced today that it has received a National Institutes of Health (NIH) small business innovation research (SBIR) grant for a program on "A Novel Method of Generating Hepatitis C Virus-Like Particles using Lentivirus". In this program, Lentigen will collaborate with Epixis SA (Paris, France).

The Hepatitis C virus is the most common blood-borne virus and HCV infection represents a major public health concern; approximately 3% of the world's population (200 million people) is chronically infected. Causing fibrosis and cirrhosis of the liver and eventually hepatocellular carcinoma, it is the leading cause of liver transplantation in the U.S. No vaccine is currently available.

Epixis SA has previously designed rVLPs pseudotyped with one or both of the HCV envelope proteins E1 and E2. Mice primed with a recombinant viral vector expressing E1 and E2 can mount unprecedented neutralizing humoral immune responses upon boosting with such pseudotyped rVLPs. Before reaching the clinic, their large scale production calls for a new efficient and safe system.

Therefore, the aim of this grant is the construction of a lentiviral vector expressing HCV rVLPs, and validation of its use for high titer production of HCV-rVLPs from human cells. This uses a similar approach to that being used in the development of a pandemic influenza VLP vaccine at Lentigen, supported by PATH.

Boro Dropulic, Lentigen's President and Chief Scientific Officer, commented, "The collaboration represents the integration of two important technologies to generate highly immunogenic HepC VLPs. The project is consistent with our strategy of applying Lentigen's technology in diseases of high unmet therapeutic need."

About Lentigen Corporation
Lentigen Corporation is a privately owned biotechnology company focused on the development of lentiviral vector technology for a wide range of therapeutic, vaccine, and bioproduction applications. Lentiviral vectors are the most efficient vehicles for the delivery of genes or gene silencing sequences stably into cells. Lentigen is a highly collaborative company, co-developing Lentiviral vector-based products across a broad spectrum of bench to clinical applications. Collaborations include The National Institutes of Health, PATH, The University of Pennsylvania, The University of Pittsburgh and The U.S. Army. For further information, visit www.lentigen.com.

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