



Lentigen™

NEWS RELEASE

## LENTIGEN AWARDED PHASE II SBIR GRANT FOR CLINICAL DEVELOPMENT OF TCR IMMUNOTHERAPY TARGETED TO MELANOMA

**Gaithersburg, MD, August 9, 2010** – 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 grant (SBIR) for a program on “Clinical Vector for TCR Immunotherapy Targeted to Melanoma”. In this program, Lentigen will collaborate with Dr. Michael Nishimura, Professor of Surgery, at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC).

Melanoma is currently the sixth most common cancer in American men and the seventh in American women. The incidence is increasing at a rate of 3-5% per year. Current therapies are unsatisfactory as metastatic melanoma has a five-year survival rate of less than 10%, even after surgery

The ultimate goal of this program is the development of a novel immunotherapy for melanoma invented by Dr. Nishimura. It is based on activation and targeting of a patient’s immune cells in the laboratory, followed by re- infusion to attack the patient’s melanoma tumor cells. Specifically, the clinical collaboration will evaluate whether using lentiviral-engineered T cells that express a high affinity T cell receptor (TCR) capable of recognizing a melanoma/melanocyte tumor antigen, will result in improved efficacy.

“While adoptive T cell transfer in melanoma patients can lead to objective clinical responses in approximately 50% of treated patients, it is often difficult to obtain the tumor-reactive T cells from all patients. Our approach to genetically modify T cells to express anti-melanoma antigen T cell receptors provides a potentially exciting solution to this problem” stated Dr. Boro Dropulic, Lentigen’s President and Chief Scientific Officer. “The phase II SBIR grant from the NIH will enable us to test this therapeutic approach in a Phase I clinical trial at MUSC.”

### **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, IAVI, Harvard Medical School, Expression Therapeutics, Epix SA, The University of Pennsylvania, The Johns Hopkins University, Case Western Reserve University, The Medical College of South Carolina, The University of Pittsburgh, the University of Minnesota, and The U.S. Army. For further information, visit [www.lentigen.com](http://www.lentigen.com).

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