

Press Release

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Four Maryland Life Sciences Companies Look For New Business Opportunities At European Cancer Clustering Event in France

Companies awarded \$2,500 grants from State to attend Europe's premier oncology event

Baltimore, MD (September 14, 2011) – Four Maryland life sciences companies – A & G Pharmaceutical, Valens Therapeutics, Amarex Clinical Research and rel-MD Inc. – have each been awarded a \$2,500 grant from the Maryland Biotechnology Center (MBC) to support their attendance at the European Cancer Cluster Partnering (ECCP) event, which begins today and runs through Friday in Toulouse, France. Dr. Judith Britz, MBC's Executive Director and Elise Lyons, the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development's European representative, are also attending the event, which is the premier oncology partnering meeting in Europe for biotech, pharma, investors, clinicians and academia to build partnerships to accelerate innovation in cancer treatment. Expected to attract more than 500 attendees, the event offers opportunities for meetings for U.S. companies to market their products and services in Europe as well as workshops on cancer therapeutics, diagnostics and drug delivery and Europe and the U.S. regulatory climate.

“This is a great opportunity for the Maryland Biotechnology Center and the companies that are joining us to promote Maryland as the gateway for global life sciences companies looking to market diagnostics, drugs and medical devices in the U.S.,” said Dr. Britz. “Through events like these and more we have planned in the future, we can connect life sciences companies in France and Maryland to identify opportunities for partnership, share best practices and help facilitate commercialization.”

“The travel grant we received from MBC has enabled us to attend this important event. Events like this have become one of the most focused ways for small companies like ours to meet with potential development partners, funders and CROs all in one place,” said Jai Zhang, VP of R&D for rel-MD. “We have several key meetings set up over the next couple of days within each category. Without the support of Maryland we would not be here.”

A&G Pharmaceutical in Columbia, led by co-founder and CEO Ginette Serrero, develops products that improve screening, detection and treatment of cancer and other diseases; Baltimore-based Valens Therapeutics, led by president and CEO Irene Gonzales, focuses on the next generation of therapeutics to treat diseases caused by abnormal angiogenesis and infectious pathogens; Amarex Clinical Research LLC in Germantown is a full service Contract Research Organization (CRO) that provides clinical regulatory strategy and product development services for drug, medical device and diagnostic kit approvals in the U.S. and other countries; and Baltimore-based rel-MD, Inc. is a start-up company that develops small molecule drugs that help treat cancer, inflammation, infectious and some neurological diseases.

Maryland's participation in the Cancer Clustering event is the latest in a series of activities following the 2010 BIO International Convention in Chicago, at which Maryland and the Cancer-BioSanté Cluster signed a Letter of Intent to build scientific and industry partnerships centered on cancer

research, diagnostics and therapeutic strategies. The agreement links private industry, academic research institutions, university hospitals and cancer centers in the two regions to leverage their complementary programs and help facilitate commercialization.

Earlier this year, the MBC convened a regulatory workshop and B2B meeting for more than a dozen French cancer research companies looking to market cancer diagnostic and therapy products in the U.S. and connect with Maryland companies as potential partners. The day-long event, attended by companies in three bio competitiveness clusters in France – Cancer BioSante, Lyonbiopole and Medicin; UBIFRANCE, the French agency for international business development; and 15 Maryland biotechnology companies, featured experts in commercializing health products in the U.S. market. The French companies also engaged in B2B meetings with Maryland companies, networked with representatives of Johns Hopkins' and University of Maryland's Office of Technology Transfer and toured the National Institutes of Health and the National Cancer Institute.

Maryland is home to more than 500 bioscience companies and 50 research-intense federal institutes and outstanding academic centers and is well positioned in the global bioscience industry. The State has been recognized by the Milken Institute as one of the top tier states highly specialized in overall bioscience development. Since the early 1990s, Maryland has focused on bioscience development and was one of the first states to develop a strategic plan for the industry.

ABOUT THE MARYLAND BIOTECHNOLOGY CENTER:

The Maryland Biotechnology Center is an organization within the State's Department of Business and Economic Development that coordinates government, nonprofit and private sector initiatives to help entrepreneurs, academic and government scientists accelerate the conversion of biotechnology innovation into products that create jobs, develop businesses and benefit the state's economy. For more information, visit www.marylandbiocenter.org.

ABOUT CANCER-BIOSANTÉ CLUSTER

Cancer-BioSanté Cluster, located in Toulouse, France, is the French competitiveness cluster in France fully dedicated to the fight against Cancer, throughout a broad continuum approach involving prevention, diagnostics, therapeutics and patient monitoring. CBSC supports companies from the Midi Pyrénées and Limousin regions, which develop innovative products in the fields of food & Health, Diagnostics, Biomarkers, Nanotechnologies, Medical Devices, Immunotherapy, Therapeutics, Bioproduction, Biotechnologies and Telemedicine. The cluster includes major companies such as sanofi-aventis, Pierre Fabre, GlaxoSmithKline, Siemens, GE Healthcare, Syngenta, Lallemand as well as more than 200 SMEs. These companies benefit from the second largest region in France in terms of academic research activity, with 500 laboratories and 9,000 researchers as well as clinicians from University hospitals and cancer centers.