



Asuragen Reports Notice of Allowance from USPTO Related to the Diagnostic Application of an Important Cancer-Related miRNA

AUSTIN, TX – November 10, 2010. Asuragen, Inc., a leader in the development of molecular diagnostics, announced today that it had received a Notice of Allowance from the United States Patent and Trademark Office (“USPTO”) for claims related to the use of mir-205 as a diagnostic in lung cancer. Human mir-205 has been identified as being highly expressed in lung cancer when compared with its expression in normal lung tissue, and, as a result, is an excellent marker for use as a diagnostic for lung cancer. Asuragen has a broad IP portfolio with over 69 issued and pending patents related to miRNA including some of the earliest functional diagnostic applications for a number of key miRNAs associated with oncology diseases.

“miRNAs are a category of biomarkers whose importance is increasingly being recognized as is evidenced by the explosion in the number of publications regarding miRNAs. We started working on miRNAs in 2002 prior to our selling Ambion and are pleased that the first, of what is a large portfolio of pending patents, are starting to issue,” said Matt Winkler, CEO and CSO of Asuragen. “This allowance from the USPTO highlights the early work we did in the newly emerging field of microRNAs and it supports our continuing development work towards novel miRNA-based molecular diagnostics for cancer.” This follows closely on the heels of a Notice of Allowance received by Yale University for its let7 patent portfolio for which Asuragen is the exclusive licensee in the fields of diagnostics.

About microRNA

miRNAs are approximately 21 nucleotides long and affect gene expression by interacting with messenger RNAs. Unlike siRNAs, miRNAs are encoded in the human genome and are used as natural regulators of global gene expression. More than 900 miRNAs are encoded in the human genome and comprise approximately 2% of all mammalian genes. Since each miRNA appears to regulate the expression of tens to hundreds of different genes, miRNAs can function as “master-switches,” regulating and coordinating multiple cellular pathways and processes. By coordinating the expression of multiple genes, miRNAs are responsible for guiding proper embryonic development, immunity, and inflammation, as well as cellular growth and proliferation. Misregulation of miRNAs appears to play a fundamental role in many cancers and unique microRNA profiles that have been identified are useful for diagnosis of certain cancer types.

About Asuragen

Asuragen is a fully integrated diagnostic development company and pharmaceutical services provider. The Company’s diagnostic product portfolio consists of the first-ever validated microRNA diagnostic assay for pancreatic cancer, quantitative RNA tests for leukemia gene translocations, innovative genetic testing solutions for the fragile X mental retardation (FMR1) gene, Signature® Oncology products for the qualitative detection of gene translocations and mutations in a variety of hematological and solid tumors, RNA stabilization technologies, and industry-leading controls and standards engineered using its patented Armored RNA® technology. Asuragen is empowered with a high level of scientific expertise and assay development capabilities, CLIA and GLP testing services, and an established cGMP manufacturing facility, which allow it to span the spectrum of discovery, testing, production and commercialization. For more information, visit www.asuragen.com.

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