



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEBIOPHARM S.A. AND TULANE CANCER CENTER SELECT HEMENWAY AS THE 2003 MAUVERNAY RESEARCH EXCELLENCE SCHOLAR

Lausanne, Switzerland, October 23, 2003 -- Debiopharm S.A. (Debiopharm) today announced that Charles Hemenway, associate professor of pediatric hematology/oncology and contributing member of the Tulane Cancer Center, was honoured with the Mauvernay Research Excellence Award for his outstanding oncology research work presented at the inaugural Mauvernay Research Excellence Seminar. The seminar took place on October 17 at the Tulane Cancer Center in New Orleans and was the first edition of a series to be held at Tulane University over the next three years. The seminar was organised jointly by Tulane University and Debiopharm with the objective of facilitating an exchange forum between oncology scientists, clinicians and experts, together with Debiopharm. The company also sponsors the Mauvernay Research Excellence Fund, for the discovery of new therapeutic agents which can be used in cancer treatment.

Hemenway presented his work on the *Rational Development of an Inhibitor of t(4;11) Leukemia*. His research focuses on two types of leukemia that are particularly resistant to conventional therapies. They share mutations in a gene which in turn produces a protein, believed to induce cancer in bone marrow cells.

Eleven other Tulane faculty researchers also were recognized for their cutting-edge work. These include Matthew E. Burow, Tyler J. Curiel, Erik K. Flemington, Steven M. Hill, Frank E. Jones, Laura S. Levy, Ming Li, Arthur J. Lustig, Gilbert F. Morris, Jess G. Thoene, and Weiping Zou. All the awards were presented to the honorees by Professor Scott Cowen, President of Tulane University and Mr Thierry Mauvernay, Executive Vice President of Debiopharm.

In addition to Hemenway and the Tulane faculty poster presenters, invited speakers at the seminar included Carl H. June of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine; Michael B. Kastan of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital; Donald P. McDonnell of Duke University Medical Center; and Donald Small of Johns Hopkins University.

"I am very impressed by the quality of research taking place at the Tulane Cancer Center," said Thierry Mauvernay, Executive Vice President of Debiopharm. "And I am proud that we were able to contribute to research in this field. Our expertise in oncology drug development and the cutting-edge work taking place at the Tulane Cancer Center will help bring more effective anti-cancer drugs to the market in the near future. We have enjoyed a longstanding relationship with Tulane University and expect it to continue."

“I am extremely proud of the quality research being conducted by Tulane scientists who are on the front lines in the battle against cancer,” says Roy S. Weiner, director of the Tulane Cancer Center, who chaired and organized the event. “Each of the honorees is a credit not only to the university but to science.”

About Debiopharm S.A.

Debiopharm, Debio R.P. and Debioclinic are an established and proven group of three synergistic and complementary companies, that have a successful track record in developing, registering and ensuring that new chemical entities are brought to market both in Europe and in the United States. Products successfully registered and launched include oxaliplatin for advanced colorectal cancer and triptorelin pamoate for prostate cancer, both market leaders in their therapeutic areas. Specialized in oncology, hormonal and niche products for serious medical conditions, Debiopharm is a partner of research institutions, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies who seek to develop and register their drugs. Debio R.P., Debiopharm's sister company, is a leading world player in the research, development and manufacturing of polymer-based controlled release injectable formulations for peptides and proteins, including proprietary technologies suitable for other therapeutic modalities such as soluble polymer cytotoxic-drug conjugates for parenteral administration. Debio R.P. also carries out scale-up under current good manufacturing practice (cGMP) and has an FDA-inspected plant. Debioclinic, the third Debio company, is a contract research organisation fully dedicated to clinical development.

About the Tulane Cancer Center

The Tulane Cancer Center was established in 1993 with the belief that a coordinated attack on cancer could result in the discovery of new and more effective methods of diagnosis and treatment. The Tulane Cancer Center staff provides comprehensive cancer care by experts in surgery, pediatrics, hematology/oncology, pathology, radiology, immunology, genetics, clinical psychology, nursing, and physical and occupational therapy. Over the past decade research has provided a tremendous understanding of the molecular events leading to cancer. These molecular changes represent the ideal targets for development of new diagnostic and therapeutic strategies. Most of the molecular changes that cause cancer can be found in a broad range of different tumor sites and therefore research in these areas cannot be well categorized by individual tumor site. Thus, programs at the Tulane Cancer Center are aimed to facilitate research and clinical studies that take advantage of these new advances. The programs include: molecular genetics and viral oncogenesis, cell signaling, drug discovery, immunology, clinical research and research training.

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