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Jain Foundation Signs Agreement With Cellular Dynamics to Create iPSC Lines From Patients With Muscular Dystrophies

Patient-Derived iPSC Lines Will be Used as Disease Models for Basic Research and Drug Discovery

SEATTLE and MADISON, Wis., Dec. 4, 2013 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- The Jain Foundation, a non-profit organization whose mission is to cure muscular dystrophies caused by dysferlin protein deficiency, today announced the signing of a Master Service Agreement with Cellular Dynamics International (CDI) (Nasdaq:ICEL). CDI will create five induced pluripotent stem cell (iPSC) lines from patients with these dystrophies. As there are currently no effective treatments for these genetic disorders, establishing model iPSC lines is an important step toward developing new drugs and therapies for these patients. Terms of the agreement were not disclosed.

Dysferlin is a protein thought to be involved in skeletal muscle repair. Genetic defects in the gene that codes for the protein result in two types of muscular dystrophy: Limb-girdle muscular dystrophy type 2B (LGMD2B) and Miyoshi muscular dystrophy 1 (MMD1). Symptoms include weakness and progressive muscle wasting, and onset typically occurs in young adults.

CDI will employ their MyCell® Products line to create LGMD2B/Miyoshi patient-derived iPSC lines. iPSC technology is based on reprogramming adult cells to a pluripotent stem cell state, whereby the resulting iPSCs, and the somatic cells derived from them, carry the genotypic backgrounds of the original donors and model the disease. A primary goal of the Jain Foundation is to use these disease models for drug discovery.

"iPSC technology promises to provide a path to better understand these devastating genetic diseases so that researchers can develop therapies," said Plavi Mittal, President and CEO of the Jain Foundation. "CDI's ability to make iPSCs at high quality and purity from any individual, including LGMD2B patients, will provide scientists new tools to understand and address these debilitating forms of muscular dystrophy. We look forward to working with CDI to develop the iPSC lines."

Bob Palay, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of CDI, said, "This is the second agreement we have entered into with an organization focused on developing new therapies for muscular dystrophy, demonstrating that research partners are confident in leveraging CDI's technical expertise to accelerate their discoveries. CDI continues to be at the forefront of innovation and is developing additional cell types, including skeletal myoblasts that may be relevant to work supported by the Jain Foundation. We are excited that the Jain Foundation shares our vision that iPSC technology is a promising path forward to advance healthcare discoveries."

About Cellular Dynamics International, Inc.

Cellular Dynamics International, Inc. (CDI) is a leading developer of next-generation stem cell technologies for drug development, cell therapy, tissue engineering and organ regeneration. CDI harnesses its unique manufacturing technology to produce differentiated tissue cells from any individual's stem cell line in industrial quality, quantity and purity. CDI is accelerating the adoption of pluripotent stem cell technology, adapting its methods to fit into standard clinical practice by the creation of individual stem cell lines from a standard blood draw. CDI was founded in 2004 by Dr. James Thomson, a pioneer in human pluripotent stem cell research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. CDI's facilities are located in Madison, Wisconsin. See www.cellulardynamics.com.

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About the Jain Foundation

The Jain Foundation is a non-profit foundation whose mission is to cure muscular dystrophies caused by dysferlin protein deficiency, which includes the clinical presentations Limb-girdle muscular dystrophy type 2B (LGMD2B) and Miyoshi muscular dystrophy 1 (MMD1). The foundation is privately funded and does not solicit funding from patients or other sources. The Foundation's focused strategy includes funding and actively monitoring the progress of scientific research projects in key pathways towards a cure, providing financial and logistical support to promising drug candidates to accelerate them to clinical trials, funding clinical trials and studies, encouraging collaboration among scientists, and educating LGMD2B/Miyoshi patients about their disease and helping them with their diagnosis (e.g., funding dysferlin protein and gene mutational analysis). See www.jain-foundation.org

Forward looking statements

This press release includes forward-looking statements about our anticipated results that involve risks and uncertainties. Some of the information contained in this press release, including, but not limited to, statements as to Cellular Dynamics International's product development efforts, the impact of its iPSC technology, and its plans, objectives, expectations and strategy for its business, contains forward-looking statements that are subject to risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results or events to differ materially from those expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. Any statements that are not statements of historical fact are forward-looking statements. When used, the words "believe," "plan," "intend," "anticipate," "target," "estimate," "expect" and the like, and/or future tense or conditional constructions ("will," "may," "could," "should," etc.), or similar expressions, identify certain of these forward-looking statements. Important factors which could cause actual results to differ materially from those in the forward-looking statements are detailed in filings made by Cellular Dynamics International with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Cellular Dynamics International undertakes no obligation to update or revise any such forward-looking statements to reflect subsequent events or circumstances.

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