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Virginia Catalyst Awards \$400,000 to Help Reduce Neonatal and Infant Death

VCU, Eastern Virginia Medical School and ReAlta Life Sciences team to provide a pharmacological intervention for Hypoxic-Ischemic Encephalopathy

RICHMOND, VA – February 20, 2018 – The Virginia Biosciences Health Research Corporation, known as Virginia Catalyst, today announced that it has awarded a \$400,000 grant to a collaborative bioscience commercialization project including a team from Virginia Commonwealth University, Eastern Virginia Medical School and ReAlta Life Sciences, LLC. This grant, which includes matching funding of \$400,000 provided by ReAlta, is intended to establish the efficacy of Peptide Inhibitor of Complement C1 (PIC1) in decreasing brain injury in an animal model of neonatal Hypoxic-Ischemic Encephalopathy (HIE), as well as establish the long-term improvement in neurological outcomes after PIC1 treatment in an animal model of neonatal HIE.

Asphyxia contributes to an estimated 23 percent of the four million neonatal deaths each year around the globe, and eight percent of all deaths of children under the age of five. HIE is a contributing factor to these deaths, but there is currently no pharmacological intervention to treat HIE.

“Virginia’s research universities have a long history of bringing emerging bioscience solutions to the marketplace, helping to drive innovation, collaboration and economic growth,” said Mike Grisham, CEO, Virginia Catalyst. “Virginia Catalyst continues to work with these research institutions and supporting commercial companies to fund projects that address major unmet needs for improving human health by fostering more collaborative environments. Past achievements have attracted significant outside capital and industry participation to help commercialize this innovation, creating high-paying jobs for Virginia while improving lives around the world.”

This grant is part of round seven of funding by Virginia Catalyst. This award follows on the announcement in December that a team from Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Tech, Inova Health System and Indivior Inc. had been awarded \$500,000 for a project focused on changing the standard of care for those who are recovering from opioid overdoses.

Virginia Catalyst is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation funded by the Virginia General Assembly’s general fund and seven of Virginia’s research universities. The organization has now awarded 27 grants totaling over \$10.8 million, combined with \$20 million in matching funds, which financed the

achievement of meaningful milestones. This has then resulted in follow-on funding of an additional \$80 million and the creation of high-paying jobs throughout the Commonwealth.

Supporting Quotes

“HIE is a leading cause of infant death and disability worldwide. Therapeutic hypothermia, the only currently available treatment option, is limited by access to major hospitals that provide tertiary care, and only modestly improves outcomes. PIC1 is a unique platform technology that has improved neurological outcomes in preclinical models of HIE. The current project will amalgamate the pharmacologic, neuroscience and neuroimaging expertise of the collaborating partners to optimize outcomes in this devastating disease affecting newborns. The Virginia Catalyst grant will play a critical role in preparing PIC1 technology for application to the FDA as a treatment for HIE.” – Dr. Tushar A. Shah, Assistant Professor - Department of Pediatrics, Eastern Virginia Medical School

“The use of MR imaging technology will provide a direct, non-invasive measurement that allows longitudinal studies to better evaluate the effect of peptide treatment.” – Dr. Jamal Zweit, Professor of Radiology, School of Medicine, Virginia Commonwealth University

“As a Norfolk-based bio-pharma company, we expect that ReAlta Life Sciences’ novel technology platform will prove effective in treating many life-threatening conditions. Our first call is to help struggling HIE newborns to survive. We thank Virginia Catalyst for their support in this critical quest. The Virginia Catalyst award, combined with the support of ReAlta’s founders (Children’s Hospital of the Kings Daughters, Eastern Virginia Medical School and Eriko Life Science Ventures), will help hasten the day that doctors and parents have an effective, safe treatment for HIE.” – T. Kerry McCarter, Managing Director, ReAlta Life Sciences

About the Virginia Catalyst

Virginia Biosciences Health Research Corporation (VBHRC), known as Virginia Catalyst, has a vision of advancing life sciences throughout Virginia as a means of addressing large unmet medical needs to improve human health and to create high-paying jobs throughout the Commonwealth. Funded by the Virginia General Assembly’s General fund, the University of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Tech, Eastern Virginia Medical School, George Mason University, Old Dominion University, and William and Mary, Virginia Catalyst has funding opportunities to support collaborative projects in the Commonwealth and is home to the Virginia Neuroscience Initiative. For more information, visit www.virginiacatalyst.org.

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