KOUTIF THERAPEUTICS

PRESS RELEASE

Formed by BioMotiv and University of Pittsburgh

CLEVELAND AND PITTSBURGH — SEPTEMBER 21, 2017 — BioMotiv, a drug development accelerator associated with The Harrington Project for Discovery & Development, and the University of Pittsburgh, are announcing the formation of a new biotechnology startup, Koutif Therapeutics, which will develop a small molecule, oral inhibitor of an E3 ligase, Fbxo3.

Koutif Therapeutics is based on intellectual property licensed from the University of Pittsburgh and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The technology was developed by Rama K. Mallampalli, MD, Chief of the Pulmonary, Allergy and Critical Care Medicine Division, Department of Medicine, at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), and Beibei Chen, PhD, Director, Small Molecule Therapeutic Center.

The University of Pittsburgh researchers identified BC-1261, a compound capable of inhibiting the novel target Fbxo3. By inhibiting Fbxo3, these compounds block both the Cav2.2 and the Glu1R pathways through the activation of another related protein, Fbxl2. By inhibiting two pathways that stimulate the known inflammatory cytokine TNF-α, the compounds have the potential to treat inflammatory conditions such as neuropathic pain, COPD, lung transplant rejection, and irritable bowel disease.

“Drs. Mallampalli and Chen’s discovery presents a novel platform for inhibiting inflammation pathways,” said Baiju R. Shah, Chief Executive Officer of BioMotiv. “We look forward to accelerating their discoveries into breakthrough medicines.”

The research was funded by multiple NIH grants including the prestigious NIH CADET grant awarded to Dr. Mallampalli in 2014. In addition, Dr. Mallampalli received support from Harrington Discovery Institute, which is supported in part by a grant from the Ohio Third Frontier, as a 2016 Harrington Scholar-Innovator.

“We look forward to developing our compounds through our partnership with BioMotiv through Koutif Therapeutics. We believe that this partnership will help us to advance our discoveries and address a variety of unmet medical needs,” said Dr. Mallampalli.

"This company will advance innovative science from our Pulmonary Division's laboratories that aim to inhibit E3 ligases to specifically down-regulate inflammation, a central contributor to many human diseases". Says Mark T. Gladwin, MD, the Chair of the Department of Medicine. "This new company highlights a growing commitment at the University of Pittsburgh and UPMC to bring major NIH-funded scientific discoveries to the clinic and to enhance the health of our patients."

About BioMotiv

BioMotiv is the mission-driven accelerator associated with The Harrington Project for Discovery & Development, a $300 million national initiative for advancing medicine centered at University Hospitals in Cleveland, Ohio. The focus is to accelerate breakthrough discoveries from research institutions into therapeutics for patients through an innovative model that efficiently aligns capital and collaborations. The company leverages an experienced team and advisory board to select, fund, and actively manage and advance a portfolio of drug development programs.

For more information, go to www.biomotiv.com.

About University of Pittsburgh

The University of Pittsburgh is one of the nation's leading research universities with expertise across a broad range of academic disciplines. The University seeks to achieve positive societal impact through the commercial licensing of innovations developed from sponsored research. To learn more about Pitt innovations available for licensing visit www.innovation.pitt.edu, or contact the Innovation Institute at innovate@pitt.edu.

Contact:
Stuart Rowe
216-455-3213
srowe@biomotiv.com

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