

Sunesis Grants Carmot Therapeutics License to Its Drug Discovery Technology

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SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, CA, Feb 08, 2010 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX News Network) -- Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (NASDAQ: SNSS) today announced that it has granted Carmot Therapeutics, Inc., a privately-held biotechnology company, an exclusive license to its proprietary Fragment-Based Lead Discovery (FBLD) technology. Carmot will use the FBLD technology, called "Chemotype Evolution," for identifying promising drug candidates in a broad range of therapeutic areas, including inflammatory, metabolic, and neurodegenerative diseases. Sunesis retains full rights to the technology for use in its future internal discovery efforts. Terms of the agreement were not disclosed.

"This agreement reflects our strategy to leverage the value of our non-core assets while focusing our resources on advancing voreloxin into a pivotal Phase 3 trial in acute myeloid leukemia later this year," stated Eric Bjerkholt, Senior Vice President, Corporate Development & Finance of Sunesis. "The FBLD discovery technology has the potential to generate compounds which may not be identified through traditional means of drug discovery. We are pleased that we can capitalize on Carmot's use of the technology to advance its research activities while at the same time retain full rights to use the platform technology for our own internal research applications."

"We believe that Chemotype Evolution has the potential to transform drug discovery and accelerate our efforts to identify novel drug candidates for challenging disease targets," stated Stig Hansen, Ph.D. and Daniel Erlanson, Ph.D., co-founders of Carmot. Carmot has recently received grants from the National Science Foundation and the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research.

About Sunesis Pharmaceuticals

Sunesis is a biopharmaceutical company focused on the development and commercialization of new oncology therapeutics for the treatment of solid and hematologic cancers. Sunesis has built a highly experienced cancer drug development organization committed to advancing its lead product candidate, voreloxin, in multiple indications to improve the lives of people with cancer. For additional information on Sunesis, please visit <http://www.sunesis.com>.

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This press release contains forward-looking statements, including without limitation statements related to the commencement and timing of a pivotal Phase 3 trial of voreloxin in acute myeloid leukemia. Words such as "advancing," "potential" and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are based upon Sunesis' current expectations. Forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties. Sunesis' actual results and the timing of events could differ materially from those anticipated in such forward-looking statements as a result of these risks and uncertainties, which include without limitation, the risk that Sunesis' drug development activities for voreloxin could be halted or significantly delayed for various reasons, the risk that Sunesis' clinical trials for voreloxin may not demonstrate safety or efficacy or lead to regulatory approval, the risk that preliminary data and trends may not be predictive of future data or results, the risk that Sunesis' nonclinical studies and clinical trials may not satisfy the requirements of the FDA or other regulatory agencies, risks related to the conduct of Sunesis' clinical trials, risks related to the manufacturing of voreloxin, and the risk that Sunesis' proprietary rights may not adequately protect voreloxin. These and other risk factors are discussed under "Risk Factors" and elsewhere in Sunesis' Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2009 and other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Sunesis expressly disclaims any obligation or undertaking to release publicly any updates or revisions to any forward-looking statements contained herein to reflect any change in the company's expectations with regard thereto or any change in events, conditions or circumstances on which any such statements are based.

Investor and Media Inquiries:

Andrea Rabney
Argot Partners
212-600-1902

Eric Bjerkholt
Sunesis Pharmaceuticals Inc.

650-266-3717

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