Agios Awarded Two Federal Grants to Advance Cancer Metabolism Focused Therapeutics

November 4, 2010 3:40 PM ET

Cambridge, MA - November 4, 2010 - Agios Pharmaceuticals, the leading biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering and developing novel drugs in the rapidly emerging field of cancer metabolism, today announced it has received two grants totaling more than $488,000 from the Qualifying Therapeutic Discovery Project (QTDP) Program. The grants will support Agios' efforts to develop novel cancer metabolism therapies including lead programs targeting the key metabolic enzymes PKM2 and IDH.

"We are pleased to be the recipient of these awards, which recognize Agios" cutting-edge drug discovery research in cancer," said David Schenkein, M.D., chief executive officer of Agios. "These awards highlight the value of our unique biological insights into the metabolic pathways of cancer cells and will help us advance our portfolio of first-in-class cancer metabolism drug candidates and expand our great team."

These grants are being distributed as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 to U.S. companies with fewer than 250 employees whose research shows the greatest potential to, among other things, significantly advance the goal of curing cancer within 30 years, address areas of unmet medical need, and demonstrate the greatest potential to create and sustain high-quality, high-paying U.S. jobs and to advance U.S. competitiveness in life, biological and medical sciences.

About Cancer Metabolism

Cancer metabolism is a new and exciting field of biology that provides a novel approach to treating cancer. Cancer cell metabolism is marked by profound changes in nutrient requirements and usage to ensure cell proliferation and survival. Research in the field has demonstrated that cancer cells become addicted to certain fuel sources and metabolic pathways. In cancer, this metabolic reprogramming is coordinated with proliferative signaling and regulated by the same oncogenes and tumor suppressor genes to ensure efficient proliferation. Glycolysis (sugar metabolism), fatty acid metabolism and autophagy (self metabolism) are three pathways shown to play a critical role in cancer metabolism. Identifying and disrupting certain enzymes in these, and perhaps other, metabolic pathways provides a powerful intervention point for discovery and development of cancer therapeutics.

About Agios Pharmaceuticals

Agios Pharmaceuticals is the first biopharmaceutical company dedicated to the discovery and development of novel therapeutics in the emerging field of cancer metabolism. To support and drive these efforts, Agios is building a robust platform integrating cancer biology, metabolomics, biochemistry and informatics to enable target and biomarker identification. Agios' capabilities to interrogate differential cellular metabolism of diseased cells relative to normal cells may also be applicable to other therapeutics areas including autoimmune, inflammatory and neurological diseases. To date, Agios has put in place a world-class scientific team of more than 60 people, built a fully integrated cell metabolism platform within the largest research laboratory dedicated to cancer metabolism, and created an emerging product development pipeline of novel cancer therapeutics. The company's founders represent the core thought leaders in the field of cancer metabolism, responsible for key advances, insights and discoveries in the field. Agios Pharmaceuticals is located in Cambridge, Massachusetts. For more information, please visit the company's website at www.agios.com.

Media Contacts:
Pure Communications
Dan Budwick, 973-271-6085
mailto:dan@purecommunicationsinc.com