



Press Release:

ZenBio, Inc. Awarded \$1.38 Million Phase II SBIR Grant for Skeletal Muscle Program

Date: September 30, 2008

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC - ZenBio, Inc. announced that it has been awarded a Phase II SBIR grant to commercialize their primary human skeletal myocyte and adipocyte co-culture system. The \$1.38 million award from the National Institutes of Health will fund the continued optimization and commercial development of this unique tool for type 2 diabetes and obesity research.

Skeletal muscle and adipose tissue are the body's major doorways for insulin-stimulated glucose disposal and are the sites of insulin resistance in obese individuals. "We still do not know much about the interplay between these two tissues as insulin resistance progresses to diabetes and its related complications", said Renee Lea-Currie, Ph.D., ZenBio's Director of Cell Biology and the Principal Investigator of the program. "We have seen profound effects on skeletal muscle cell metabolism when muscle cells are cultured along with adipocytes from obese donors. This grant will allow us to continue investigating these interactions and the complex mechanisms involved in the development of type 2 diabetes."

"We are excited to move forward into the commercial development phase for this program", said Ben Buehrer, Ph.D., Vice President of ZenBio. "Investigating the interactions between different cell types involved in obesity related diseases is extremely difficult. We hope to reduce some of the difficulty by providing a customizable co-culture system for researchers to use. This grant will allow us to optimize and validate the cell system in much greater detail. That frees up time and money for researchers to focus on using the system to discover novel treatments and therapeutics for type 2 diabetes and metabolic disease. "

ZenBio, Inc., a privately held biotechnology company, is a leading provider of research tools for the study of human metabolic disease. The company, founded in 1995 performs contract research for major pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies around the world. The company pioneered tissue engineering with adult adipose-derived stem cells and is currently investigating the role obesity plays in the development and onset of metabolic disease. Its mission is to provide the highest quality cells, reagents and contract services to the biomedical research community; to develop and commercialize research tools; and to leverage its expertise in this field as a contract research organization. For more information visit the company website or call (919)-547-0692; 1-866-ADIPOSE or e-mail Peter Pieraccini peter@zenbio.com

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