



Zymergen Advances Molecules for Prominent Malaria and COVID-19 Drug Targets for Further Testing

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EMERYVILLE, Calif., March 06, 2022 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Biotechnology company Zymergen (ZY) is pleased to announce early results from its work on infectious disease, discovering hundreds of potential novel hits against malaria, tuberculosis, and COVID-19 targets. Hits for PfAPP, a critical target in the treatment of malaria, are now being advanced for validation, with hits for an emerging COVID-19 target, PLpro, expected to follow.

This ambitious multi-target infectious disease program is supported through a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, enabling Zymergen to identify novel hits for all three target pathogens. The early progress has been enabled by Zymergen's differentiated cheminformatics capabilities and ability to search their proprietary virtual compound database of Natural Products.

"Virtual screening has been a powerful approach for discovering small molecule drugs, but applying this approach to more complex molecules has not been done on a large scale until now," said Zymergen Research Fellow John Kulp. "Complex molecules like Natural Products have better bioactivity and are more likely to be able to treat hard-to-drug targets. Our platform and data give us a unique approach to leveraging these novel molecules."

The targets were selected for their high therapeutic potential, but historic lack of progress using standard drug discovery approaches. For PfAPP, Zymergen has already identified >200 molecules with better docking scores than the current best-in-class molecule, apstatin. Docking scores are well-accepted in the industry for virtual screening campaigns and the best hits are now being moved into validation testing with a set of global partners. Zymergen will oversee all validation with funding provided as part of the Gates Foundation grant.

Zymergen recently announced its drug discovery business at the 40th annual JP Morgan Healthcare conference, with a goal of unlocking previously inaccessible chemical diversity to develop next generation therapeutics. Natural Products have a history of success as therapeutics and Zymergen's unique platform that combines synthetic biology, cheminformatics and metagenomics has the potential to transform how these molecules are discovered and developed.

"We are incredibly pleased with the progress we are making through this collaboration, and today's announcement is a reflection of our momentum," said Zymergen VP of Innovation Devin Scannell. "Zymergen has a mission to make better products, a better way for a better world, and we're looking forward to further progress in the development of treatments for these diseases that are an enormous burden on people, globally."

About Zymergen

Zymergen is a biotech company that designs and produces molecules, microbes and materials for diverse end markets. We partner with nature to make better products, a better way, for a better world.

Forward Looking Statements

This press release contains "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, as amended. Such forward-looking statements are based on the Company's beliefs and assumptions and on information currently available to it on the date of this press release. In some cases, you can identify these statements by forward-looking words such as "believe," "may," "can," "aims," "will," "continue," "anticipate," "intend," "could," "project," "potential," "opportunity," "expect," "likely," "goal" or the negative or plural of these words or similar expressions. Forward-looking statements in this press release, include but are not limited to statements regarding the potential for Natural Products to treat hard-to-drug targets, the potential benefits of using virtual screening for discovery of more complex molecules and the potential for our drug discovery business. Forward-looking statements may involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements, including, but not limited to, risks relating to our ability to successfully commercialize or generate revenue from our products; our ability to develop or execute on our new strategic plan and our ability to reduce our operating costs and extend our cash runway. These and other risks are described more fully in the Company's filings with the SEC, including the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2021, and other documents the Company subsequently files with the SEC. Except to the extent required by law, the Company undertakes no obligation to update such statements to reflect events that occur or circumstances that exist after the date on which they were made.

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