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Case Western Reserve University grants option to startup Thermalin Diabetes Inc.

Research leads to advancements in treatment of diabetes patients

CLEVELAND – Case Western Reserve University has granted an 18-month, exclusive option to startup Thermalin Diabetes Inc. regarding a portfolio of insulin analogs. The company must reach certain milestones in order to exercise its option to obtain an exclusive license on therapies designed to help patients with diabetes.

Cleveland-based Thermalin Diabetes is developing treatments that it hopes will become an important part of the \$12 billion, rapidly growing insulin market. Insulin is a therapeutic protein used to manage blood sugar levels. Innovations in the 1990s led to the introduction of insulin analogs with superior therapeutic performance.

"This is one of the coolest technologies that we've seen, because of the potential to serve mankind," said Joseph Jankowski, Case Western Reserve's associate vice president for technology management within the university's Technology Transfer Office.

Potential for improved treatment of Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes results from the work of Dr. Michael Weiss, chairman of the Biochemistry Department at Case Western Reserve University's School of Medicine. His approximately 20 years of research into the structure and function of biological molecules has focused on insulin, insulin analogs and insulin receptors.

New and improved insulin analogs will offer attractive alternatives for patients and may also revolutionize the use of insulin pumps. Jankowski said important characteristics of these insulin analogs are that they are faster acting with fewer side effects, have stability without refrigeration and are long acting with lower potential risk of cancer.

Thermalin Diabetes has closed more than \$275,000 in seed financing from individual investors.

"We are very pleased to have the support of so many individuals in the Cleveland community," said Weiss, who is founder and chief scientific officer of Thermalin Diabetes. "While we have a long way to go, I am hopeful that together we can create a great biotech success for Cleveland."

Thermalin Diabetes also has received a \$254,000 Phase I Small Business Technology Transfer Grant from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the National Institutes of Health. This grant is intended to support the development of one of Thermalin's insulin analogs through large animal testing. When the company achieves the grant's specific aims, it will be eligible for significant additional grant funding to advance the compound to human clinical trials.

Among the company's early backers is Dick Dietrich, co-founder of Integral Inc. and a long-time supporter of the Diabetes Association of Greater Cleveland and the Dietrich Diabetes Research Institute.

Weiss' scientific work with insulin has been enriched by a gifted group of students and fellows. Colleagues at CWRU are Qing-xin Hua, S. Nakagawa, Zhu-li Wan, Nelson Phillips, Famarz Ismail-Beigi and Jonathan Whittaker, and long-term collaborators are Guy Dodson (University of York, UK), Panno Katsoyannis (Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, NY) and Don Steiner (University of Chicago).

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For more information, contact Richard Berenson, Executive Chairman, Thermalin Diabetes Inc., (617) 695-0523, or email: rick@thermalin.com

Case Western Reserve University is among the nation's leading research institutions. Founded in 1826 and shaped by the unique merger of the Case Institute of Technology and Western Reserve University, Case Western Reserve is distinguished by its strengths in education, research, service, and experiential learning. Located in Cleveland, Case Western Reserve offers nationally recognized programs in the Arts and Sciences, Dental Medicine, Engineering, Law, Management, Medicine, Nursing, and Social Work. <http://www.case.edu>

Thermalin Diabetes Inc. is a Cleveland-based company developing next generation insulin analogs for the improved management of Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes. Based on a portfolio of more than 100 insulin analogs discovered by Dr. Michael Weiss at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, Thermalin Diabetes is poised to address significant unmet needs in many segments of the \$12B, rapidly-growing insulin market. <http://www.thermalin.com>