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Biocept and Rosetta Genomics Collaborate to Evaluate microRNAs From Circulating Tumor Cells

SAN DIEGO and PRINCETON, N.J. and REHOVOT, Israel, Oct. 13, 2014 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Biocept, Inc. (Nasdaq:BIOC), a molecular oncology diagnostics company specializing in biomarker analysis of cell-free circulating tumor DNA (cfDNA) and circulating tumor cells (CTCs), and Rosetta Genomics, Ltd. (Nasdaq:ROSG), a leading molecular diagnostics company advancing microRNA-based diagnostics based on its proprietary microRNA platform technologies, today announced a collaboration that will combine both companies' platform technologies in an innovative approach to cancer diagnostics. The collaboration will utilize Biocept's patented microfluidic channel technology to capture CTCs and then apply Rosetta Genomics' technical expertise and proprietary methods to extract and analyze microRNA from these cells. The companies will test for markers currently offered by Rosetta as well as pursue new potential markers.

This joint proof-of-concept study will initially seek to determine whether CTCs from lung cancers provide microRNA signatures similar to those previously demonstrated by Rosetta and in use clinically today from tissue sample testing performed through Rosetta's CLIA laboratory. Biocept's proprietary microfluidic channel technology will be utilized to capture CTCs in the blood. Rosetta Genomics will then deploy its proprietary RT-PCR platform to characterize microRNAs isolated from those CTCs.

The goal of this project is to demonstrate proof-of-concept and determine opportunities for next steps in development of advanced diagnostics. This could include the development of next generation versions of certain current tests, which would then use CTCs from blood as "liquid biopsies" in lieu of current invasive approaches. With proof-of-concept data, the joint platform could be of value to pharmaceutical and biotech companies searching for a way to use liquid biopsies/CTCs along with microRNA profiling (and other downstream modalities like Next Generation Sequencing mutational profiles) to predict and monitor response to therapies.

"Our ability to capture and release CTCs for further downstream analysis puts us in a unique position to partner with leading companies who have already developed proprietary biomarker signatures," said Michael Nall, President and CEO of Biocept. "The concept of looking at microRNAs from CTCs is something that we've had an interest in for some time and Rosetta Genomics, as a leader in this space, is well positioned to help us pursue this diagnostic innovation."

Analysis of CTCs provides the ability to obtain genomic information from patients where tissue biopsies are not practical or possible. A simple blood draw allows the study of tumor cells in circulation on a real-time basis starting with the point-of-diagnosis and continuing throughout treatment. For example, this provides valuable insights when a patient's disease progresses while on therapy due to emerging resistance, thus allowing the clinician to potentially plot the optimal next course of treatment. MicroRNA analysis can provide unique insight into the biomarker profiles of these cells. Combining current and new microRNA profiles through the use of CTC capture could expand the role and utility of microRNA signatures in various solid tumor diseases.

"By combining our existing expertise in the microRNA space with Biocept's expertise in CTCs, we are poised to expand our efforts from profiling and discovering biomarkers on tissue biopsies to now exploring options of using these same techniques in a liquid biopsy environment," said Ken Berlin, CEO of Rosetta Genomics.

About Biocept, Inc.

Biocept, Inc., headquartered in San Diego, Calif., is a commercial-stage oncology diagnostics company focused on providing information on patients' tumors to physicians using its proprietary technology platform to help improve individual patient treatment. Biocept has developed proprietary technology platforms for capture and analysis of circulating tumor DNA, both in circulating tumor cells (CTCs) and in plasma (cell free tumor DNA). A standard blood sample is utilized to provide physicians with important prognostic and predictive information to enhance individual treatment of their patients with cancer. Biocept currently offers its OncoCEE-BRTM test for breast cancer and plans to introduce CLIA validated tests for lung, colorectal, prostate and other solid tumors based on its proprietary technology platforms.

About Rosetta Genomics. Ltd.

Founded in 2000, Rosetta's integrative research platform combining bioinformatics and state-of-the-art laboratory processes has led to the discovery of hundreds of biologically validated novel human microRNAs. Building on its strong patent position and proprietary platform technologies, Rosetta is working on the application of these technologies in the development and commercialization of a full range of microRNA-based diagnostic tools. Rosetta Genomics' testing services are commercially

available through its Philadelphia-based CAP accredited, CLIA certified lab. For more information, please visit www.rosettagenomics.com.

Forward-Looking Statements Disclaimer Statement

This release contains forward-looking statements that are based upon current expectations or beliefs, as well as a number of assumptions about future events. Although Biocept and Rosetta believe that the expectations reflected in the forward-looking statements and the assumptions upon which they are based are reasonable, they can give no assurance that such expectations and assumptions will prove to have been correct. Forward-looking statements are generally identifiable by the use of words like "may," "will," "should," "could," "expect," "anticipate," "estimate," "believe," "intend," or "project" or the negative of these words or other variations on these words or comparable terminology. To the extent that statements in this release are not strictly historical, including without limitation statements as to the ability to develop next generation versions of certain current testing methods in which liquid biopsies could be used, the ability to market any resulting joint platform to pharmaceutical and biotech companies, and any impacts on diagnostic strategies, such statements are forward-looking, and are made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. The reader is cautioned not to put undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, as these statements are subject to numerous risk factors as set forth in the companies' Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) filings. The effects of such risks and uncertainties could cause actual results to differ materially from the forward-looking statements contained in this release. Neither Biocept nor Rosetta plan to update any such forward-looking statements and expressly disclaim any duty to update the information contained in this press release except as required by law. Readers are advised to review the companies' filings with the SEC, which can be accessed over the Internet at the SEC's website located at www.sec.gov.

CONTACT: Company Contacts:

Rosetta Genomics

Ken Berlin, President & CEO

(609) 419-9003

investors@rosettagenomics.com

LHA

Anne Marie Fields

212-838-3777

afields@lhai.com

Biocept, Inc.

David Burke

The Ruth Group

646-536-7009

dburke@theruthgroup.com

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