

## **Arbor Vita Corporation And NoNO Announce Collaboration For Novel Stroke Treatment**

SUNNYVALE, Calif. and TORONTO, Oct. 16 /PRNewswire/ -- Arbor Vita Corporation, a U.S.-based biotechnology company, and NoNO, Inc., a Canadian biotechnology company focused on neurological diseases, announced today their partnership to develop and commercialize drugs for the treatment of stroke. The research and development collaboration combines Arbor Vita's PDZ-based Drug Discovery Platform with NoNO's expertise in the area of neurological disorders. Financial terms of the collaboration were not disclosed.

"We are very pleased to be working with NoNO, a biotechnology company founded by some of the leading neuroscientists in Canada," stated Peter Lu, M.D., founder, president and chief executive officer of Arbor Vita Corporation. "Under this collaboration, we are developing drugs targeting PDZ-protein interactions to mitigate brain damage from cerebral ischemia (stroke), which could also extend to the treatment of neurotrauma, pain, Alzheimer's and other diseases."

In a landmark study published in *Science* (2002 Oct 25; 298(5594):846-50), Michael Tymianski, M.D., Ph.D., and his scientific colleagues first demonstrated in vivo that the inhibition of the interaction between NMDA (N- methyl D-aspartate) receptors, which are found on brain neurons and allow them to communicate with each other, and PSD-95, a protein containing PDZ domains, resulted in the brain cells becoming resilient to stroke and stroke-like insults in animals. PDZ proteins such as PSD-95 are critical elements that organize and regulate many signaling pathways in human cells. The disruption of PDZ interactions has recently begun to be appreciated as providing a novel way to control multiple signaling cascades in complex diseases.

"PDZs, with their pivotal role in cell signaling, represent an opportunity to hinder cellular signals that cause cells to die in a stroke, without causing the severe side effects that were observed with previous stroke drugs," explained Dr. Tymianski, founder and president of NoNO, Inc. "By developing drugs that act downstream of the NMDA receptor, we can selectively block the inappropriate signals which result in cell death without disruption of the NMDA receptor itself, which is an essential cellular protein for transmission of signals between nerve cells."

The two companies also announced the presentation of preclinical data at Neuroscience 2006, the 36th annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience being held this week in Atlanta, Georgia. More than 30,000 scientists from around the world will attend to exchange ideas about cutting-edge research on the brain, spinal cord and nervous system. The collaborative poster, "Mechanism of neuroprotective action of the PSD-95 inhibitor TAT-NR2B9c," will be presented on Tuesday, October 17 at 1:00 PM Eastern.

The work presented in this poster extends Dr. Tymianski's earlier work to identify the key cellular proteins and interactions responsible for mitigation of neuronal damage following stroke. Furthermore, it shows a dramatic demonstration of the power of targeting PDZ-based interactions for therapeutic use. This new understanding has opened the doors for development of a new class of specific drugs for the treatment of stroke with the potential for significantly fewer side effects than current treatments.

#### About Arbor Vita Corporation

Arbor Vita ([www.arborvita.com](http://www.arborvita.com)) is a biotechnology company focused on the discovery, development, and commercialization of novel drugs and diagnostics addressing disease through a new family of targets, PDZ proteins. PDZ proteins are critical elements that organize and regulate many signaling pathways in human cells. Arbor Vita is pioneering the development of therapeutics and diagnostics through their unique understanding of the role of PDZs in cell signaling and disease. The company is tackling major health issues including cancer, infectious diseases such as influenza, stroke, and cardiovascular disease.

#### About NoNO, Inc.

NoNO Inc. is a biotechnology company founded for the purpose of developing and commercializing therapeutic compounds for the treatment of stroke and related CNS disorders. NoNO Inc. was founded by scientists, many of whom are world leaders in basic and/or clinical neuroscience. NoNO Inc. has focused on strategies for developing therapeutic agents that selectively interfere with key pathways of neurological diseases, including pathways that involve PDZ domains, while minimizing side effects. Its lead projects are in the areas of stroke, neurotrauma, and tissue ischemia.

#### Arbor Vita Corporation

CONTACT: Debra Bannister, +1-530-676-8001 [ordebra.bannister@arborvita.com](mailto:ordebra.bannister@arborvita.com), for Arbor Vita Corporation

Web site: <http://www.arborvita.com/>