



Amgen Awards Two Local Biotech Start-Ups With Golden Ticket To LabCentral

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Amgen Golden Tickets Provides Innovative Companies With Lab Space and Mentorship to Advance Science

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Dec. 17, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- Amgen (NASDAQ: AMGN) and LabCentral today announced that Octagon Therapeutics and Seranova Bio have each won an Amgen Golden Ticket to LabCentral, Cambridge's premier launchpad for high-potential life sciences and biotech start-ups. The two Golden Ticket winners were chosen by an internal team of Amgen scientific leaders and live audience members at a virtual pitch event on Dec. 9, 2020. Five finalists pitched their business plans to attendees where the audience members' votes served as input for the Amgen internal committee's decision.

Amgen has served as a platinum sponsor of LabCentral since 2014, awarding Golden Tickets to 12 innovative start-ups to date. Each year, Amgen nominates two early-stage companies to take up residence in LabCentral's Kendall Square facilities, which includes one year of free bench space for one scientist and access to the shared amenities and resources offered by LabCentral. As recipients of the Amgen Golden Ticket, Octagon Therapeutics and Seranova Bio will also partner with Amgen scientists for ongoing mentoring throughout the year.

"Our strategic partnership with LabCentral allows Amgen to identify and empower some of the most promising start-up companies and advance ground-breaking science underway here in Cambridge," said Rohini Deshpande, Ph.D., vice president of Drug Substance Technologies and site head at Amgen Massachusetts. "We are excited about innovative technology presented by Octagon Therapeutics and Seranova Bio and look forward to engaging with both as they continue working to better serve patients."

"This is a tremendous opportunity for Octagon," said Isaac Stoner, president and chief executive officer of Octagon Therapeutics. "The resources and community available at LabCentral provide a huge advantage to fast-growing life science companies. We are also excited to collaborate with Amgen scientists as we advance our important class of medicines towards the clinic and expand the platform into new disease areas."

About Octagon Therapeutics

Octagon is developing a new class of targeted immunomodulators for severe autoimmune disease. The company was founded on novel biological insights into the pathological activation of lymphocytes that cause autoimmune disease; the metabolic processes in these immune cells are subtly altered when compared to a healthy immune response. These insights have led to the development of a differentiated small molecule therapeutic strategy that leverages these differences to specifically target aberrant immune activation while sparing healthy immune functioning. Octagon's lead program, OTG177, specifically inhibits autoreactive B cells involved in pemphigus/pemphigoid but the approach is relevant in a wide range of autoimmune disorders.

"Receiving the Amgen Golden Ticket will open doors for our company," said Aaron Ring, M.D. Ph.D., co-founder of Seranova Bio. "We are thrilled to receive the scientific, operational, and business development support from Amgen. We know this opportunity will help us advance our work to develop novel therapeutics using our unique target discovery platform."

About Seranova Bio

Seranova Bio is striving to establish a new paradigm for therapeutic target discovery. The company's Rapid Extracellular Antigen Profiling (REAP) platform combines high-quality, comprehensive protein sampling with next-generation DNA sequencing to profile patients' autoantibodies with higher throughput and fidelity than existing technologies. Seranova Bio's technological breakthrough reveals, in much greater depth, the underlying humoral response to disease and provides critical insights to drug developers. Seranova Bio aims to collaborate with pharmaceutical partners to discover novel therapeutic targets and develop new treatments to autoimmune disease, neurodegeneration, and cancer.

About Amgen

Amgen is committed to unlocking the potential of biology for patients suffering from serious illnesses by discovering, developing, manufacturing and delivering innovative human therapeutics. This approach begins by using tools like advanced human genetics to unravel the complexities of disease and understand the fundamentals of human biology.

Amgen focuses on areas of high unmet medical need and leverages its expertise to strive for solutions that improve health outcomes and dramatically improve people's lives. A biotechnology pioneer since 1980, Amgen has grown to be one of the world's leading independent biotechnology companies, has reached millions of patients around the world and is developing a pipeline of medicines with breakaway potential.

For more information, visit www.amgen.com and follow us on www.twitter.com/amgen.

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