



AuraSense Therapeutics Completes \$13.6 Million Series C Equity Investment

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SKOKIE, Ill., June 17, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- AuraSense Therapeutics, a Chicago-based biopharmaceutical company commercializing spherical nucleic acid (SNA™) constructs as gene regulatory and immunotherapeutic agents, has announced the close of its Series C financing that included an investment by Bill Gates. "Based on the success AuraSense Therapeutics has had in its extensive animal trials, we have ambitious plans to rapidly advance SNA™ constructs into the clinic," said Dr. David Giljohann, Chief Executive Officer of AuraSense Therapeutics.

The Company announced that current investors, including Patrick Ryan, founder of Aon; David Walt, co-founder of Illumina and a Company Director; Boon Hwee Koh, Director of Agilent Technologies and former Chairman of Singapore Airlines; Craig Mundie, Senior Advisor to the CEO of Microsoft; and new investors the Rathmann Family Foundation, have invested alongside Mr. Gates. AuraSense Therapeutics adds to existing funding through the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to develop rapidly adaptable gene-targeted anti-bacterial agents to address the growing need for new antibiotics, and AbbVie Inc., who served as a strategic investor in the Series B financing.

SNA™ constructs overcome one of the most difficult obstacles to the broad implementation of oligonucleotide-derived therapeutics: safe and effective delivery into cells and tissues of interest. The round of financing will be used to further develop and advance several novel SNA-based constructs into human trials. "We are rapidly developing the comprehensive AuraSense Therapeutics pharmaceutical pipeline and look forward to entering the clinic with our molecules, which will allow us to address unmet medical needs," said Dr. Sergey Gryaznov, AuraSense Therapeutics Chief Technology Officer.

Schiff Hardin LLP served as deal counsel to AuraSense Therapeutics for the investment transaction. Terms of the investment were not disclosed.

About AuraSense Therapeutics, LLC

AuraSense Therapeutics (AST) is a biopharmaceutical company developing first-in-class therapies based upon its proprietary Spherical Nucleic Acid (SNA™) gene regulation and immune modulation strategies. AST is leading the translation of SNA constructs as innovative medicines with a core focus on debilitating diseases with limited or no treatment options. AuraSense Therapeutics' uniquely engineered SNA™ constructs possess attractive biocompatibility and versatility as therapeutics and hold great promise for combating the most life-threatening diseases, including many forms of cancer, infectious disease, and skin conditions.

About Spherical Nucleic Acids

SNA™ technology originated in the lab of Professor Chad A. Mirkin at the Northwestern University International Institute for Nanotechnology. SNAs are nanoscale particles that consist of a spherical arrangement of densely packed and radially oriented nucleic acids. This architecture overcomes one of the most difficult obstacles to gene regulation: safe and effective delivery into cells and tissues of therapeutic importance without the need for additional physical or chemical methods or components. The SNAs can be designed to be extremely potent and highly targeted gene regulation and immune-modulatory agents.

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