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Merrimack Pharmaceuticals and Cancer Treatment Centers of America(R) Partner in Multifaceted Collaboration to Advance Translational Research and Individualized Treatment

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., June 28, 2012 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Merrimack Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq:MACK) and the Cancer Treatment Centers of America® (CTCA) announced today that they have formed a unique and wide ranging partnership to advance their long-term vision of individualized treatment - where diagnosis and therapy is guided by an in-depth understanding of the underlying mechanism of a patient's disease. The collaboration encompasses research on diagnostics based on a network signaling approach to analyzing patients' tumors as well as clinical trial research.

For the diagnostic research, CTCA will contribute archived tumor biopsies from their extensive tumor databank as well as prospectively collected tumor samples. These samples will be analyzed using Merrimack's Network Biology approach to identifying the network signaling that drives cancer growth with the goal of understanding each patient's cancer at the molecular level. Many of CTCA's patients are battling advanced cancer and have received many prior lines of therapy. This makes CTCA's tumor archive particularly unique as they offer an opportunity for Merrimack to explore how the molecular characteristics of a tumor change as a result of therapy. This joint effort eventually could lead to the identification of novel companion diagnostics to guide treatment decisions.

"Every day, experts at CTCA provide personalized care to advanced and late-stage cancer patients. This partnership with Merrimack supports our goal to give every patient an individually focused treatment plan, using innovative technologies and tools to help fight their cancer and improve their quality of life," said Maurie Markman, M.D., Senior Vice President of Clinical Affairs & National Director of Medical Oncology at CTCA. "We believe that the innovations that come from this partnership could help provide the right treatment for every patient's unique biology."

"Access to CTCA's tumor samples greatly enhances the speed and scope of the research we are doing to understand the complexity of cancer cells and to characterize what their growth is dependent upon," says Robert Mulroy, CEO of Merrimack Pharmaceuticals. "CTCA is a great example of a forward-looking institution trying to change the face of cancer care. This collaboration represents the future of individualized treatment where a hospital and a biopharmaceutical company work together on research, which we hope will ultimately result in much better treatment for cancer patients."

The collaboration also encompasses clinical research. Merrimack will collaborate with CTCA investigators to take advantage of the rich clinical expertise at CTCA through participation in and collaboration on clinical studies of Merrimack therapeutics.

About Cancer Treatment Centers of America

Cancer Treatment Centers of America (CTCA) is a growing network of privately held hospitals that provide a comprehensive, fully integrated and individualized cancer treatment experience. CTCA regional destination hospitals are located in Chicago, Philadelphia, Phoenix and Tulsa, with a fifth hospital opening in Atlanta in 2012.

About Merrimack Pharmaceuticals

Merrimack is a biopharmaceutical company discovering, developing and preparing to commercialize innovative medicines paired with companion diagnostics for the treatment of serious diseases, with an initial focus on cancer. Merrimack applies Network Biology, its proprietary systems biology-based approach to biomedical research, throughout the research and development process. Merrimack currently has five targeted therapeutic oncology candidates in clinical development.

Forward-looking statements

Any statements in this press release about Merrimack's future expectations, plans and prospects constitute forward-looking statements within the meaning of The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, as amended. Actual results may differ materially from those indicated by such forward-looking statements. Merrimack anticipates that subsequent events and developments will cause its views to change. However, while Merrimack may elect to update these forward-looking statements at some point in the future, Merrimack specifically disclaims any obligation to do so.

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