PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES IN THE SEARCH FOR AN HIV VACCINE HIGHLIGHTED AS RESEARCHERS, FUNDERS AND POLICY-MAKERS GATHER FOR AIDS VACCINE 2012 IN BOSTON

Leading Global Conference on HIV Vaccine Research Explores New Ideas and New Approaches in HIV Vaccine Design and Testing

(Boston, MA) Scientists from around the world will gather in Boston next week to present more than 400 new research studies updating global progress in the search for a safe and effective HIV vaccine. AIDS Vaccine 2012, the world's only scientific meeting dedicated exclusively to HIV vaccine research, runs Sunday, 9 September through Wednesday, 12 September at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center.

The annual AIDS vaccine meeting is hosted by the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise (http://www.vaccineenterprise.org/) a unique collaboration of HIV vaccine research, funding, advocacy and stakeholder organizations. The Local Hosts for AIDS Vaccine 2012 are the Harvard University Center for AIDS Research and the Ragon Institute of Massachusetts General Hospital, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University.

"HIV vaccine research is in its most promising era since the epidemic began," said Bill Snow, director of the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise. "With sound and well-financed implementation, new HIV prevention strategies could produce important reductions in the 2.5 million HIV infections occurring each year. At the same time, the development of a safe and effective AIDS vaccine remains central to efforts to bring us significantly closer to the end of this epidemic."

A landmark 2009 HIV vaccine study known as RV144 in Thailand demonstrated the first proof of concept that an AIDS vaccine can prevent infection. AIDS Vaccine 2012 will follow up with new research exploring potential mechanisms on how and why that vaccine candidate may have worked, present new data on the workings of the human immune system that can help steer future vaccine design; and share updates on new neutralizing antibodies that protect against a wide range of HIV strains, which are driving new technologies. The conference program also includes other, potentially more powerful emerging immunological approaches to enhance HIV vaccine delivery and development.
AIDS Vaccine 2012 conference sessions will be webcast and available within 24-hours after presentation on [http://www.vaccineenterprise.org/conference/2012/program/webcasting](http://www.vaccineenterprise.org/conference/2012/program/webcasting). Conference posters and abstracts will also be available on the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise website, [http://www.vaccineenterprise.org/conference/2012/program/presentations](http://www.vaccineenterprise.org/conference/2012/program/presentations).

Boston is at the forefront of global technological innovation and is home to scientific collaborations that are accelerating HIV biomedical prevention research. AIDS Vaccine 2012 is the result of collaborations between the Ragon Institute and three independent Centers for AIDS Research (CFARs) in New England. In keeping with the conference theme of *New Minds, New Ideas, New Approaches*, AIDS Vaccine 2012 will host, for the first time, sessions exploring synergies between the most promising areas of HIV biomedical prevention research including HIV cure, microbicides and treatment as prevention and HIV vaccine research.

"Advances in HIV prevention strategies, including HIV vaccine development, are transforming the field," said Dan Barouch, M.D., Ph.D., professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and chair of AIDS Vaccine 2012. "Recent progress has also inspired new ideas and new approaches to the design and testing of next generation HIV vaccine candidates. We are pleased to welcome researchers from around the world to AIDS Vaccine 2012 to share their recent discoveries and to engage in these important discussions."

AIDS Vaccine 2012 will also showcase the work of young and early-career investigators, the generation of researchers who are emerging to carry HIV vaccine research and development forward faster. More than 45 percent of the conference program includes presentations on the latest cutting-edge research by early-career investigators.

"Past approaches to vaccine design and testing have not yet yielded a safe and effective vaccine that the world so urgently needs. New ideas and novel perspectives are therefore eminently needed to achieve an HIV vaccine as soon as possible," said Galit Alter, assistant professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital and chair of AIDS Vaccine 2012. "At AIDS Vaccine 2012, we will hear how scientists, many who are new to the field, are using novel technologies and out-of-the-box approaches to take HIV vaccine research to the next phase of discovery to help end this epidemic."

**Conference Media Briefing**

A conference media briefing featuring Anthony Fauci, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Nelson Michael, U.S. Military HIV Research Program, Salim Karim, Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa, and other leaders in the field will be held on Monday, 10 September at 12:30 p.m. in room 255 of the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center. Journalists who are unable to attend the briefing in-person may dial in to the press conference (listen only) at 1-888-619-1583, passcode 1538995497. Dial in details for international participants, along with a list of other conference media briefings, are available at: [http://vaccineenterprise.org/conference/2012/sites/default/files/AV12PressSchedule.pdf](http://vaccineenterprise.org/conference/2012/sites/default/files/AV12PressSchedule.pdf).
Facebook and Twitter
Conference participants will keep up with what is happening at AIDS Vaccine 2012 and share their updates with the broader community through Facebook @HIVEnterprise and Twitter, #AIDSVax2012.

About the Organizers
The Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise is an alliance of independent organizations dedicated to accelerating the development of preventive HIV vaccines through mutual coordination, collaboration, knowledge sharing and recruitment of new resources and funders to the field.

Galit Alter, M.D., Assistant Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital and Dan Barouch, M.D., Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center will chair AIDS Vaccine 2012. Co-chairs are Lindsey Baden, M.D., Assistant Professor of Medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Bruce Walker, M.D., Director of the Harvard University Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) and the Ragon Institute.

AIDS Vaccine 2012 is sponsored by the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise, French National Agency for Research on AIDS and Viral Hepatitis (ANRS), Batavia Bioservices, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The Broad Institute, Canadian HIV Vaccine Initiative Research and Development Alliance, CFAR at Harvard University, CFAR at University of Massachusetts, CFAR Lifespan/Tufts/Brown (Marian Hospital), CFAR UCSF-GIVI Center for AIDS Research, Crucell, Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, GeoVax Labs Inc., Gilead Sciences, Inc., GlaxoSmithKline Vaccines, Government of Canada, the U.S. Military HIV Research Program (MHRP), the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), JPT Peptide Technologies, Mabtech, Merck & Co. Inc., Microsoft, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), the Office of AIDS Research (OAR) of the U.S. National Institutes of Health, Ragon Institute of MGH, MIT and Harvard, sanofi pasteur, UNAIDS: The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, ViiV Healthcare and the Wellcome Trust.


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