National Cancer Institute Continues Funding of Fast-Track SBIR Biorepository Project at PharmaSeq

Monmouth Junction, NJ, August 20, 2014. PharmaSeq, Inc., announced today the continued funding of Year Three of a Fast-Track Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) grant for a project entitled "Light-activated Electronic p-Chips for Tagging Samples in Biorepositories and Cryostorage." The grant was awarded by the National Cancer Institute of the NIH.

The specific aims of the grant period are to complete development and validation of an innovative electronic system for tagging and tracking sample vials that are used in biorepositories. The system is based on PharmaSeq’s patented p-Chip®, a revolutionary product for digital labeling of objects in life science and biomedical research. p-Chips are small and inexpensive, and they maintain their properties in the very low temperatures typically used for long-term storage. In addition, p-Chips can be easily read through heavy layers of frost that degrades the performance of conventional optical barcodes. The stability of p-Chips at high temperatures means that they can be embedded directly into plastic vials as part of the flow injection manufacturing process.

The rapid expansion of molecular biology techniques into modern therapeutic developments is resulting in a high demand for biological samples, which means that biorepositories represent a high growth market. A major contributing factor to this is the success of the human genome sequencing project and progress in cancer research, both of which require multiple samples of body fluids, tissue or cells to be collected and preserved from each patient. A second factor is the increasingly stringent regulatory requirements for the industry. Samples are typically sent from multiple locations to centralized biorepositories whose collections are growing rapidly and therefore facing increasing challenges in reliably tracking and tracing samples over their useful lifetimes. The use of p-Chip-tagged containers will improve reliability of sample identification, provide secure chain-of-custody and improve overall workflow while lowering costs.

During the previous two grant periods, PharmaSeq successfully demonstrated the overall concepts of using p-Chips to tag vials, including fabrication of the vials and the construction of a single-vial ID reader. More recently, the Company has designed a reader for arrays of vials that can identify around 100 frozen samples in less than 2 seconds. This feature is especially important as it allows scientists to rapidly locate samples while preventing loss of quality that results from a rise in temperature. PharmaSeq expects to begin field trials with the array readers later this year and enter commercial production in early 2015. In conjunction with this, the Company has formed alliances with several major suppliers to the market.

Dr. Wlodek Mandecki, President of PharmaSeq, Inc., said, “We continue to be excited about this project. We believe that we are in a position to use p-Chip technology to provide a highly desirable end-to-end tracking system that will improve workflow, increase reliability and reduce costs in biorepositories and biomedical laboratories. At the same time we are expanding uses of the technology platform by developing additional p-Chip-tagged products for many healthcare and life sciences applications.”

For further information, please contact Dr. Richard Morris, CEO, or Dr. Wlodek Mandecki, President, at (732) 355-0100.