Verastem Co-Founder, Dr. Robert Weinberg, Recognized with Two Prestigious Cancer Research Awards

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- Salk Institute Medal of Excellence and American Association of Cancer Research Lifetime Achievement Award for Cancer Research -

BOSTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Apr. 18, 2016-- Verastem, Inc. (NASDAQ:VSTM), focused on discovering and developing drugs to treat cancer, today announced that Robert Weinberg, Ph.D., Verastem Co-founder and Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Board, and a pioneer in cancer research, was recently honored with the Salk Institute Medal for Research Excellence and the 13th annual American Association of Cancer Research (AACR) Lifetime Achievement Award for Cancer Research.

Dr. Weinberg is a founding member of the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research and the Daniel K. Ludwig Professor for Cancer Research in the Department of Biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He is the internationally recognized authority on the genetic basis of human cancer development and is most widely known for his discoveries of the first human oncogene, a gene that causes normal cells to form tumors, and the first tumor suppressor gene. His lab now primarily focuses on two areas: the interactions between epithelial and stromal cells (the two major types of cells found in mammalian tissue) that produce carcinomas and the processes by which cancer stem cells form, invade and metastasize.

“Bob’s research has revolutionized the way cancer is understood and has paved the way for powerful new technologies to help diagnose and treat cancer,” said Robert Forrester, Verastem President and Chief Executive Officer. “Everyone at Verastem is thrilled that he has been honored by both the Salk Institute and the AACR for the tremendous contributions he has made over the years in the battle against cancer. We are proud to have him as a colleague in this important fight.”

The Salk Institute Medal for Research Excellence, a distinction that has only been awarded twice before in the Institute’s 55-year history, was awarded to Dr. Weinberg during an award ceremony on April 13 in La-Jolla, California. Neuroscientist Solomon Snyder of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, also received this prestigious award.

The first Salk Institute Medals were awarded in 2006 to Donald Metcalf, an Australian physiologist whose research on cancer has improved disease treatment, and to Paul Farmer, anthropologist, physician and co-founder of Partners in Health. In 2010, gene expression pioneer Robert G. Roeder of The Rockefeller University was awarded the Salk Medal for Research Excellence, and Irwin M. Jacobs, renowned entrepreneur and philanthropist, received the Salk Medal for Public Service. In 2014, violinist Itzhak Perlman was awarded the Public Service medal for all he has done to eradicate polio around the globe.

Dr. Weinberg was presented with the AACR Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cancer Research during the AACR 2016 Annual Meeting opening ceremony on Sunday, April 17. The AACR established the Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cancer Research in 2004 as a means to honor an individual who has made significant contributions to cancer research, either through a single scientific discovery or a body of work. These contributions, whether they have been in research, leadership, or mentorship, must have had a lasting impact on the cancer field and must have demonstrated a lifetime commitment to progress against cancer.

Weinberg, who received his Ph.D. in biology from MIT in 1969, has held research positions at the Weizmann Institute and the Salk Institute. In 1982, he helped found Whitehead Institute, joined the faculty as a professor of biology at MIT, and published his landmark paper "Mechanism of Activation of a Human Oncogene" in the journal *Nature*. In 1999, another of his major papers, "Creation of Human Tumor Cells with Defined Genetic Elements," was also published in *Nature*. In collaboration with Dr. Douglas Hanahan, Dr. Weinberg authored the foundational paper, Hallmarks of Cancer, which was published in *Cell* in 2000 and its update, Hallmarks of Cancer: The Next Generation, in 2011. Dr. Weinberg is an elected member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He has received numerous honors and awards, including the Discover Magazine 1982 Scientist of the Year, the Sloan Prize of the General Motors Cancer Research Foundation, and the 1997 National Medal of Science.

Dr. Weinberg is the author or editor of five books and more than 350 articles. Three of the books are intended for a lay audience; “One Renegade Cell,” “Racing to the Beginning of the Road: The Search for the Origin of Cancer” and “Genes and the Biology of Cancer” are co-authored with Dr. Harold E. Varmus, former Director of the National Institutes of Health. More recently, Dr. Weinberg has published a textbook “The Biology of Cancer,” which is intended for doctoral students learning about this disease. Dr. Weinberg is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine and a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

About Verastem, Inc.

Verastem, Inc. (NASDAQ:VSTM) is a biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering and developing drugs to improve outcomes for patients with cancer. Our product candidates utilize a multi-faceted approach to treat cancer by reducing cancer stem cells, enhancing anti-tumor immunity, and modulating the local tumor microenvironment. Our most advanced clinical product candidates are the Focal Adhesion Kinase inhibitors, VS-6063 and VS-4718, and the dual PI3K/mTOR inhibitor, VS-5584. For more information, please visit www.verastem.com.

Verastem forward-looking statements notice:

This press release includes forward-looking statements about Verastem’s strategy, future plans and prospects, including statements regarding the

utility of treating cancer by reducing cancer stem cells, enhancing anti-tumor immunity, and modulating the local tumor environment. The words “anticipate,” “appear,” “believe,” “estimate,” “expect,” “intend,” “may,” “plan,” “predict,” “project,” “target,” “potential,” “will,” “would,” “could,” “should,” “continue,” and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words. Each forward-looking statement is subject to risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied in such statement. Applicable risks and uncertainties include the risks that Verastem’s product candidates will not receive regulatory approval or become commercially successful products. Other risks and uncertainties include those identified under the heading “Risk Factors” in Verastem’s Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2015 and in any subsequent SEC filings. The forward-looking statements contained in this press release reflect Verastem’s current views with respect to future events, and Verastem does not undertake and specifically disclaims any obligation to update any forward-looking statements.

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