

New York Genome Center Appoints Dr. Robert B. Darnell, World Leader in Biomedical Research, as President & Scientific Director

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NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Nov 28, 2012--The New York Genome Center (NYGC) today announced the appointment of Robert B. Darnell, M.D., Ph.D., one of the world's leading experts in the emerging area of RNA genomics, as its President & Scientific Director. In this role, Dr. Darnell will leverage his 22 years of experience in molecular neuro-oncology and leadership in RNA genomics, spanning multiple diseases and therapeutic areas, to lead the New York Genome Center. Dr. Darnell will direct all aspects of the NYGC, including its scientific and research activities, and the recruitment and development of a world-class scientific team in genomic research and medicine. Dr. Darnell, who previously advised the NYGC as a member of its Founding Board and Executive Committee, also joins the NYGC Board of Directors. Nancy J. Kelley, J.D., M.P.P., Founding Executive Director and Member of the NYGC Board of Directors, takes on the additional title of Chief Operating Officer.

Dr. Darnell is an internationally recognized research scientist and physician who is responsible for pioneering translational studies in paraneoplastic neurologic syndromes, which linked tumor immunity to autoimmune brain disease, leading to new antitumor strategies being tested in cancer patients. Studying these patients led his team to discover neuron-specific systems that regulate RNA expression, and to the invention of HITS-CLIP, now the gold standard with which to study RNA regulation in vivo. His innovative studies of mRNA splicing, translation, and miRNA regulation in clinical and

experimental settings are offering new ways to explore the “dark matter” of the human genome, and to overlay genome-wide sequence information with human diseases, including brain disease and cancer.

“The appointment of Dr. Darnell as our President & Scientific Director marks a momentous occasion for the New York Genome Center as we build our science and research capability,” said Russ Carson and Ivan Seidenberg, Co-Chairs of the NYGC Board of Directors. “Bob is deeply committed to our goal of having the New York Genome Center become an independent research institution and a world-class collaborative center for translational genomic research, linking sequencing, bioinformatics, and computational biology to the care of patients.” Carson and Seidenberg also stated, “As the Founding Executive Director, Nancy Kelley has been a driving force in the development of NYGC and will play an expanded role in delivering this important science to clients worldwide. The entire Board is excited to work with Bob and Nancy to deliver the benefit of the many breakthrough advancements in genomics.” Dr. Darnell stated, “I am extremely honored and excited to join the New York Genome Center at this key point in its development, and to have the opportunity to shape, inform, and lead this institution to achieve the Center’s ambitious plans. I look forward to launching a new multi-institutional scientific effort in New York to accelerate genomics-based fundamental research and to realize its potential to revolutionize clinical medicine.” Dr. Darnell will remain the Heilbrunn Professor of Cancer Biology at The Rockefeller University, one of NYGC's Institutional Founding Members (IFMs), and an Investigator of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. He has numerous academic connections with the IFMs; in addition to his position at RU, Dr. Darnell is an Adjunct Attending Physician at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, an alumnus of Columbia College, and received his medical and neurology training at the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine and the Weill Cornell Medical College.

Tom Maniatis, Chairman of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics at Columbia University, a Member of the NYGC Board of Directors, and a key architect of NYGC’s scientific vision, stated, “I warmly welcome Bob to his position as President & Scientific Director, one for which he is exceptionally well-suited. It is widely recognized that the rate-limiting step in fulfilling the promise of genomics is extracting meaningful biological insights and clinically actionable information from massive genomic data sets. I believe that Bob is uniquely qualified as a leader, scientist,

and clinician to place the NYGC at the forefront of solving this problem by building a strong internal bioinformatics program at NYGC and coordinating the efforts of a powerful bioinformatics consortium among the IFMs." Over the next five years, NYGC expects to create more than 500 science-related jobs, most of which will be in basic and clinical research, integrating bioinformatics, computational biology and high throughput sequencing.

About Dr. Darnell Robert B. Darnell, M.D., Ph.D., is an Investigator with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and is the Robert and Harriet Heilbrunn Professor of Cancer Biology at The Rockefeller University in New York City, where he serves as the Director for Science Programs at the Center for Clinical and Translational Research. He is Senior Physician at the Rockefeller University Hospital and is an Adjunct Attending Neuro-Oncologist at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC). Dr. Darnell is a leading expert in the study of paraneoplastic neurologic syndromes, rare disorders triggered by an immune system response to common cancers, that he has studied with his clinical colleague Dr. Jerome Posner at MSKCC. His patient-oriented studies led him to discover that neurons have unique mechanisms governing the regulation of RNA, the transcribed copies of our genes. He went on to pioneer the development of a new method, termed HITS-CLIP, to study RNA regulation in intact brain. HITS-CLIP is now the gold standard for the study of RNA regulation, and is being widely applied in neurobiology, cancer biology, immunology and virology, as well as being used to explore the "dark matter" of the human genome. Dr. Darnell's work has resulted in numerous awards, including the Derek Denny-Brown Young Neurological Scholar Award, the Burroughs Wellcome Fund Clinical Scientist Award in Translational Research, the Emerald Foundation Distinguished Investigator Award, and an NIH Directors Transformative Research Award, and he holds several patents and Investigational New Drug applications. Dr. Darnell serves on the Editorial Boards of the journals *Molecular and Cellular Biology* and *eLIFE*. In 2010, he was elected member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, member of the Association of American Physicians and Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Dr. Darnell currently serves on the Board of Scientific Councilors of the Jackson Laboratory, the NINDS Advisory Council, and was a member of the Founding Board and is an Executive Committee Member of the New York Genome Center.

About the New York Genome Center Founded in August 2010, the New York Genome Center (NYGC) is an independent, non-profit organization – leveraging the collaborative resources of leading academic medical centers, research universities, and commercial organizations. Our vision is to transform medical research and clinical care in New York through the creation of one of the largest genomics research facilities in North America, integrating sequencing, bioinformatics, and data management.

NYGC represents an unprecedented sharing of data and resources among premier institutions, which will dramatically increase the quality and speed of research outcomes to advance clinical care. This collaboration will help forward the advances leading to a new era of personalized medicine, accelerate the development of new diagnostics and treatments for human diseases, and provide an engine for life science commercialization in the region.

NYGC's Institutional Founding Members include Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, Columbia University, Cornell University/Weill Cornell Medical College, The Jackson Laboratory, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Mount Sinai Medical Center, NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, New York University/NYU School of Medicine, North Shore-LIJ Health System, The Rockefeller University, and Stony Brook University.

To date, NYGC has raised over \$110 million in funds from its Institutional Founding Members, from philanthropies such as the Simons Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and Bloomberg Philanthropies, and from other strategic relationships, including the New York City Economic Development Corporation and the New York City Investment Fund.

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