



MEDIA RELEASE

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Former venture capitalist brings global expertise to Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) *Dr. Mario Thomas heads to OCE's Centre for Commercialization of Research (CCR)*

TORONTO, June 12, 2009 – An innovative leader with a proven track of taking businesses from start-up to commercial success has been named as the Managing Director of the Centre for Commercialization of Research (CCR) at Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE).

Mark Romoff, OCE President and CEO, announced today that Dr. Mario Thomas has been appointed to the role of Managing Director. CCR was launched in November by OCE and the Networks of Centres of Excellence of Canada.

“Mario has incredibly valuable, hands-on experience in integrating business and science in directing corporate growth,” said Romoff. “He brings to CCR the perfect combination of his extensive global experience filled with outstanding achievements in the life sciences sector, driving successful development collaborations and financial ventures.”

As Co-Founder, President and CEO of EntoMed in France, he took a university-run research project and transformed it into a commercial business, generating €24 million in financing. Prior to that as the former President and CEO of TerraGen Discovery Inc., Vancouver a biotech start-up, Dr. Thomas raised more than \$13 million in venture capital to advance anti-infective research and improved corporate value through a series of strategic maneuvers.

Most recently, as Vice-President and Partner at T2C2/Bio Venture Capital in Montreal, Dr. Thomas designed strategies that led to 12 different multi-million dollar investment opportunities. He has dealt with some of the largest institutional investors and venture capital funders in the world. He also successfully negotiated investments on behalf of this \$100 million venture fund that focused on life science investments in Canada, Europe and Israel.

In order to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits to Canadians, CCR helps grow and retain Canadian technology-based companies that can capture new markets, and strengthen existing ones, with breakthrough innovations and accelerate the commercial introduction of leading edge technologies, goods, services and business models in priority areas. CCR's primary focus is on economically-crucial areas such as energy, the environment; natural resources; health and medical technologies as well as information and communications technologies.

“I am thrilled to be taking on this position at such an exciting time,” said Dr. Thomas. “I believe sincerely that innovation is critical to prosperity and as one of its strategic objectives CCR is committed to increasing the number of companies that move successfully through the stages of commercialization to become sustainable global competitors.”

Dr. Thomas' skills and expertise make him the ideal candidate to lead CCR and its Business Growth initiative which gives financial support and advice in three primary areas – management; product and market development; and technology strategy, with a plan developed to fit the specific needs of each company.

Through CCR, companies can also tap into OCE's other programs, the capabilities of partner organizations across Canada, including investors, and gain access to a comprehensive suite of resources and expertise. Through OCE's network, CCR can also help companies build relationships in the research community and deliver a continuous stream of talent and new ideas to support growth.

- CCR is funded by the Government of Canada through the Networks of Centres of Excellence. For information about (CCR) e-mail ccr-info@oce-ontario.org
- For more information on Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE), contact Sean McNeely at (416)-861-1092 ext. 1034 or sean.mcneely@oce-ontario.org

About Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) Inc. (www.oce-ontario.org)

Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) Inc. drives the commercialization of cutting-edge research across key market sectors to build the economy of tomorrow and secure Ontario's global competitiveness. In doing this, OCE fosters the training and development of the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs and is a key partner with Ontario's industry, universities, colleges, research hospitals, investors and governments. OCE's Centres work in communications and information technology, earth and environmental technologies, energy, materials and manufacturing and photonics. OCE is funded by the government of Ontario and is a key partner in delivering Ontario's Innovation Agenda. OCE through its Centre for Commercialization of Research (CCR), an initiative supported by the Networks of Centres of Excellence of Canada, also acts as a catalyst which allows innovative businesses to grow and achieve sustainable, commercial success and global competitiveness.

Backgrounder

Dr. Mario Thomas is an accomplished senior executive with impressive international credentials in the innovation industries. With over 20 years in leadership roles directing corporate development including mergers and acquisitions, he creates remarkable value for all stakeholders.

Dr. Thomas brings extensive experience filled with illustrious achievements in the life sciences sector driving successful development collaborations and financial ventures. He excels at expanding leading-edge product pipelines globally by catalyzing R&D programs with creative collaborations. Dr. Thomas builds world-class teams to deliver optimum performance and global collaboration. He delivers powerful business transformation drawing on his insights, experience, training, and industry knowledge to orchestrate strategic alliances that deliver lucrative results.

Dr. Thomas' career began in Canada at Johnson & Johnson Inc. in research and development, followed by a successful tenure in marketing with their Hospital Products division. After eight years at Johnson & Johnson, he joined Burroughs Wellcome Inc., where he took on increasing responsibilities in marketing to lead brand life cycle planning. Following his outstanding performance in this capacity, he went on to become Business Manager for the Virology and Oncology unit. Dr. Thomas later served as Vice President, Business Development for the Therapeutic division of BioChem Pharma. Over five years, he negotiated numerous alliances with universities, biotech, and pharmaceutical companies.

The broad scope of Dr. Thomas' business engagements has taken place on almost every continent worldwide. He conducts business in a broad variety of settings and cultures globally. He prides himself on being a solution provider to complex business challenges with a wealth of experience in directing diverse business transactions. His inclusive management philosophy brings people together fostering collaboration while leveraging all available resources to bring focus and precision to every project.

Dr. Thomas holds a PhD in chemistry and a B.Sc. from Université Laval in Québec City as well as a diploma in business administration from École des Hautes Études Commerciales of Université de Montréal. He is a lifelong learner who engages in continuous professional development at the executive level. He is also a Chartered Director with a diploma from the Université Laval. Dr. Thomas brings an in-depth background in board level functions both as a board member and in managing board relations as an executive.