



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **First Louisiana Biotech Company Focused on Cancer Announces Opening**

*(Baton Rouge, LA – April, 24, 2008):* Esperance Pharmaceuticals Inc., a new biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering and developing targeted and selective anticancer agents, announced today the opening of its corporate headquarters and laboratories in the Louisiana Emerging Technology Center, located on the LSU campus.

Esperance was founded on a patented technology discovered by scientists at the LSU Pennington Biomedical Research Center, the LSU Ag Center, and the Louisiana State University A&M campus.

“Esperance’s platform technology is a major technical advance that has great potential for developing more potent and safer drugs that target cancer cells without harming normal cells,” said Hector W. Alila, President and Founder of Esperance Pharmaceuticals. “We are focusing on developing a new class of targeted cancer therapies with better efficacy and safety profiles than existing cancer therapies such as radiation or chemotherapy.”

Research done at Esperance has shown that these drugs are very effective in targeting and destroying both primary tumors and metastases in animal models of cancer.

Initially structured by Louisiana Fund I LP of Baton Rouge, Esperance has secured a \$9 million Series A financing that will help it move one of its lead compounds toward early clinical testing.

Co-lead investors with Louisiana Fund I are Themelios Venture Partners LP (Shreveport, La.) and Research Corporation Technologies Inc. (Tucson, Ariz.)

"Louisiana Fund I has followed the development of this technology at LSU and we are very excited about the potential of therapeutic drugs for cancer that may come from this technology," said Joseph F. Lovett, Managing General Partner of Louisiana Fund I. "We are delighted to have Esperance located in Baton Rouge. It's also significant that Themelios Venture Partners and Research Corporation Technologies, who are quite experienced at investing in the biomedical area, were eager to invest in a start-up biotech company in Louisiana."

"Like most scientific breakthroughs, this technology came about initially as a university laboratory surprise," said Dr. John V. Lombardi, LSU System President. "Because of the hard work, innovation and scientific collaboration among LSU researchers, there are great hopes that this novel approach to treating cancer will be successful."

The technology was developed by Dr. William Hansel and his collaborators Drs. Fred Enright and Carola Leuschner.

The Esperance laboratories are located in a large wet-lab suite in the Louisiana Emerging Technology Center (LETC) at the Southeast gate to LSU. "LETC is a significant investment by the state to encourage the growth of the biotech industry in Louisiana," said Arthur R. Cooper, CEO of the LSU System Research & Technology Foundation. "Esperance's choice to open its labs here in Baton Rouge demonstrates that the state's economic development efforts are working well."

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