



## FORMA THERAPEUTICS AND MOFFITT CANCER CENTER ESTABLISH MULTIYEAR EPIGENETICS ALLIANCE

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*FORMA Therapeutics expands translational reach through partnership agreement with  
Moffitt basic and clinical scientists*

*Alliance to be co-led at Moffitt by Drs. Ed Seto and Eduardo Sotomayor*

**WATERTOWN, Mass., and TAMPA, Fla.** – September 23, 2014 – [FORMA Therapeutics](#) and [Moffitt Cancer Center](#) announced today a bold, collaborative research initiative and exclusive license option agreement focused on histone deacetylases (HDACs) and epigenetics. This research initiative will emphasize exploring mechanisms of action and differentiation profiles of potential therapeutic drug candidates and will provide critical insights for treating relevant patients with HDAC modulators. Under this agreement, FORMA will pair its ultra-efficient drug discovery team with Moffitt's world-class clinical and translational scientists in an open-access business framework.

"In order to continually advance innovative cancer treatments, interrogating the molecular complexities of immunology and epigenetics is paramount. Working with FORMA's leading scientists capable of generating potent and specific tools to probe clinical hypotheses has the potential to redefine critical roadmaps that control cancer development," said [Alan F. List](#), M.D., president and CEO, Moffitt.

"We are privileged to be strategic partners with Moffitt, one of only 41 National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers in the United States. This team validates the molecular signatures in tumors to support the development of personalized therapeutics," said Steven Tregay, Ph.D., president and CEO, FORMA Therapeutics. "Our collaboration with Moffitt enables us to efficiently match our drugs to the right patients and realize a precision medicine approach to cancer drug development."

In addition to conducting joint research studies, the framework for this newly-minted epigenetics alliance includes explorations into novel targets and other emerging epigenetic mechanisms through "Moffitt Innovative Studies." This strategic directive provides Moffitt researchers with the opportunity to identify exciting new areas in the epigenetics arena managed via an internal peer-review process. Together, these two activities will enhance the long-term success of this partnership.

This partnership structure will provide access to in vitro and in vivo biological systems, as well as anonymized patient samples for functional profiling. The team will explore identification and characterization of non-histone HDAC substrates to fully understand the role of selective HDAC inhibitors on immune and cancer cell function and to evaluate bioactivity in applicable disease models.

"Our relationship with Moffitt provides the opportunity to significantly accelerate understanding of the clinical application for highly selective histone deacetylase modulators, enzymes involved in histone acetylation and transcriptional regulation, as well as other key epigenetic and immune control factors. This unique opportunity to probe the pathophysiological contributions of target-

selective compounds across related molecular pathways in a disease-relevant setting will guide our creation of breakthrough drugs,” said Kenneth W. Bair, Ph.D., chief scientific officer and head of Research and Development, FORMA Therapeutics.

The alliance will be co-led at Moffitt by [Ed Seto](#), Ph.D., senior member, [Department of Molecular Oncology](#); and [Eduardo M. Sotomayor](#), M.D., Susan and John Sykes Endowed Chair in Hematologic Malignancies, senior member and chair, Department of Malignant Hematology.

“The integration of members from FORMA and Moffitt into a joint team, combining unique bench-to-bedside experiences, should readily advance our understanding of the biological role of HDACs and their associated substrates. We expect these advances to translate new knowledge into effective therapies,” said Seto.

“It is extremely rewarding to partner with the FORMA Therapeutics team and collectively influence the discovery and translational development of future therapeutic medicines. FORMA’s selection of Moffitt for this expansive partnership was based on our assemblage of renowned clinical researchers with broad knowledge in HDAC biology and proven clinical research expertise at the forefront of the oncology-immune-epigenetic axis,” said Sotomayor.

As part of this agreement, a collaborative consortium on epigenetics will consist of:

- FORMA Therapeutics Inc.
- Moffitt Cancer Center
  - Co-chair: Ed Seto, Ph.D., senior member, Department of Molecular Oncology
  - Co-chair: Eduardo M. Sotomayor, M.D., senior member and chair, Department of Malignant Hematology
  - [James J. Mulé](#), Ph.D., senior member, associate center director, Translational Research, Michael McGillicuddy Endowed Chair for Melanoma Research and Treatment, director of Cell-Based Therapies
  - [Claudio Anasetti](#), M.D., senior member and chair, Department of Blood & Marrow Transplantation
  - [Jeffrey S. Weber](#), M.D., Ph.D., director of the Donald A. Adam Comprehensive Melanoma Research Center of Excellence, senior member, Department of Cutaneous Oncology
  - [P.K. Epling-Burnette](#), PharmD, Ph.D., senior member, Immunology Program
  - [Brian Betts](#), M.D., assistant member, Department of Blood & Marrow Transplantation
  - Alejandro Villagra, Ph.D., research scientist, Immunology Program

“The internal scientific ecosystem Moffitt has built integrates a broad array of disciplines including immune regulation, epigenetic control, tumor metastasis and translational genomics. Further, Moffitt’s organizational structure as a multidisciplinary team of basic scientists, physician-scientists, clinicians and hematopathologists, operating within a functional matrix team to explore HDAC biology, drove FORMA’s interest in a partnership. We are pleased to expand FORMA’s community of external scientists to include Moffitt as a cornerstone network member,” said Rob Sarisky, Ph.D., chief business officer, FORMA Therapeutics.

### **About Moffitt Cancer Center**

Located in Tampa, Moffitt is one of only 41 [National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers](#), a distinction that recognizes Moffitt’s excellence in research, its contributions to clinical trials, prevention and cancer control. Moffitt is the top-ranked cancer hospital in the Southeast and has been listed in [U.S. News & World Report](#) as one of the “Best Hospitals” for

cancer since 1999. With more than 4,500 employees, Moffitt has an economic impact on Florida of nearly \$1.6 billion. For more information, visit [MOFFITT.org](http://MOFFITT.org), and follow the Moffitt momentum on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

### **About FORMA**

FORMA Therapeutics' scientists are passionate about discovering and developing medicines that will make a difference in oncology and other genetically driven therapeutic areas. The company's drug discovery engine drives screening and structure-based approaches across broad families of targets involved in tumor metabolism, epigenetics, protein homeostasis and protein-protein interactions. Deep biological insight across targets is combined with the company's chemistry expertise and integrated with a world class network of academic investigators, clinical experts and corporate partners to rapidly direct the creation of high quality, innovative drug candidates.

FORMA is headquartered in Watertown, MA near the epicenter of the Cambridge Life Sciences cluster, with additional chemistry operations in Branford, CT. [www.formatherapeutics.com](http://www.formatherapeutics.com)

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### **Media Contact**

For FORMA Therapeutics

Kari Watson or Charles Liles, +1 781-235-3060

[kwatson@macbiocom.com](mailto:kwatson@macbiocom.com) or [cliles@macbiocom.com](mailto:cliles@macbiocom.com)

MacDougall Biomedical Communications