



## **Startech Announces \$2.5 Million Texas Emerging Technology Fund Investment in ViroXis Corporation**

ViroXis Successfully Merging Traditional Healthcare and Innovative Botanical Drug Development

Startech and the South Texas Regional Center of Innovation and Commercialization (STRCIC) today announced the investment of \$2.5 million in San Antonio-based ViroXis Corporation by the Texas Emerging Technology Fund (TETF). The award is to advance the product development and commercialization of its topical Albuterpenoid drug, a patented anti-viral therapeutic derived from East Indian Sandalwood oil (EISO), aimed at treating common skin warts, a highly prevalent disease that currently lacks a successful means of treatment.

ViroXis is an innovative life sciences company merging evidence-based healthcare and botanical drug development technology. EISO is produced by steam distillation of the heartwood of the East Indian Sandalwood tree (*Santalum album*) and is widely used as a perfume, cosmetic, skin enhancer, and flavoring agent. EISO has successfully completed an investigational Phase IIb FDA approved clinical study with clinical investigators at the Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. The therapeutic is for treatment of Human Papillomavirus (HPV) the cause of skin warts, a contagious condition with a US prevalence of approximately 10 million people. Current treatment methods of HPV warts include cryotherapy, surgery, cauterization and topical keratolytic agents, and have generally proven to be unsatisfactory due to a lack of efficacy, treatment-associated pain, potential scarring, inoperability, cost, and very high rates of recurrence. ViroXis is developing its EISO-based Albuterpenoid topical drug as a painless, effective prescription alternative to current treatments.

"We are pleased to announce ViroXis as the most recent recipient of ETF funding in South Texas," said Jim Poage, President and CEO of Startech and the STRCIC. "This investment in ViroXis will enable the continued development of important technology that will ultimately provide a safer and more effective way to treat skin warts particularly in children. This therapeutic agent is a novel and innovative way to use botanical compounds that exist in nature and apply them to heal the human body."

"ViroXis' promising innovations could soon bring relief to ailing people in Texas and around the world," Gov. Perry said. "This Texas Emerging Technology Fund investment will not only improve the health of the patients benefiting from this therapy, it will also grow the quality and strength of Texas' biotechnology sector." Ian Clements, President and CEO of ViroXis, stated, "This significant investment in ViroXis by the Texas ETF will enable us to move our lead product into clinical trials, bringing us one step closer to launching a novel botanical drug for treatment of a serious and problematic skin condition. We are fortunate that, in San Antonio, we have close relationships with several companies, universities, clinicians and non-profit research institutes that are willing and able to assist us in our drug development program. We are extremely pleased that the State of Texas recognizes the potential value of our efforts and has chosen to invest in ViroXis."

## **About Startech**

Startech is a private non-profit 501 (c)(3) Texas corporation that exists to Inspire technology innovation and commercialization, Create technology companies, and Grow them into viable businesses in the South Texas regional economy. Startech offers Venture Innovation, Investment and Collaborative services for Entrepreneurs, Investors, Researchers, Service Providers and Partners interested in technology innovation and commercialization. In this respect, Startech works closely with several funding sources including the South Texas Angel Network, the Texas Emerging Technology Fund, Venture Capital, SBIR and STTR grants, Microsoft BizSpark, and many others. From 2003 - 2009, Startech portfolio clients have raised more than \$162 million in external financing. Startech derives financial support from the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, the State of Texas, the University of Texas at San Antonio, private companies, individuals, and public institutions.