



Consortium of Medical Schools Led by Mount Sinai Fast-Tracking COVID-19 Detection Test Utilizing Fluidigm Microfluidics Technology

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Speed and scale of Fluidigm microfluidics technology to facilitate early-stage host monitoring for COVID-19

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., March 16, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Fluidigm Corporation (Nasdaq:FLDM), an innovative biotechnology tools provider with a vision to improve life through comprehensive health insight, today announced that a consortium of medical schools led by the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai is utilizing Fluidigm® microfluidics technology to create an epigenetic test for early detection of the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19. The spread of this disease has been declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization.

Part of the Epigenetic CHaracterization and Observation (ECHO) program of the U.S. Defense Department's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), the consortium is developing a test using real-time PCR for host detection assays targeting epigenome and viral RNA for early-stage monitoring of potentially infected individuals.

Incorporating the Fluidigm Biomark™ HD system and the company's microfluidics technology, a single integrated fluidic circuit (IFC) can screen 192 samples across 24 different parallel processed assays to allow early detection of the virus infection. Labs will be able to generate more than 6,000 individual test results per day with just one hour of hands-on time, representing a scale and parallel processing of assays not possible using microwell plates.

The consortium led by the Icahn School of Medicine plans to submit the test for Emergency Use Authorization, in accordance with U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) guidelines, for a high-throughput screening assay for COVID-19 based on robust real-time PCR. It will employ the high-throughput sample processing capacity of the Biomark HD coupled with parallel multi-assay interrogation of microfluidics.

"Speed, scale and early detection are critical in addressing the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the ability to rapidly screen a large number of samples will enhance capabilities in identification and management of infected individuals, including those who are asymptomatic," said Chris Linthwaite, President and CEO of Fluidigm. "We believe the application of Fluidigm microfluidics technologies to epigenetic testing for COVID-19 has significant potential to increase the speed and capacity of these critical screening efforts.

"Fluidigm is committed to supporting the efforts of the consortium and others in addressing the rapidly evolving global COVID-19 pandemic. We believe that partnering with other developers and labs seeking Emergency Use Authorization for tests utilizing our unique IFC technology has the potential to add significant testing capacity. Quick and reliable detection is crucial to combat this rapidly advancing pandemic."

Microfluidics technology generates more data and uses a fraction of expensive testing reagents per precious sample as compared with more traditional, microwell plate-based PCR technology. Fluidigm Biomark HD and microfluidics technology, in particular, enable the automated assembly of PCRs at the nanoscale level in a massively parallel manner.

"We appreciate the unique expertise Fluidigm brings to this multi-institution, DARPA-supported effort to develop an early test for COVID-19," said Professor Stuart C. Sealfon, MD, principal investigator of the DARPA ECHO program and Director of the Center for Advanced Research on Diagnostic Assays and Chairman Emeritus of the Department of Neurology at the Icahn Sinai School of Medicine.

About Fluidigm

Fluidigm (Nasdaq:FLDM) is an industry-leading biotechnology tools provider with a vision to improve life through comprehensive health insight. We focus on the most pressing needs in translational and clinical research, including cancer, immunology, and immunotherapy. Using proprietary CyTOF® and microfluidics technologies, we develop, manufacture, and market multi-omic solutions to drive meaningful insights in health and disease, identify biomarkers to inform decisions, and accelerate the development of more effective therapies. Our customers are leading academic, government, pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and plant and animal research laboratories worldwide. Together with them, we strive to increase the quality of life for all. For more information, visit fluidigm.com.

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Forward-Looking Statements for Fluidigm

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, including, among others, statements regarding the implementation of Fluidigm microfluidics technology and products by third parties and the anticipated benefits of, and applications and demand for, such products. Forward-looking statements are subject to numerous risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from currently anticipated results, including but not limited to risks relating to challenges inherent in developing, manufacturing, launching, marketing, and selling new products; risks relating to company research and development and distribution plans and capabilities; interruptions or delays in the supply of components or materials for, or manufacturing of, Fluidigm products; potential product performance and quality issues; intellectual property risks; and competition. Information on these and additional risks and uncertainties and other information affecting Fluidigm business and operating results is contained in Fluidigm's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2019, and in its other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. These forward-looking statements speak only as of the date hereof. Fluidigm disclaims any obligation to update these forward-looking statements except as may be required by law.

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