

## GOING FOR GOLD: GOLD LEAF AWARDS HONOUR CANADIAN BIOTECH INNOVATION

*Arius Research, Medicago Inc., Zymeworks Inc., Centre for Drug Research and Development's Natalie Dakers and Lesia Babiak, from Janssen-Ortho Inc. honoured with prestigious industry awards*

OTTAWA (May 13 2009) – BIOTECanada today announced the 2009 winners of the prestigious Gold Leaf Awards. Nominated and judged by biotechnology industry leaders, the awards honour companies and individuals who have demonstrated leadership, innovation and financial success in 2008.

Toronto's Arius Research, that made headlines last year in an all cash acquisition deal from Roche worth C\$191 million, took top honours as company of the year. "With this significant deal with a major global pharmaceutical player, Arius is a successful example of the globally recognized leadership of Canadian private sector biotechnology research," said BIOTECanada Chairman, Brad Thompson.

The early stage company awards went to Medicago Inc., who successfully expanded their relationship with Philip Morris International into a \$15.9 million private placement and non-exclusive partnership for their plant-based vaccine work; and to Zymeworks Inc. who closed \$1.35 million in financing last year and whose unique computational molecular simulation platform fuses the worlds of high tech and enzyme modification in industrial biotechnology.

"Both of these leading firms are stellar examples of Canadian innovative thinking, partnership potential, and research and development expertise," said BIOTECanada President and CEO, Peter Brender. "Once commercialized, their products will make a significant contribution to Canada's economy."

The association also awarded a national industry leadership award to Natalie Dakers, President and CEO of the Vancouver-based Centre for Drug Research and Development, an organization that guides and supports early-stage drug development. An entrepreneur who founded her own biotech company, now at the helm of CDRD, Ms Dakers has been integral to the organization's success which includes raising over \$70 million in funding from government and industry partners to support its commercialization mission.

An award for association leadership went to Lesia Babiak of Janssen-Ortho Inc., whose leadership of the BIOTECanada's Health Advisory Board allowed the Association to establish a position of leadership with our government partners, and within the industry on important business and public policy issues.

Awards are judged by the BIOTECanada board of directors on the basis of strict criteria. The awards are presented annually by BIOTECanada. Sixty-three nominations for fifty-one nominees were received this year.

For more details about the award winners visit: [www.goldleafawards.ca](http://www.goldleafawards.ca). Background material attached.

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## Media Backgrounder 2009 Gold Leaf Award Winners – Background Quotations

### **Company of the Year – Arius Research (Pharma Research Toronto)**

“We are honored to have received this prestigious award from BIOTECCanada,” said Dan Pereira Vice President, Head of Research Pharma Research Toronto. “Roche's capabilities in biopharmaceutical research, development, manufacturing and commercialization offered us the ideal opportunity to realise the full potential of our approach and pipeline of candidate drugs, and we are pleased that our financial success is recognized by the industry.”

### **Early Stage Company of the Year – Health – Medicigo Inc.**

“The transaction with Philip Morris represented a major accomplishment given today's challenging market conditions,” said Andy Sheldon, President and CEO of Medicigo Inc. “The support and expertise Phillip Morris brings to Medicigo are a strong validation of our product and will be invaluable as we move into the next phase of product development.”

### **Early Stage Company of the Year – Industrial & Agricultural – Zymeworks Inc.**

“We are immensely pleased that our technology and progress have been recognized by the industry in this competitive field,” said Ali Tehrani, President and CEO of Zymeworks Inc. “2008 has seen major advancements in our computational technology, with significant funding milestones and start of a promising collaboration with DSM.”

### **Industry Leadership Award – Natalie Dakers, President and CEO, Centre for Drug Research and Development**

“Working with this industry I am struck every day by Canada's incredible innovative potential in biotechnology,” said Natalie Dakers, President and CEO, Centre for Drug Research and Development. “I am deeply honoured to be recognized by the industry for the work of CDRD, which involves so many of my dedicated team.”

### **Contribution to the Association Award –Lesia Babiak, Director, Federal Affairs & Health Policy, Janssen-Ortho Inc.**

“I am honoured to receive this year's Gold Leaf award for contribution to the association,” said Lesia Babiak, Director, Federal Affairs & Health Policy, Janssen-Ortho Inc. “I am committed to the work BIOTECCanada does to build biotechnology innovation and ensure our products get to Canadians, and I am immensely pleased to be recognized by my colleagues in this way.”

### **ABOUT BIOTECCanada [www.biotech.ca](http://www.biotech.ca)**

BIOTECCanada is dedicated to the sustainable commercial development of biotechnology innovation in Canada. It is the national industry-funded association with over 250 member companies representing the broad spectrum of biotech constituents including emerging and established firms in the health, industrial, and agricultural sectors, as well as academic and research institutions and other related organizations.

