CEO & Founder of Vertex Pharmaceuticals, Inc. to be Keynote at Five Ventures®

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – March 3, 2009 – Joshua Boger, CEO and Founder of Vertex Pharmaceuticals, Inc., will be the keynote speaker, April 9, for Five Ventures® Business Plan Competition. Boger, a native of Concord, North Carolina, is one of the most respected biotechnology entrepreneurs in the world and is the author of over 50 scientific publications. He holds 31 issued U.S. patents in pharmaceutical discovery and development, and has lectured widely in the United States, Europe and Asia on various aspects of drug discovery and development. Vertex Pharmaceuticals, Inc. is a global biotechnology company committed to the discovery and development of breakthrough small molecule drugs for diseases including cancer, pain, cystic fibrosis and HIV.

About Five Ventures®
A free competition open to any aspiring entrepreneur with an early-stage high-growth business within the Southeast region of the county. Entrepreneurs are encouraged to submit their executive summaries by March 9th via the www.FiveVentures.com website. Upon submission, businesses will be segmented into one of five sectors: Biotechnology, Information Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Service/Retail and Student/Non-Profit.

Finalists will compete for over $100,000 in cash and in-kind services. Teams will receive one-on-one mentoring and coaching from a network of over 50 volunteer professionals from throughout the region. The finals of Five Ventures® will take place on April 9 at the UNC Charlotte’s Barnhardt Student Activities Center. Five Ventures® continues to seek sponsors, coaches and aspiring entrepreneurs interested in participating in the program. For registration and additional details visit www.FiveVentures.com.

Sponsors of the 2009 Five Ventures® Business Plan Competition and Conference include: Belk College of Business at UNC Charlotte; Charlotte Research Institute; Office of Technology Transfer at UNC Charlotte; The Ben Craig Center; Business Wire; Grant Thornton LLP; Black Diamond Capital Group; Cabarrus Economic Development; Defense & Security Technology Accelerator; Organizational Science of UNC Charlotte; Bright Yellow Jacket; Wed|3; Inception Micro Angel Fund (IMAF); BIG Council; Robinson, Bradshaw & Hinson, P.A.; SwampFox and the SBTDC of North Carolina.

About UNC Charlotte
A public research university, UNC Charlotte is the fourth largest campus among the 17 institutions of The University of North Carolina system. It is the largest institution of higher education in the Charlotte region. The university offers 18 doctoral programs, 62 master’s degree programs and 90 programs leading to bachelor’s degrees. Fall 2008 enrollment exceeds 23,300 students, including almost 5,200 graduate students.

http://www.uncc.edu

About the Charlotte Research Institute
The Charlotte Research Institute is the portal for business-university partnerships at UNC Charlotte. CRI includes eight multidisciplinary research centers and The Ben Craig Center, a business incubator. CRI supports new research ventures, partnerships with regional and national enterprises, and spin-off companies created from UNC Charlotte research results. The centers focus on Precision Metrology, eBusiness Technology, Optoelectronics and Optical Communications, Visualization, Motorsports Engineering, Bioinformatics, Life Sciences and Biomedical Engineering Systems. http://www.CharlotteResearchInstitute.org

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