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Vertex Pharmaceuticals Receives Distinguished Recognition by Scientific American Magazine

- Company named Business Leader in Medical Treatment in the 2004 "Scientific American 50" -

New York, November 8, 2004 -- Vertex Pharmaceuticals Incorporated (Nasdaq:VRTX) has been named a Business Leader by Scientific American magazine in its annual list recognizing outstanding acts of scientific and technological leadership from the past year. Vertex was chosen based on its leadership in the development of new medicines for the treatment of hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection.

"Scientific American believes strongly that the best hope for a safer, healthier, more prosperous world rests in the enlightened use of technology," said John Rennie, Editor-In-Chief of Scientific American. "The Scientific American 50 is our annual opportunity to salute the people and organizations making that possible through their outstanding efforts as leaders of research, industry and policymaking."

Selected by the magazine's Board of Editors with the help of distinguished outside advisors, the Scientific American 50 recognizes research, business and policy leaders in various technological categories including Medical Treatments, Computing, Environment and more.

Vertex has been named Business Leader in Medical Treatment based on efforts by the Company to develop VX-950, an oral hepatitis C protease inhibitor and one of the most advanced of a new class of direct antivirals in development for treatment of HCV infection. Earlier in 2004, Vertex initiated a first-in-human clinical trial for VX-950, and last week the Company reported results from that trial in a late-breaker presentation at the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases' annual meeting in Boston. Today, Vertex announced that it has begun the first study of VX-950 that will enroll patients with hepatitis C.

"Chronic hepatitis C virus infection is a serious public health concern for some 2.7 million people in the United States alone," said Joshua Boger, Ph.D., Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Vertex Pharmaceuticals. "VX-950 exemplifies Vertex's commitment to people infected with chronic HCV by developing innovative medicines that can transform their care."

Vertex's drug development portfolio includes two different approaches for advancing the future standard of care in HCV. In addition to VX-950, Vertex is developing merimepodib, an IMPDH inhibitor in combination with pegylated interferon alpha (peg-IFN) and ribavirin. Addition of merimepodib to standard therapy has the potential to enhance antiviral activity and improve clinical outcomes for a larger percentage of patients. Vertex owns worldwide development and commercialization rights for merimepodib, and owns worldwide development and commercialization rights to VX-950 except for Japan and certain Far East markets.

The Scientific American 50 appears in the magazine's December issue, which hits newsstands November 23.

Clinical Need and Market Opportunity in HCV Infection
Chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection is a serious public health concern affecting approximately 2.7 million people in the United States. HCV causes inflammation of the liver, which may lead to fibrosis and cirrhosis, liver cancer and ultimately, liver failure. Cirrhosis of the liver resulting from chronic HCV infection is the leading indication for liver transplantation in the U.S. Due to the asymptomatic nature of HCV infection, it often goes undetected for up to 20 years following initial infection. Worldwide, the disease strikes as many as 185 million people. Each year, 8,000 to 10,000 people in the U.S. die from complications of HCV.

The current standard of care in HCV treatment is a combination of weekly injections of peg-IFN and daily oral dosing of ribavirin. This combination therapy provides a sustained viral response for only 40 to 50 percent of patients chronically infected with genotype 1 HCV, the most difficult viral strain to treat and the most common form in the U.S.

About Vertex
Vertex Pharmaceuticals Incorporated is a global biotechnology company committed to the discovery and development of breakthrough small molecule drugs for serious diseases. The Company's strategy is to commercialize its products both independently and in collaboration with major pharmaceutical partners. Vertex's product pipeline is principally focused on viral

diseases, inflammation, autoimmune diseases and cancer. Vertex co-promotes the new HIV protease inhibitor, Lexiva(R), with GlaxoSmithKline.

This press release may contain forward-looking statements, including statements that (i) Vertex is developing medicines, including VX-950, that can transform the clinical care of chronic hepatitis C; (ii) that Vertex has begun the first study of VX-950 that will enroll patients with hepatitis C; and (iii) the addition of merimepodib to standard therapy has the potential to enhance antiviral activity and improve clinical outcomes for a larger percentage of patients. While management makes its best efforts to be accurate in making forward-looking statements, such statements are subject to risks and uncertainties that could cause Vertex's actual results to vary materially. These risks and uncertainties include, among other things, the risks that clinical trials for merimepodib or VX-950 may not proceed as planned due to technical, scientific, supply or patient enrollment issues, that actual clinical studies of VX-950 will not reflect the results obtained in earlier clinical nonclinical testing, that clinical results may not demonstrate the value of direct antivirals and combination therapies for HCV patients generally, and other risks listed under Risk Factors in Vertex's form 10-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on March 15, 2004 and amended on September 8, 2004.

Lexiva(R) is a registered trademark of the GlaxoSmithKline group of companies.

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