



**Governor Bill Richardson Announces UNM Health
Sciences Center, NCGR in Santa Fe Selected to
Participate in
\$24 Million Federal Contract
to Research Infectious Diseases**

**New Mexico bio powerhouses will partner with
Iceland's deCODE genetics**

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SANTA FE- Governor Bill Richardson announced today the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center, and the National Center for Genome Resources (NCGR) in Santa Fe have been selected to participate in a unique international biomedical research project. Iceland-based biopharmaceutical company deCODE genetics (NASDAQ:DCGN) has been awarded a five year, \$24 million contract from the National Institutes of Health to research infectious diseases with the intent of developing new methods of prevention and treatment. deCODE genetics selected UNM and the NCGR to join them on the project.

"This contract is a direct result of the world-class disease research being performed at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center, and the high quality of the doctors and staff," said Governor Richardson. "I am committed to utilizing New Mexico's cutting-edge research and development resources to grow our economy and create high-tech, high-wage jobs. Together, this solid public-private partnership- UNM, deCODE, the National Center for Genome Resources, and the National Institutes of Health- will develop new drugs for infectious diseases, and improve the quality of life for New Mexicans and people everywhere."

Governor Richardson made the announcement at a news conference at the State Capitol, and was joined by UNM president Louis Caldera, deCODE genetics CEO Kari Stefansson, National Center for Genome Resources chairman Miguel Rios and New Mexico Economic Development Department Secretary Rick Homans.

Under the contract, deCODE genetics will search for the key genes involved in susceptibility to infectious diseases, such as Tuberculosis, adverse reaction to smallpox vaccination and the root causes of pneumonia and meningitis. Using this data, Professor Rick C. Lyons of the UNM Health Sciences Center, a renowned expert in the study of common pathogens and microbial virulence, will lead UNM's work to develop better means of treatment and prevention of these diseases.

The National Center for Genome Resources will design and maintain a database that will allow scientists worldwide to query and visualize the results of the project.

The New Mexico Economic Development Department was instrumental in introducing deCODE to the UNM Health Sciences Center and NCGR, and in bringing the project to successful fruition.