

## PRESS INFORMATION

### **AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE**

Autoimmunity: Unique Research Centre starts in  
Wendelsheim, Germany

**The AIRA e. V. (Association for Interdisciplinary Research in Autoimmunity) is celebrating the opening of the AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE in Wendelsheim on Friday, the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 2006. The opening is an introduction to a new type of platform for ongoing, interdisciplinary and international research as well as professional training in the field of autoimmune diseases.**

Research in finding the causes of autoimmune diseases suffers under the enormous diversity of clinical pictures. The fact that the clinical symptoms of a single autoimmune disease generally exceed the boundaries of individual specialist medical disciplines, has led to the extreme decentralization of research activities.

Only through the centralization of research in the field of autoimmunity can applied research be accelerated in order to allow an early diagnosis, finding effective therapies or even the cure for autoimmune diseases.

Despite the tremendous significance of autoimmune diseases worldwide, a centralized research centre which unites very different areas of research in an interdisciplinary manner does not exist until now.

The establishment of the AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE in Wendelsheim, Germany, focuses on creating a platform for the exchange of findings and experiences as well as supporting the practical implementation of research projects through providing the required space and technical facilities that are unique in this form.

The development of the institute is being promoted through private investments by the initiators Dr. h.c. Karl-Heinz Kipp, Switzerland, and Dr. Torsten Matthias, owner and managing director of AESKU.DIAGNOSTICS in Wendelsheim.

Furthermore, the State's Ministry of Economic Affairs, Transport, Agriculture and Viniculture in the German federal state of Rhineland-Palatinate is providing the laboratory at the AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE with the latest equipment necessary for the areas of activity of the institute.

To create a unique platform for interdisciplinary research in autoimmunity the support of committed individuals is essential in order to initiate and to guarantee the realization of future-oriented research and development projects. Therefore the AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE will be supported by an active advisory council of nine experts in autoimmunity.

The institute will be located in the technology centre MikroForum in Wendelsheim, which fulfils the space and technical prerequisites in an optimum manner. "Location with an outlook" – the slogan says it all.

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The opening of the institute also forms part of the program for the first international symposium of the AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE entitled "Autoimmunity 2006", taking place on Saturday, the 6<sup>th</sup> of May.

Autoimmunity 2006 offers you an overview of the latest research trends from the various areas of autoimmunity. The symposium also creates a platform for the constructive, interdisciplinary exchange of ideas and findings with the speakers and with one another.

Participation is free of charge but only possible following prior registration.

The extensive programs for both events, the most important organizational key data and background information about the association AIRA e.V. and the AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE are available from:

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Task and objectives / Scientific Support

#### The association AIRA

- Promotes interdisciplinary research in autoimmunity.
- Creates an excellent foundation for the interdisciplinary orientation of activities and advantages for the world at large through an open approach towards the various cooperation partners in science and business.
- Establishes a scientific, spatial and technical platform for ongoing, interdisciplinary and international research as well as professional training through the development of the AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE.

#### Tasks and objectives of the AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE

- **Platform for interdisciplinary research in international research networks:** The AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE initiates and coordinates international research cooperation and development projects. At the same time it offers the spatial and personnel requirements for the implementation of joint interdisciplinary projects at the facility in Wendelsheim.
- **Forum for international information exchange:** A future-oriented event forum is being created at the AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE; including meetings between leading scientists, further training of doctors and laboratories as well as information events for patients.
- **Focal point for the development of new treatment options:** The AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE has consciously positioned itself as an international interface between basic research and clinical research, so that recent research results may be incorporated into clinical application.

#### The advisory council

To create a unique platform for interdisciplinary research in autoimmunity the support of committed individuals is essential in order to initiate and to guarantee the realization of future-oriented research and development projects. Therefore the AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE will be supported by an active advisory council of experts in autoimmunity.

- **Professor Yehuda Shoenfeld**, University of Tel Aviv, Israel
- **Professor Noel R. Rose**, Johns Hopkins Medical Institute, Baltimore, USA
- **Prof. Dr. Klaus Helmke**, Munich-Bogenhausen Hospital, Germany
- **Prof. Dr. Reinhold E. Schmidt**, Hanover Medical University, Germany
- **Prof. M. Eric Gershwin, MD**, University of California at Davis, USA
- **Prof. Loïc Guillevin**, Hopital Avicenne, Bobigny, France
- **Prof. Dr. Dr. Jürgen Stein**, University of Frankfurt, Germany
- **Prof. Dr. Markus J. Maeurer**, Smittskyddsinstitutet, Solna, Sweden
- **Dr. Allan Wiik**, Department of Autoimmunology, Statens Serum Institut, Copenhagen, Denmark

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## The 3 pillars of support

- Private investment by the initiators of AIRA, Dr. h.c. Karl-Heinz Kipp, Switzerland, and Dr. Torsten Matthias, Germany.
- Moral and financial support from the German State of Rhineland-Palatinate.
- Scientific support from an active advisory council and numerous international research cooperations.

## Expert opinions

Prof. Yehuda Shoenfeld, holder of the Laura Schwartz-Kipp chair at the University of Tel Aviv: *"I have the feeling that our center and department can be an ideal partner for such a center in Germany. I express my willingness to be part of it, contributing to the benefit of patients and to strengthening the relationships between medical and industrial institutions in Germany."*

Prof. Dr. K. Helmke, head of the Clinical Immunology/Rheumatology/Osteology department at Munich-Bogenhausen Hospital: *"I am not aware of any other project in which research and teaching is networked with international cooperation, further training, national and international student exchanges, cooperation between university and industrial research, and which has been incorporated into cooperative structures. Also to be mentioned in this respect are the approaches to further training at widely varying levels. The project seems to be an exemplary one, without comparison, at the present time at least on a national scale, and probably also on an international one."*

## AESKU-KIPP.INSTITUTE: The initiators

### Dr. Torsten Matthias

Dr. Torsten Matthias, born 1961, founder and owner of AESKU.DIAGNOSTICS has extensive experience in research and development. For nearly two decades his professional work and activities have focused on the topic of autoimmunity.

Various awards since the foundation of his company in the year 2000 are testimony to the highly innovative character of the company and the unique selling points of the products.

- "Pioniergeist 2000", award from the state of Rhineland-Palatinate for the business concept
- "Innovation Prize 2001" from the state of Rhineland-Palatinate for the development of the patented alpha-fodrin tests.

The clear objective of the research and development work for Dr. Torsten Matthias is, above all, the development of innovative and, at the same time, market-oriented diagnostics and therapies.

The financial and personnel resources for the extraordinary research commitment of his company are essentially financed by its ongoing corporate growth.

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Dr. Torsten Matthias is pursuing the objective of attaining the close networking of interdisciplinary research in the fields of the pathogenesis, diagnosis and therapy of autoimmune diseases, and of guaranteeing such a network in the long term.

Alongside the further positive development of the company, he has also set himself the goal of establishing a platform for ongoing, interdisciplinary, international research in the field of autoimmunity in the next three years. He is supporting the development of the AESKU-KIPP.INSTITUTE through major personal investment.

## **Dr. h.c. Karl-Heinz Kipp**

Dr. h.c. Karl-Heinz Kipp, born 1924, began his extraordinary career as an entrepreneur as long ago as 1948 with the acquisition of the Trier-based "Trierer Trachten und Bänderhandlung Alfred Massa".

In 1965 he founds the first Massa consumer market under this catchy name, and then rapidly rises through the ranks of the leading self-service stores with new and absolutely unique concepts.

In 1986 he transformed the family-run company into a stock corporation. He himself withdrew from the business and sold his shares, the bulk of which to Asko AG in 1987, which later became part of the Metro Group. The real estate of the Massa Group has remained in the ownership of the family, however, and will be leased in the long term by the new owners of the markets.

Today Dr. Karl-Heinz Kipp lives in Switzerland and ranks among the world's richest men. He specifically invests in real estate, among other things in luxury hotels in Switzerland.

In addition to his extraordinary commitment to social matters, Dr. Karl-Heinz Kipp above all promotes research and development in the medical sector.

In line with his strong ties to his first business headquarters in Alzey, he has invested in the development of the high technology centre MikroForum in Wendelsheim near Alzey.

In 2003 together with the company AESKU.DIAGNOSTICS, Wendelsheim, and in cooperation with the Laura Schwartz-Kipp Foundation which he has established, he supported the creation of the world's first chair for autoimmunity at the University of Tel Aviv.

Karl-Heinz Kipp is supporting the development of the AESKU-KIPP.INSTITUTE as a private investor, so as to promote research into autoimmunity, and to open up new development opportunities for the MikroForum and for Rhineland-Palatinate as a research location.

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## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Pictures and Captions



**Picture 1 (Original: 1,18 MB)**

On Friday, the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 2006, the AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE in Wendelsheim opens its doors for interdisciplinary and international research projects in the field of autoimmune diseases.



**Picture 2 (Original: 0,71 MB)**

Dr. Torsten Matthias, Chairman of the Board AIRA e.V. and owner of AESKU.DIAGNOSTICS: The AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTE has consciously positioned itself as an international interface between basic research and clinical research, so that recent research results may be incorporated into clinical application.



**Picture (Original: 0,65 MB)**

Prof. Yehuda Shoenfeld, holder of the Laura Schwartz-Kipp chair at the University of Tel Aviv and Chairman of the „1<sup>st</sup> International AESKU-KIPP.INSTITUTE-Symposium „Autoimmunity 2006“.



**Picture 4 (Original: 0,21 MB)**

The AESKU.KIPP INSTITUTES supports the practical implementation of research projects through providing the required space and technical facilities that are unique in this form.

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