

## ValveXchange announces start of chronic animal studies

**January 30, 2009. Denver** - ValveXchange Inc. announced that it has begun animal testing of its proprietary exchangeable valve technology. CEO, Larry Blankenship, stated *"This is a major milestone for VXi and the development of our technology. Working with two expert teams, we have confirmed our implantation technique and are moving to chronic animal studies. We are particularly pleased that we have been able to achieve this milestone on time and under budget!"* The two centers working in partnership with ValveXchange are the laboratories of Dr. Eric Monnet at the College of Veterinary Medicine at the Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, and Professor Richard Bianco, Director of Experimental Surgical Services, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN. Both Institutions are well-recognized for their expertise in animal surgery.

The [Veterinary Hospital](#) at Colorado State University has been ranked as one of the top veterinary center in the U.S. [Dr. Monnet](#) and his colleagues have interests in ventricular and valvular function in various animal models and have [published](#) extensively in this field. [Dr. Chris Orton](#), one of the team members at Colorado State, is known for his early work in developing a tissue-engineered valve and is listed as the inventor on perhaps the first major patent ([5,192,312](#)) on the decellularization of animal tissue valve, a technology that ultimately led to the first therapeutic use of decellularized valves.

[Prof. Richard Bianco](#) of the University of Minnesota is known world-wide for his high volume of prosthetic and bioprosthetic valve implants into the juvenile sheep model, and his many [publications](#) on this topic. Many of his key publications relate to developing pre-clinical animal models for testing heart valves, and he has implanted virtually every valve that is currently on the market. During the first implant of the VXi valve, Prof. Bianco commented that our first generation sewing cuff *"felt just like that of the Edwards valve"*, and that *"not having the leaflets in the way avoided worry about damage during implantation"*.

The acute animal studies were particularly important to VXi as they enabled us to *"identify the need for new accessory tools for insertion and exchange early in our animal work, and prepare for the exchange experiments in the coming months"*, said Ivan Vesely, Ph.D., Founder and Chief Scientific Officer of VXi.