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Warner Brothers to film movie about whistleblower who works for Fresno company

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by adrianr
03/25/08 9:10AM

A Fresno company has promoted a man in their East Coast office who happens to be the subject of a film being shot by Warner Brothers, in his role as a whistleblower in the 1992 price-fixing case involving the Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) Company.



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Cypress Systems, Inc., a Fresno-based biotechnology company, announced that it has promoted Mark E. Whitacre, Ph.D. to become the company's Chief Operating Officer (COO) and President of Operations.

Here's the kicker -- he'll be played by Matt Damon.

The movie is scheduled to be filmed starting in April. Dr. Mark Whitacre was a whistleblower in the 1992 price-fixing case involving Archer Daniels Midland, when he was President of the ADM BioProducts Division and Corporate Vice President of the company.

The film will depict the FBI undercover work by Mark Whitacre and detailing the ADM price-fixing case. The movie and script will be based on the Kurt Eichenwald book published in 2000, "The Informant." The Steven Soderbergh directed movie has cast Matt Damon in the role of Mark Whitacre.

The ADM price fixing case is well documented in hundreds of articles and was the subject of two books. Besides "The Informant" by Kurt Eichenwald, James B. Lieber, an attorney, wrote a book titled, "Rats in the Grain." Lieber's detailed book, written as a documentary, portrayed Mark Whitacre as an American hero.

In early March 2008, Dean Paisley, a now retired 25-year veteran of the FBI, joined Mark Whitacre in Washington, D.C. where they jointly met with government lawyers. The objective of the meeting was to present strong support for Executive Clemency by all three FBI agents, including Brian Shepard who maintained day-to-day contact with Mark Whitacre during the case, and one of the former prosecutors who worked on the original case.

Dean Paisley has said, "Such strong pardon support from several current and former Department of Justice officials is unprecedented."

Dr. Whitacre joined the executive management team in December 2006 as President of Technology and Business Development for Cypress's East Coast office.

The company's CEO & President, Paul A. Willis, stated that, "By having Mark Whitacre as a part of the management team, we have taken a significant step in our effort to expand our selenium based cancer prevention research and to develop next generation products. Dr. Whitacre's research and top-management business experience has fully aligned with the future direction of the company and its continued expansion into fermentation technology with emphasis on biotechnology and life science applications. In the fifteen months since Dr. Whitacre joined the company, he has proven to be a valuable part of the management team."

In an effort to provide greater detail related to Dr. Whitacre's extensive education, research accomplishments, management experience, professional career, and his current work with Cypress, the company launched a biography website at <http://www.markwhitacre.com/> last year. Dr. Whitacre's education includes B.S. and Master's degrees from Ohio State University and a Ph.D. in Nutritional Biochemistry from Cornell University where Mark's Ph.D. thesis adviser was a renowned selenium researcher, Dr. G.F. Combs, Jr. Dr. Whitacre's research at Cornell University related to the biochemical role of selenium at the cellular level in the prevention of diseases. Mark continued his studies after Cornell earning multiple advanced degrees, including a law degree. These and other accomplishments are listed on the biography website just provided.

The company's flagship ingredient, SelenoExcell(R) High Selenium Yeast, was standardized and approved as the research standard selenium yeast source by the Division of Cancer Prevention of the National Cancer Institute, which resulted in the signing of a Clinical Trial Agreement in 1998. As a result of these efforts, SelenoExcell(R) has

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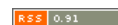
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been selected as the sole intervention agent in a series of cancer prevention and health related trials. See <http://www.cypsystems.com/>. The company maintains a clear focus on the mission to advance the prevention of cancer (as opposed to treatment) through selenium supplementation and overall health stewardship.

Cypress President Paul Willis said, "We support Mark Whitacre 110%! Mark has proven to be a valued asset to our management team. Mark openly admits to his mistakes and wishes that things had turned out differently. We are fully aware of the details of this case and Mark's specific involvement. We consider ourselves to be among a growing list of supporters, which include the FBI agents just named among other agents, former U.S. and Canadian prosecutors involved with the case, several prominent law firms, and numerous other business professionals. We are strong believers in second chances and Mark most certainly has earned the right to a second chance. We at Cypress desire to move forward from this point and make a positive contribution regarding the importance of selenium from selenium yeast in cancer prevention and several other health-related research areas."

Mr. Willis added, "Let it be known, that we maintain high respect for the Archer Daniels Midland Company (ADM) and their current management team. We are fully aware that they have been under new management for several years and, like so many others who were involved in this case, wish only to put this behind them and move forward with the process of building a strong, vibrant and rewarding future for their companies and their personnel."



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Cool story!

by [brodiemash](#) (Registered)

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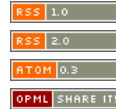
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You guys deserve the recognition!
Way to rep Fresno!

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