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Acucela Announces Launch of its Japanese Web Site at www.Acucela.jp

Japanese Language Web Site Will Serve as Valuable Tool to Share News of Acucela's Scientific and Clinical Developments to Treat Blinding Eye Diseases

BOTHELL, Wash. (March 1, 2010) – Acucela, a clinical-stage biotechnology company focused on developing new treatments for blinding eye diseases, today announced the launch of its Web site in Japanese at www.Acucela.jp. The new Web site, which complements the English version at www.Acucela.com, provides comprehensive information on Acucela's novel therapeutic approach utilizing visual cycle modulation (VCM) technology, the company's robust ophthalmic pipeline, recent developments and more.

“We are pleased to announce the launch of our new Japanese Web site, which will be instrumental in updating the Japanese business, investment, scientific and medical communities on our advancing pipeline of innovative therapeutics to treat blinding eye diseases,” says Ryo Kubota, M.D., Ph.D., president and chief executive officer of Acucela. “The development of a Japanese Web site is a step forward for Acucela in our efforts to be an emerging biotech company in both the United States and Japan.”

Acucela, which has offices in Tokyo and Bothell, Wash., is working closely together with its strategic partner, Japan-based Otsuka Pharmaceuticals Co., Ltd., to co-develop ACU-4429, the lead compound in Acucela's VCM program, to treat dry age-related macular degeneration (dry AMD) – a leading cause of vision loss in people over the age of 50 and for which there is no currently approved treatment.

Acucela has maintained a strong relationship with the Japanese business and scientific community since its founder, Dr. Kubota, started the company in 2002. Dr. Kubota, who was born and grew up in Japan, spent his early career performing ocular research at Keio University, where he earned his M.D. and Ph.D. In the course of his work there, he discovered the glaucoma gene, myocilin, a discovery that earned him the Suda Award for his contribution to the field of neurodegenerative retinal disease. After continuing his research at the University of Washington

in the U.S., Dr. Kubota practiced ophthalmology in Japan for 10 years before returning to the U.S. and becoming an assistant professor at the University of Washington. He then founded Acucela to have a global impact through the development of novel and safe therapies for patients with blinding eye diseases.

About Acucela Inc.

Acucela Inc. is a clinical-stage biotechnology company focused on leveraging promising science in visual cycle modulation (VCM) to develop new methods for treating blinding eye diseases that affect tens of millions of people worldwide. The company's orally-delivered VCM therapies, which selectively target cells within the retina to protect visual acuity, have the potential to be used to treat several devastating eye diseases, including dry age-related macular degeneration (AMD), retinopathy of prematurity, Stargardt disease and diabetic retinopathy. Acucela is also developing, with Otsuka Pharmaceutical, Rebamipide ophthalmic suspension, a product candidate for dry eye. For more information, please visit www.Acucela.com.

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