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Acucela Inc. Hires Seasoned Clinical Development Team

Acucela Inc., a Seattle, WA biotech company developing new drugs for eye diseases, announced today that it has hired a clinical development team with significant experience in ophthalmic drug development. "This veteran team of clinical development experts allows us to truly become a large force in ophthalmic drug development. We will be able to take our compounds forward into the clinic, using the decades of lesson learned by these individuals," said Dr. Ryo Kubota, Acucela's President and CEO. The team includes:

Dr. Les Kaplan, Chief Strategy Officer
Dr. Robert David, Director of Clinical Development
Dr. Balbir Brar, Director of Toxicology
Mr. Peter Kresel, Global Regulatory Affairs

Dr. Kaplan joined Allergan in 1983 and, prior to being appointed to Executive Vice President, was Corporate Vice President, Research and Development and Global BOTOX from June 1998 to November 2003. Dr. Kaplan was elected to Allergan's board of directors in 1994 and served in that capacity until April 2004. Dr. Kaplan is also a member of the board of the Keck Graduate Institute and the National Neurovision Research Institute. Dr. Kaplan received a M.S. and Ph.D. in organic chemistry from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Dr. David is an expert in the field of ophthalmic pharmaceutical clinical development. Prior to his association with Acucela, Dr. David was the Senior Medical Director of Ophthalmology Clinical Development at Allergan. He was responsible for developing strategies for global clinical development of products for ophthalmic drugs, especially for glaucoma. During his tenure, he played a key role in bringing several glaucoma drugs into and through clinical development, including very successful products such as Alphagan (brimonidine tartrate ophthalmic solution) and Lumigan (bimatoprost ophthalmic solution). Dr. David also led Allergan's efforts to identify and qualify clinical investigators for clinical trials, as well as to establish and maintain in-depth relationships with the key thought leaders in glaucoma. Before Allergan, Dr. David held several positions at Ben Gurion University in Israel, including Associate Professor of Ophthalmology, Director of the Glaucoma Service and Vice-Chairman. He received his M.D. from The Hebrew University Medical School, in Jerusalem.

Dr. Brar is a leading expert in the field of pre-clinical toxicology and pharmacokinetics, and had 25 years of experience in developing pharmaceuticals. He was previously a Vice-President of Clinical Development at Allergan, where he saw through the development of successful products such as Alphagan, Lumigan, and Botox. At Allergan, he was responsible for building a new R&D facility, and hiring a team of 100 scientists. Prior to Allergan, Dr. Brar worked at Smith Kline as Director of Drug Safety. He obtained a Ph.D. in Toxicology/Pathology from Rutgers University and a D.V.M. in India.



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Mr. Kresel has 40 years of experience in pharmaceuticals, focusing in regulatory affairs. Most recently, he was the Senior Vice President of Global Regulatory Affairs at Allergan, where he facilitated the movement of new products through various regulatory agencies. This includes extremely successful products such as BOTOX, Alphagan and Lumigan, as well as products with difficult regulatory profiles, such as tazarotene. Prior to Allergan, he was the Director of Worldwide Regulatory Affairs at Bristol-Myers Squibb.

Acucela Forward-Looking Statement

This press release contains "forward-looking statements" as that term is defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements involve risks and uncertainties, which may cause results to differ materially from those set forth in the statements. The forward-looking statements include statements regarding product development. No forward-looking statement can be guaranteed, and actual results may differ materially from those projected. Acucela undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise.

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