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Appointment of Deborah A. Kessler as Chief Operating Officer

Bothell, WA – October 8, 2007 Acucela Inc., a clinical stage biotech company discovering new drug therapies for eye diseases, announced the appointment of Deborah A. Kessler as Chief Operating Officer, effective October 8, 2007.

Prior to joining Acucela, Ms. Kessler was Executive Director of Merck Research Laboratories, headed the Gene Expression Laboratory and held the position of Chief Operating Officer for Rosetta Inpharmatics, LLC in Seattle, WA. Before Merck and Rosetta, Ms. Kessler applied her experience in the medical product industry holding positions in R&D and manufacturing for Spacelabs Medical, Inc and Siemens Ultrasound. Ms. Kessler spent a large part of her career as an Engineer at the NASA Johnson Space Center where her accomplishments include working as a Flight Dynamics Officer in the Mission Control Center.

“Her strong expertise in building the infrastructure of a company and her project management skills will bring our company to the next level of sophistication and greatly improve our operational ability to progress towards accomplishing our company’s goals. We always use the phrase “Rocket science” as an analogy for the most challenging science, but she is a real rocket scientist from NASA. She is very good at accomplishing challenging tasks under very stressful circumstances with limited time and money, a trait very helpful for a biotech company.” Dr. Ryo Kubota, President and CEO of Acucela said.

Ms. Kessler holds a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Maryland and a M.S. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Houston.

About Acucela

Acucela Inc. is focused on developing new drug therapies for eye diseases, and particularly neurodegenerative retinal diseases such as macular degeneration. The company has proprietary disease-specific assays and technologies to identify and develop compounds that can safely and effectively treat retinal diseases and injuries. The company’s novel approaches have significant therapeutic potential to treat retinal diseases such as Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD), Stargardt’s disease, and glaucoma, which affect 50 million people worldwide. The Bothell-based company was founded in 2002. For more information, please visit <http://www.acucela.com>.

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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