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## **Acucela Announces Screening Collaboration To Identify Novel Drugs For Macular Degeneration**

**Bothell, WA - Aug 21, 2007** Acucela Inc., a clinical stage biotech company discovering new drug therapies for eye diseases, announced it will be collaborating with a major US-based pharmaceutical company with interests in ophthalmology to perform compound screening using Acucela's OcuScreen™ technology. Acucela has developed these proprietary, disease-specific assays to identify and discover compounds that can safely and effectively treat eye diseases.

"We believe that this is an important step toward expanding our collaborative efforts with partners", said Ryo Kubota, MD, Ph.D, President and Chief Executive Officer of Acucela Inc. "We feel honored to assist experienced pharmaceutical companies with our cutting edge scientific expertise. We are excited to work with pharmaceutical companies that share our vision of curing blinding eye diseases."

Financial details were not disclosed.

### **About Acucela**

Acucela Inc. is focused on developing new drug therapies for eye diseases, and particularly neurodegenerative retinal diseases such as macular degeneration. They have proprietary disease-specific assays and technologies to identify and develop compounds that can safely and effectively treat retinal diseases and injuries, including expanding the potential indications for neuroprotective drugs already in development or identifying toxic (or phototoxic) liability. For companies without an ophthalmology focus, their core technology of keeping mammalian retinas alive in culture for extended periods of time allows them to screen compounds for retinal toxicity, an important side effect of CNS or oncology drugs.

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 affects the sight of 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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