



Akouos Announces Expansion of Executive Team and Board of Directors

August 5, 2020

Alan Smith, Ph.D., Joins as Chief Technology Officer

Saira Ramasastry Joins Board of Directors; Arthur Tzianabos, Ph.D., Role Expanded to Chairman

BOSTON, Aug. 05, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Akouos, Inc. ("Akouos") (Nasdaq: AKUS), a precision genetic medicine company dedicated to developing potential gene therapies for individuals living with disabling hearing loss worldwide, today announced the appointment of Alan Smith, Ph.D., as chief technology officer. In addition, the company announced that Saira Ramasastry has been appointed to its board of directors as audit committee chair, and board member Arthur Tzianabos, Ph.D., has been appointed chairman of the board.

"Alan brings terrific experience in the development and manufacturing of complex biologics, and a proven track record of building teams and establishing infrastructure to support in-house GMP manufacturing capabilities," said Manny Simons, Ph.D., founder, president, and chief executive officer of Akouos. "Alan joins Akouos at a pivotal time as we prepare to advance our lead program, AK-OTOF, to IND submission next year. We are also excited to welcome Saira, an esteemed life science leader, to our board of directors, and delighted to expand Arthur's role to chairman of our board. Together, these appointments will be instrumental as Akouos continues to grow into a fully integrated genetic medicine company developing innovative potential therapies for a variety of inner ear disorders."

Dr. Smith joins Akouos with more than 30 years of experience in research and development, manufacturing, and quality in the areas of cell and gene therapies. He has contributed to more than 25 FDA regulatory submissions for cell therapy products and devices. Prior to Akouos, Dr. Smith was executive vice president, technical operations at Bellicum Pharmaceuticals, where he led cell product manufacturing, viral vector manufacturing, process development, assay development, GMP supply chain and logistics, worldwide facilities functions, and the design, construction, and startup of multiple GMP manufacturing facilities. Previously, Dr. Smith was vice president of research and development and cellular therapeutics for LifeNet Health and its subsidiary, The Institute of Regenerative Medicine. Earlier in his career, Dr. Smith served as president and chief executive officer for Cognate BioServices Inc. and chief operating officer and senior vice president of research and development for Osiris Therapeutics, Inc. Dr. Smith is also a former adjunct professor at Eastern Virginia Medical School, California State University, Long Beach and Utah State University. He holds a B.S. in chemistry from Southern Utah University and a Ph.D. in biochemistry from Utah State University.

Ms. Ramasastry is managing partner of Life Sciences Advisory, a firm that she founded to provide strategic advice and business development solutions for life science companies. Ms. Ramasastry is also a health innovator fellow of the Aspen Institute and a member of the Aspen Global Leadership Network. Prior to founding Life Sciences Advisory, Ms. Ramasastry was an investment banker with Merrill Lynch & Company, where she helped establish the biotechnology practice and was responsible for origination of mergers and acquisitions, and strategic and capital markets transactions. Prior to joining Merrill Lynch, she served as a financial analyst in mergers and acquisitions group at Wasserstein Perella & Co., an investment banking firm. Ms. Ramasastry currently serves on the board of directors for Vir Biotechnology Inc., Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd., and Sangamo Therapeutics, Inc. She holds a B.A. in economics with honors and distinction and an M.S. in management science and engineering from Stanford University, as well as an M. Phil. in management studies from the University of Cambridge, where she is a guest lecturer for the Bioscience Enterprise Programme and previously served on the Cambridge Judge Business School Advisory Council.

Initially appointed as an independent director to Akouos's board of directors in July 2018, Dr. Tzianabos has now been appointed to serve as chairman. Dr. Tzianabos is currently the chief executive officer and president of Homology Medicines, Inc., leading the efforts to develop genetic medicines for patients with rare genetic diseases. Previously, Dr. Tzianabos spent nine years at Shire Plc, where he worked on the development and launches of multiple treatments for patients with rare genetic disorders. Prior to joining Shire, Dr. Tzianabos was an Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and maintained laboratories at the Channing Laboratory, Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics at Harvard Medical School. He serves on the board of directors for Stoke Therapeutics, Inc., the Alliance for Regenerative Medicine, and the development board for the University of New Hampshire's College of Life Sciences and Agriculture. Dr. Tzianabos holds a B.S. in biology from Boston College and a Ph.D. in Microbiology from the University of New Hampshire.

About Akouos

Akouos is a precision genetic medicine company dedicated to developing gene therapies with the potential to restore, improve, and preserve high-acuity physiologic hearing for individuals living with disabling hearing loss worldwide. Leveraging its precision genetic medicine platform that incorporates a proprietary adeno-associated viral (AAV) vector library and a novel delivery approach, Akouos is focused on developing precision therapies for forms of sensorineural hearing loss. Headquartered in Boston, Akouos was founded in 2016 by leaders in the fields of neurology, genetics, inner ear drug delivery, and AAV gene therapy.

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