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Autoimmune Clinical Drug Development Expert, David J. Chang, M.D., M.P.H., Joins Cabaletta Bio as Chief Medical Officer

Extensive clinical development experience in autoimmune therapeutics complements existing Cabaletta core competencies in cell therapy translational research and manufacturing

PHILADELPHIA, July 15, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Cabaletta Bio, Inc., a biotechnology company focused on the discovery and development of cellular therapies for B cell-mediated autoimmune diseases, announced today the appointment of David J. Chang, M.D., M.P.H., as Chief Medical Officer.

“David’s extensive experience in clinical development and track record of successfully bringing products to market provide an outstanding complement to the early stage translational research, orphan disease, and CAR-T cell therapy experience currently on our team,” said Steven Nichtberger, M.D., Co-founder, CEO and Chairman of Cabaletta Bio. “David and his emerging team will collaborate closely with Dr. Gwendolyn Binder, EVP Science & Technology, and her organization as well as our scientific founders, Drs. Aimee Payne and Michael Milone to optimize translational clinical development and manufacturing as we prepare to file the IND on our lead program.”

Dr. Chang joins Cabaletta as the Chief Medical Officer with more than 25 years of clinical development experience in autoimmunity, neuroscience, and inflammatory diseases at both biopharmaceutical companies and in academia. He most recently served as the Senior Vice President and Head of Inflammation, Autoimmunity and Neuroscience, Global Medicines Development, at AstraZeneca, and previously he was Vice President and Head of Immuno-Inflammation, Clinical Development, at GlaxoSmithKline. Earlier in his career, he held clinical leadership roles at Merck and Wyeth. Dr. Chang has overseen the submissions and approvals of biologics and small molecules for the treatment of systemic lupus erythematosus, psoriasis, and gout. He has been responsible for clinical trials across many diseases ranging from idiopathic inflammatory myositis to rheumatoid arthritis. Prior to joining the industry, Dr. Chang held academic appointments at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. Dr. Chang also was recently Co-chair of the Foundation of the NIH Biomarkers Consortium Inflammation and Immunity Steering Committee.

Dr. Chang earned a B.S. degree from Yale University and an M.D. degree from New York University, followed by residency training in Internal Medicine at Cornell University Medical Center and a Fellowship in Rheumatology at Hospital for Special Surgery/Cornell University. He also holds a M.P.H. degree from Emory University and is currently an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Division of Rheumatology at the University of Pennsylvania.

“Cabaletta’s innovative CAAR T platform has the potential to be a game changer for the

treatment of B cell-mediated autoimmune diseases," said Dr. Chang. "I am looking forward to working with the skilled and experienced team at Cabaletta and to having the opportunity to apply my global industry experience working in several therapeutic areas in both early and late-stage clinical development as well as medical affairs toward our mission of advancing our CAAR T programs."

About CAAR T Cell Therapy

Chimeric AutoAntibody Receptor (CAAR) T cells are engineered to bind and destroy only disease-causing B cells, while sparing the normal B cells which are essential for human health. CAAR T cells are based on the revolutionary chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T cell technology developed at the University of Pennsylvania, which led to the first gene therapy approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Rather than a CD19-targeting molecule, CAAR T cells express an autoantibody-targeted antigen on their surface. The 4-1BB co-stimulatory domain and the CD3-zeta signaling domain of the CAAR construct carry out the same activation and cytotoxic functions as in CAR T cells. Thus, Cabaletta's CAARs are designed to direct the patient's T cells to kill only the self-reactive B cell population, potentially leading to complete and durable remission of disease while sparing all other B cell populations that provide beneficial immunity from infection.

About Cabaletta Bio

Cabaletta Bio is focused on the discovery and development of cellular therapies for B cell-mediated autoimmune diseases. Cabaletta's therapeutic platform produces highly selective autologous Chimeric AutoAntibody Receptor (CAAR) T cells that are designed to precisely bind and destroy only specific autoantibody-producing B cells while sparing normal antibody-producing B cells, which are essential for human health. The platform is based on the revolutionary Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T cell technology developed at the University of Pennsylvania ("Penn") that resulted in one of the first commercially-available CAR T cell products for the treatment of B cell malignancies. Cabaletta was founded by Penn physician/scientists Michael Milone, M.D., Ph.D., and Aimee Payne, M.D., Ph.D., who serve as co-chairs of Cabaletta's Scientific Advisory Board and Steven Nichtberger, M.D., CEO of Cabaletta. Cabaletta has an exclusive global licensing agreement and multiple sponsored research agreements with the University of Pennsylvania to develop the CAAR T technology to treat B cell-mediated autoimmune diseases. The Company's lead therapeutic program is a potential treatment for a prototypical B cell-mediated autoimmune disease, mucosal pemphigus vulgaris (mPV), which is a rare skin disorder that causes painful blisters and sores on mucous membranes leading to severe and sometimes debilitating and life-altering effects. For more information, visit www.cabalettabio.com.

Editor's Note: Drs. Milone, Payne and Nichtberger are University of Pennsylvania faculty members and hold equity stakes in the Company, and the University of Pennsylvania is an equity holder and investor in the Company. In addition, both Penn and the inventors of the licensed technology may receive additional financial benefits under the license in the future.

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