May 5, 2016

Rigel to Present at Upcoming American Association of Immunologists (AAI) Annual Meeting

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., May 5, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Rigel Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq: RIGL) today announced that it will present three scientific posters at the American Association of Immunologists (AAI) meeting in Seattle, Washington from May 13-17, 2016. The posters provide data from the company's preclinical research programs in key anti-inflammatory and autoimmune targets, Nrf2, MerTK and IRAK1/4. Rigel plans to partner select preclinical research programs in the future.

An overview of each project presented at the AAI meeting follows:

Nrf2

Nrf2 (nuclear factor erythroid-derived-2-like-2) is a transcription factor that plays a pivotal role in cellular defense against environmental stress. Rigel has discovered a novel class of molecules that are potent activators of Nrf2, and has identified an orally bioavailable lead candidate, R970, which has been shown to delay the onset of and suppress clinical disease in a murine model of multiple sclerosis (MS). Unlike the currently marketed Nrf2 activator dimethylfumarate (DMF), approved for the treatment of MS, Rigel's Nrf2 activators are favorably inactive at the niacin receptor of target cells. Activating the niacin receptor causes a flushing side effect in patients taking DMF. In addition to developing a next generation therapy for MS, Rigel is exploring the potential for Nrf2 pathway regulation in the treatment of other inflammatory and neurodegenerative indications, including psoriasis and Huntington's disease.

Abstract Title: ***R970, A Selective Activator of Nrf2, is Efficacious in a Murine Model of Multiple Sclerosis***
Abstract Link: ***https://immunology2016.zerista.com/event/member/257579***
Poster Session Title: ***Late-Breaking Therapeutic Approaches to Autoimmunity***
Program #: ***71.03***
Presentation Date: ***2:30pm - 3:45pm, Saturday, May 14***
Poster Board #: ***P2281***

MerTK

MerTK is a member of the family of TAM kinases (Tyro3, AXL, Mer) that has been identified as having a significant role in controlling the activity of phagocytes to remove dead cells

within an inflammatory condition. Rigel is exploring the potential therapeutic applications of MerTK in various inflammatory and oncology models.

Abstract Title: ***In Vitro and In Vivo Characterization of Small Molecule Inhibitors of the Anti-inflammatory TAM Receptor MerTK***
Abstract Link: ***https://immunology2016.zerista.com/event/member/256976***
Poster Session Title: ***Innate Immune Cells and B Cells in Cancer***
Program #: ***142.19***
*Presentation Date****:*** ***2:30pm - 3:45pm, Sunday, May 15***
Poster Board #: ***P2442***

IRAK1/4
IRAKs are key components in the signal transduction pathways associated with inflammation in humans. Rigel has identified IRAK1/4 inhibitors that are potent regulators of the inflammatory signal mediated by the Toll-like receptors and Interleukin-1 family of cytokines and is evaluating their potential therapeutic utility in a number of inflammatory diseases, including gout and lupus.

Abstract Title: ***Characterization of a Small Molecule IRAK4 Kinase Inhibitor for the Treatment of Autoimmune and Inflammatory Diseases***
Abstract Link: ***https://immunology2016.zerista.com/event/member/256941***
Poster Session Title: ***Novel Therapeutic Mechanisms in Systemic Autoimmunity***
Program #: ***210.13***
Presentation Date: ***2:30pm - 3:45pm, Monday, May 16***
Poster Board #: ***P2270***

About Rigel (www.rigel.com)
Rigel Pharmaceuticals, Inc. is a clinical-stage biotechnology company dedicated to the discovery and development of novel, targeted drugs in the therapeutic areas of immunology, oncology and immuno-oncology. Rigel's pioneering research focuses on signaling pathways that are critical to disease mechanisms. The company's current clinical programs include fostamatinib, an oral spleen tyrosine kinase (SYK) inhibitor, which is in Phase 3 clinical trials for ITP; a Phase 2 clinical trial for autoimmune hemolytic anemia (AIHA); and a Phase 2 clinical trial for IgA nephropathy (IgAN). In addition, Rigel has two oncology product candidates in Phase 1 development with partners BerGenBio AS and Daiichi Sankyo.

This press release contains "forward-looking" statements, including, without limitation, statements related to Rigel's clinical development and partnership plans. Any statements contained in this press release that are not statements of historical fact may be deemed to be forward-looking statements. Words such as "planned," "will," "may," "expect," and similar expressions are intended to identify these forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are based on Rigel's current expectations and inherently involve significant risks and uncertainties. Actual results and the timing of events could differ materially from those anticipated in such forward looking statements as a result of these risks and uncertainties, which include, without limitation, the availability of resources to develop Rigel's product candidates and Rigel's dependence on Rigel's corporate partnerships, as well as other risks detailed from time to time in Rigel's reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including its Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2016. Rigel does not undertake any obligation to update forward-looking statements and expressly disclaims any obligation or undertaking to release

publicly any updates or revisions to any forward-looking statements contained herein.

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