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ONCOLOGY

Gritstone Oncology Announces the Addition of Eugene Zhukovsky, Expert in Bispecific Biotherapeutics Development, to its Scientific Advisory Board

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EMERYVILLE, Calif., April 04, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Gritstone Oncology, Inc. (Nasdaq: GRTS), a clinical-stage biotechnology company developing the next generation of cancer immunotherapies to fight multiple cancer types, today announced that Eugene Zhukovsky, Ph.D., an expert in the development of bispecific biotherapeutics, has joined Gritstone's scientific Advisory Board (SAB).

"Our Gritstone EDGE™ artificial intelligence platform is a robust discovery engine which is identifying numerous tumor-specific antigen targets, such as neoantigens and cancer testis antigens, that have the potential to be novel targets for multiple therapeutic modalities, including bispecific antibodies," said Andrew Allen, M.D., Ph.D., co-founder, president and chief executive officer of Gritstone Oncology. "Eugene is an accomplished research and development leader whose specialized expertise in bispecific antibody development will be an asset to Gritstone as we continue to broaden our therapeutic portfolio targeting novel tumor-specific antigens."

Eugene Zhukovsky, Ph.D., applies optimized monospecific and novel bispecific antibody platforms to the development of immunotherapeutics for cancer, with a particular focus on leveraging the biology of inhibitory and agonistic immune checkpoint modulators. Dr. Zhukovsky was the CSO of Affimed Therapeutics where he was responsible for the advancement of bispecific antibody therapeutics from discovery to the clinic. More recently he has been the chief scientific officer (CSO) of Biomunex Pharmaceuticals, where he realigned the company's strategic focus towards immuno-oncology therapeutics by leveraging its proprietary bispecific antibody platform, the BiXAb®. He is also a co-Founder and Partner at ZM Scientific, a consultancy firm that advises biotechnology companies. Prior to Affimed, he served as Senior Research Fellow at Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc. leading antibody discovery efforts, and an Associate Director at Xencor, Inc. responsible for translational research efforts from discovery through development of several clinical candidates for hematological malignancies. Dr. Zhukovsky received his Ph.D. in biochemistry from Brandeis University and performed a post-doctoral fellowship at Genentech, Inc.

"I am excited to join Gritstone's SAB and help advance its cutting-edge immunotherapy programs," said Dr. Zhukovsky, chief scientific officer of Biomunex. "Bispecific antibodies have generated promising data in hematologic malignancies, but the identification of shared targets that are highly specific to solid tumors has been a barrier to expanding their utility. Gritstone has an exceptional tool with EDGE, which, when coupled with its initial work in T cell receptor-like antibody design, has the potential to lead to breakthroughs in antibody-based cancer therapies."

About Gritstone Oncology

Gritstone Oncology (Nasdaq: GRTS), a clinical-stage biotechnology company, is developing the next generation of cancer immunotherapies to fight multiple cancer types. Gritstone develops its products by leveraging two key pillars—first, a proprietary machine learning-based platform, Gritstone EDGE™, which is designed to predict, from a routine tumor biopsy, the tumor-specific neoantigens (TSNA) that are presented on a patient's tumor cells; and second, the ability to develop and manufacture potent immunotherapies utilizing patients' TSNA to potentially drive the patient's immune system to specifically attack and destroy tumors. The company's lead product candidate, GRANITE-001, is a personalized neoantigen-based immunotherapy beginning Phase 1 clinical testing. Gritstone's second product candidate, SLATE-001, is a shared neoantigen ("off-the-shelf") immunotherapy which is advancing towards the clinic. Novel tumor-specific antigens can also provide targets for bispecific antibody (BiSAb) therapeutics for solid tumors, and Gritstone's BiSAb program is currently in lead optimization. For more information, please visit gritstoneoncology.com.

Gritstone Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements, including, but not limited to, statements related to its scientific advisory board membership and potential growth and success driven by such members. Such forward-looking statements involve substantial risks and uncertainties that could cause Gritstone's research and clinical development programs, future results, performance or achievements to differ significantly from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements. Such risks and uncertainties include, among others, the uncertainties inherent in the drug development process, including Gritstone's programs' early stage of development, the process of designing and conducting preclinical and clinical trials, the regulatory approval processes, the timing of regulatory filings, the challenges associated with manufacturing drug products, Gritstone's ability to successfully establish, protect and defend its intellectual property and other matters that could affect the sufficiency of existing cash to fund operations. Gritstone undertakes no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements. For a further description of the risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ from those expressed in these forward-looking statements, as well as risks relating to the business of the company in general, see Gritstone's most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K filed on March 28, 2019 and any current and periodic reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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