

Lion Biotechnologies Names Elma Hawkins President, Chief Executive Officer and Director

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LOS ANGELES, Dec. 15, 2014 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Lion Biotechnologies, Inc., a biotechnology company that is developing novel cancer immunotherapies based on tumor infiltrating lymphocytes (TIL), today announced that its board of directors has appointed Elma Hawkins, PhD, to serve as its president and chief executive officer, effective January 1, 2015, and appointed Dr. Hawkins as a director, effective immediately.

Dr. Hawkins has served as Lion's president and chief operating officer since August 2014. From February 2014 until her appointment as president, Dr. Hawkins served as Lion's head of clinical development. She has more than 30 years of experience in biotechnology drug development, corporate development, fundraising and general management, with a special focus on oncology. For eight years prior to joining Lion, she consulted for various biotechnology companies and financial institutions and also served as president of Viridian Pharmaceuticals.

Previously, Dr. Hawkins was president and CEO of Advanced Viral Research, vice chairman of Antigenics and director of corporate development at Genzyme Corporation. Earlier in her career, she held preclinical, clinical and regulatory positions at Warner-Lambert/Parke-Davis Pharmaceuticals and at the Center for the Study of Drug Development at Tufts University. She holds multiple degrees, including a PhD in organic chemistry and an MBA.

"I'm grateful to have the opportunity to lead Lion during an exciting time of growth for both the company and the field of immuno-oncology in general," Dr. Hawkins said. "TIL therapy has demonstrated curative potential in metastatic melanoma and may be applicable to a range of other solid tumors, both alone and in combination with other immunotherapies. As we prepare to file an IND for a new Phase 2 trial in metastatic melanoma that we plan to initiate in the first quarter of 2015, we are also actively working to expand indications for TIL therapy and to enhance the efficacy and efficiency of TIL production."

Jay Venkatesan, a director at Lion, commented, "Elma brings to Lion deep knowledge of oncology drug development, as well as the strategic acumen of a veteran industry executive. Since Elma first started to work with Lion in February, she has demonstrated exemplary leadership, skill and passion across a wide range of clinical development and management activities. On behalf of the board of directors, it's a pleasure to welcome Elma both as CEO and as a new director, and we are fully confident that Lion will continue making great strides under her leadership."

About Lion Biotechnologies

Lion Biotechnologies, Inc. is engaged in the development of T-cells and engineered T-cells for the treatment of various cancers. The company's lead product candidate is a ready-to-infuse autologous T-cell therapy utilizing tumor-infiltrating lymphocytes (TIL) for the treatment of patients with Stage 4 metastatic melanoma, and is based on a clinical Cooperative Research and Development Agreement with the National Cancer Institute. TIL therapy is also being evaluated in physician-sponsored clinical trials at MD Anderson Cancer Center and the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute. For more information, please visit <http://www.lionbio.com>.

Forward Looking Statements

This press release contains certain forward-looking statements that are subject to a number of risks and uncertainties, including the risks relating to the Company's ability to timely file an investigational new drug application, to conduct a Phase 2 clinical trial in metastatic melanoma, and to further successfully develop or commercialize the Company's TILs technologies. Additional risks and uncertainties are described in the Company's most recently filed quarterly report on Form 10-Q and annual report on Form 10-K. Except as permitted by law, the Company undertakes no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

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