Geron Appoints Vice President, Human Resources

June 20, 2019

MENLO PARK, Calif., June 20, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Geron Corporation (Nasdaq: GERN) today announced the appointment of Shannon Odam as Vice President, Human Resources. Ms. Odam joins other recently recruited senior leadership to further strengthen the organization as it expands its operations to support the planned opening of the Phase 3 portion of IMerge in lower risk myelodysplastic syndromes for screening and enrollment in the summer of 2019.

As Vice President, Human Resources, Ms. Odam will lead all aspects of a comprehensive human resources function, including oversight of policies and operations for leadership and talent management, training, organizational development, operational effectiveness and workforce planning. In addition, Ms. Odam will work in partnership with the executive team to evaluate, design and implement programs to create a cohesive, collaborative and high-performing culture to support the Company's growth initiatives as Geron advances the imetelstat program into late-stage clinical development and potential commercialization.

Shannon Odam has more than 20 years of experience leading human capital strategy development and execution in dynamic cultures that lead to accelerating organizational performance. Prior to Geron, Ms. Odam was Vice President, Human Resources at BioElectron Technology and a member of the executive team, where she led human resources planning and operations to establish strategic alignment. Prior to that, Ms. Odam was Market Diversity Leader at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC), Silicon Valley. Ms. Odam's tenure at PwC spanned 10 years with increasing responsibility where she focused on leading the Silicon Valley practice through a rapidly changing business environment as well as developing, retaining and advancing employees through implemented programs. She also provided executive coaching at all levels of the organization. Ms. Odam holds a B.S. in criminology from California State University, Fresno, and an M.S. in human resources and organizational development from University of San Francisco. In addition, Ms. Odam received a certification in executive coaching from The Hudson Institute in Santa Barbara, California.

Inducement Grants Under Nasdaq Listing Rule 5635(c)(4)

In connection with the commencement of employment, the Company has granted non-statutory stock options to purchase an aggregate of 478,400 shares of Geron common stock to Ms. Odam and two other new employees. The stock options were granted on June 19, 2019 at an exercise price of $1.59 per share, which is equal to the closing price of Geron common stock on the date of grant. Each stock option granted has a 10-year term and vests over four years, with 12.5% of the shares underlying the option vesting on the six-month anniversary of commencement of employment and the remaining shares vesting over the following 42 months in equal installments of whole shares, subject to continued employment with Geron through the applicable vesting dates. Each stock option was granted as a material inducement to employment in accordance with Nasdaq Listing Rule 5635(c)(4) and is subject to the terms and conditions of a stock option agreement covering the grant and Geron's 2018 Inducement Award Plan, which was adopted December 14, 2018 and provides for the granting of stock options to new employees.

About Imetelstat

Imetelstat is a novel, first-in-class telomerase inhibitor exclusively owned by Geron and being developed in hematologic myeloid malignancies. Early clinical data suggest imetelstat may have disease-modifying activity through the suppression of malignant progenitor cell clone proliferation, which allows potential recovery of normal hematopoiesis. Ongoing clinical studies of imetelstat consists of a Phase 2/3 trial, called IMerge, in lower risk myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS) and a Phase 2 trial, called IMbark, in Intermediate-2 or High-risk myelofibrosis. Imetelstat has been granted Fast Track designation by the United States Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of patients with transfusion-dependent anemia due to lower risk MDS who are non-del(5q) and refractory or resistant to an erythroid stimulating agent.

About Geron

Geron is a late-stage clinical biopharmaceutical company focused on the development and potential commercialization of a first-in-class telomerase inhibitor, imetelstat, in hematologic myeloid malignancies. For more information about Geron, visit www.geron.com.

Use of Forward-Looking Statements

Except for the historical information contained herein, this press release contains forward-looking statements made pursuant to the "safe harbor" provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Investors are cautioned that such statements, include, without limitation, those regarding: (i) that the Phase 3 clinical trial in lower risk myelodysplastic syndromes will be open for patient screening and enrollment in summer 2019; (ii) that imetelstat may have disease-modifying activity; (iii) that the imetelstat program could potentially be commercialized; and (iv) other statements that are not historical facts, constitute forward-looking statements. These statements involve risks and uncertainties that can cause actual results to differ materially from those in such forward-looking statements. These risks and uncertainties, include, without limitation, risks and uncertainties related to: (i) whether the Company overcomes all the clinical, safety and efficacy, technical, scientific, manufacturing and regulatory challenges to enable the opening of the Phase 3 clinical trial in lower risk myelodysplastic syndromes for screening and enrollment in summer 2019; (ii) whether regulatory authorities permit the further development of imetelstat on a timely basis, or at all, without any clinical holds; (iii) whether imetelstat is safe and efficacious, and whether any future efficacy or safety results may cause the benefit-risk profile of imetelstat to become unacceptable; (iv) whether imetelstat is approved by regulatory authorities for commercialization; and (v) whether imetelstat demonstrates disease-modifying activity. Additional information on the above risks and uncertainties and additional risks, uncertainties and factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those in the forward-looking statements are contained in Geron's periodic reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission under the heading "Risk Factors," including Geron's quarterly report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2019. Undue reliance should not be placed on forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date they are made, and the facts and assumptions underlying the forward-looking statements may change. Except as required by law, Geron disclaims any obligation to update these forward-looking statements to reflect future information, events or circumstances.

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