Editas Medicine Announces Favorable Decision from U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in CRISPR Patent Interference

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CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Feb. 28, 2022 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Editas Medicine, Inc. (Nasdaq: EDIT), a leading genome editing company, announced today the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) issued another favorable decision to the Broad Institute, Inc. (Broad) involving specific patents for CRISPR/Cas9 editing in human cells. Pending an appeal to the Federal Circuit, this decision ends the U.S. patent interference between the University of California, the University of Vienna, and Emmanuelle Charpentier (collectively, CVC) and Broad.

This action by the USPTO is the second favorable decision determining Broad as the first group to invent the use of CRISPR/Cas9 for editing DNA in those cells necessary for making gene editing medicines for people. With this decision, the USPTO has clearly determined that CVC was not the first to invent using CRISPR/Cas9 in eukaryotic cells, including human cells, and that CVC is not entitled to patent claims directed to that subject matter. The patents at issue in the current interference are owned by Broad and exclusively licensed to Editas Medicine for the development of medicines for people living with serious diseases.

“While scientists in both groups made important scientific contributions to the field, this proceeding was to determine who invented the use of CRISPR/Cas9 for editing the DNA in eukaryotic cells, including human cells. We are pleased with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office’s decision, ending the interference, and determining the Broad Institute’s innovative work to discover and use the CRISPR/Cas9 technology in human cells,” said James C. Mullen, Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer, Editas Medicine. “The decision reaffirms the strength of our foundational intellectual property as we continue our work to develop life-changing medicines for people living with serious diseases. We are using this revolutionary technology to develop medicines, including our lead program EDIT-101 for the treatment of LCA10.”

Editas Medicine’s foundational intellectual property includes issued patents covering fundamental aspects of both CRISPR/Cas9 and CRISPR/Cas12a gene editing. Editas Medicine’s patents broadly cover CRISPR/Cas9 and CRISPR/Cas12a gene editing in all human cells. Successfully editing this cell type is essential to making CRISPR-based medicines. Overall, the Company holds a wide range of fundamental intellectual property directed to all the components of its genome editing platform as well as product-enabling and product-specific intellectual property. Patents covering the use of CRISPR/Cas9 and CRISPR/Cas12a for gene editing of human cells have issued in the United States, Australia, Europe, Japan, China, and other jurisdictions.

About Editas Medicine
As a leading genome editing company, Editas Medicine is focused on translating the power and potential of the CRISPR/Cas9 and CRISPR/Cas12a genome editing systems into a robust pipeline of treatments for people living with serious diseases around the world. Editas Medicine aims to discover, develop, manufacture, and commercialize transformative, durable, precision genomic medicines for a broad class of diseases. For the latest information and scientific presentations, please visit www.editasmedicine.com.

Forward-Looking Statements
This press release contains forward-looking statements and information within the meaning of The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. The words “anticipate,” “believe,” “continue,” “could,” “estimate,” “expect,” “intend,” “may,” “plan,” “potential,” “predict,” “project,” “target,” “should,’’ ‘‘would,’’ and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words. The Company may not actually achieve the plans, intentions, or expectations disclosed in these forward-looking statements, and you should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements. Actual results or events could differ materially from the plans, intentions and expectations disclosed in these forward-looking statements as a result of various factors, including: uncertainties inherent with litigation, including patent interference proceedings; uncertainties inherent in the initiation and completion of pre-clinical studies and clinical trials and clinical development of the Company’s product candidates; availability and timing of results from pre-clinical studies and clinical trials; whether interim results from a clinical trial will be predictive of the final results of the trial or the results of future trials; expectations for regulatory approvals to conduct trials or to market products and availability of funding sufficient for the Company’s foreseeable and unforeseeable operating expenses and capital expenditure requirements. These and other risks are described in greater detail under the caption “Risk Factors” included in the Company’s most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, which is on file with the Securities and Exchange Commission, as updated by the Company’s subsequent filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, and in other filings that the Company may make with the Securities and Exchange Commission in the future. Any forward-looking statements contained in this press release represent the Company’s views only as of the date hereof and should not be relied upon as representing its views as of any subsequent date. Except as required by law, the Company explicitly disclaims any obligation to update any forward-looking statements.

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