Editas Medicine Announces U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit Affirms Favorable U.S. Patent and Trademark Office Decision in CRISPR Interference

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CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Sept. 10, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Editas Medicine, Inc. (NASDAQ: EDIT), a leading genome editing company, announced today that the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit (CAFC) affirmed the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) decision that ended the U.S. patent interference between the University of California, the University of Vienna, and Emmanuelle Charpentier (collectively, UC) and the Broad Institute, Inc. (Broad) concerning certain CRISPR/Cas9 patents Editas Medicine exclusively licenses from Broad. This favorable action by the CAFC upholds the USPTO decision issued in February 2017, granting Broad's motion for no interference-in-fact.

"We are pleased with the Federal Circuit's decision affirming the Patent Trial and Appeal Board decision on the patents that were granted to the Broad Institute for its innovative and fundamental work on CRISPR/Cas9 genome editing," said Katrine Bosley, President and Chief Executive Officer, Editas Medicine. "This decision is highly favorable for Editas and for the Broad as it reaffirms the strength of our intellectual property foundation and has profound implications for making CRISPR medicines."

Editas Medicine's foundational intellectual property includes issued patents covering fundamental aspects of both CRISPR/Cas9 and CRISPR/Cpf1 (also known as CRISPR/Cas12a) gene editing. The patents broadly cover CRISPR/Cas9 and CRISPR/Cpf1 gene editing in eukaryotic cells, which includes 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 of the components of its genome editing platform as well as product-enabling and product-specific intellectual property.

In 2014, the USPTO granted the first of several foundational patents to Broad with broad claims covering CRISPR/Cas9 in eukaryotic cells. In 2016, the USPTO declared an interference proceeding between Broad and UC that involved several of Broad's issued CRISPR patents. While scientists in both groups had made important scientific contributions to the field, this proceeding was initiated by the USPTO to determine which of the two groups first invented the use of CRISPR/Cas9 for editing DNA in eukaryotic cells.

In February 2017, the Patent Trial and Appeal Board of the USPTO determined that the patent claims that had been granted to Broad were separately patentable from, and thus, do not interfere with, the claims of the UC application. This ruling ended the interference proceeding and upheld Broad's fundamental CRISPR/Cas9 patents as originally granted. Today's decision affirms that USPTO decision from February 2017. The Broad patents continue to be valid and in force. Foundational claims covering the use of CRISPR/Cas9 for gene editing in eukaryotic cells have also issued to Broad as patents in each of the United States, Europe, and Australia.

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/Cpf1 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 in the initiation and completion of preclinical studies and clinical trials and clinical development of the Company's product candidates; availability and timing of results from preclinical 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 Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q, which is on file 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 speak only as of the date hereof, and the Company expressly disclaims any obligation to update any forward-looking statements, whether because of new information, future events or otherwise.

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