



Ascent Therapeutics Appoints Industry Leaders to Senior Management Team

-- Experienced Professionals to Support Development of Pepducin® Technology --

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – June 2, 2009 – [Ascent Therapeutics, Inc.](#), a biopharmaceutical company developing a new class of lipidated peptides called Pepducins to target G-protein coupled receptors (GPCRs), today announced two additions to the Company’s senior management team with the appointment of John Tagliamonte as Vice President, Business Development and Michael Houston, Ph.D. as Vice President, Preclinical Chemistry and CMC. Mr. Tagliamonte most recently served as Vice President Business Development for ImmunoGen, Inc. and Dr. Houston was previously Vice President of Chemistry and Formulations at MDRNA, Inc.

“John and Michael have a breadth of highly applicable industry experience with groundbreaking platforms, and I look forward to working with them as we advance Pepducin technology to create novel, GPCR-targeted therapeutics,” said Frederick Jones, M.D., President and Chief Executive Officer of Ascent. “Their drug development experience and business acumen will be invaluable to the Ascent leadership team, particularly as we move our lead programs forward and look to expand our technology applications. I am confident that Michael’s deep knowledge of peptide chemistry and drug development will contribute to the successful advancement of Ascent’s programs and that John’s leadership, vision and industry familiarity, as evidenced through his impressive track record, will help Ascent forge new opportunities for partnerships.”

John Tagliamonte has more than a decade of biotechnology business development experience and has been involved in over \$2.5 billion in transactions. He was most recently Vice President Business Development for ImmunoGen, Inc. and prior to that led venture investments for Safeguard Scientifics from 2004 to 2005, where he also served as interim head of Business Development for Laureate Pharma. From 2001 to 2004 he was Director of Strategy and Business Development with Johnson & Johnson focused on licensing and other forms of corporate partnership. Mr. Tagliamonte began his business career with Bio-Rad Laboratories in sales and

global marketing roles and his early scientific career included research at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. He received his M.B.A. from Boston College and his B.S. in molecular biology from Tufts University.

Michael Houston, Ph.D., has a broad knowledge of peptide chemistry and drug development research gained through leadership positions at Cytivax, Natestch Pharmaceuticals, and most recently, MDRNA, Inc. where he was Vice President of Chemistry and Formulations, responsible for directing the siRNA chemistry and delivery programs at the company. Prior to that, Dr. Houston was Senior Director of Chemistry at Natestch Pharmaceuticals where he was responsible for the peptide and siRNA chemistry programs. Dr. Houston also served as the Director of Chemistry at Cytovax Biotechnologies where he directed the preclinical and clinical chemistry programs of the company's peptide-based vaccines. He received his B.Sc and Ph.D. from the University of Waterloo and was a Post-Doctoral fellow in the laboratory of Bob Hodges at the University of Alberta.

About Pepducin® Technology

Ascent's proprietary Pepducin technology platform is being used to develop novel, small lipopeptides to greatly expand the scope of G-protein coupled receptor drug development. Approximately 40% of currently approved drugs target GPCRs. However, this large class of well validated pharmaceutical targets has enormous untapped potential due to the difficulty in selectively modulating the pharmacology of many of these membrane-bound receptors using small molecules and biologics, traditional approaches that target the extracellular ligand binding site. Pepducin technology comprises a short peptide derived from a GPCR intracellular loop linked to a hydrophobic moiety. This structure allows Pepducin lipopeptides to anchor in the cell membrane lipid bilayer and modulate GPCR activity via a unique intracellular allosteric mechanism. Ascent's Pepducin technology platform represents an entirely new paradigm for affecting GPCR signal transduction, potentially transforming the scope of GPCR therapeutics for a much wider range of serious illnesses.

About Ascent Therapeutics, Inc.

Ascent Therapeutics is developing a new class of lipidated peptides targeting G-protein coupled receptors (GPCRs), a well-validated class of cell receptors that regulate a broad range of diseases.

The Company's proprietary Pepducin technology can inhibit or activate important GPCR targets that industry has been unable to access to date. Ascent is applying its technology and expertise across a number of therapeutic areas, creating valuable partnership opportunities and a broad internal pipeline of novel therapeutic products. Ascent is a venture-backed company whose investors include Novartis Option Fund, Healthcare Ventures and TVM Capital. Please visit www.ascentrx.com for more information.

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