

Kite Pharma Commends Honors Conferred to Scientific Advisory Board Members for Their Significant Contributions to Medicine

September 3, 2015 3:44 PM ET

- **Kite SAB Chair Dr. Owen Witte Reappointed to US Cancer Panel**
- **Prof. Zelig Eshhar Received Israel Prize, the Nation's Highest Honor**
- **Dr. James Economou Elected to the National Academy of Medicine**

SANTA MONICA, Calif., Sept. 3, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Kite Pharma, Inc. (Kite) (Nasdaq:KITE) today commended members of its Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) for the honors and recognition they have received recently for their unique contributions to medicine:

- Owen Witte, M.D., a scientific founder of Kite and Chair of Kite's SAB, was reappointed by President Barack Obama to serve on the President's three-member Cancer Panel, which monitors the development and execution of the National Cancer Program. Dr. Witte is the Founding Director of the Eli and Edythe Broad Center of Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at UCLA. He also holds the UCLA David Saxon Presidential Chair in Developmental Immunology. A Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator, Dr. Witte has made significant contributions to the understanding of human leukemias, immune disorders, and epithelial cancer stem cells. He also received this year's G.H.A. Clowes Memorial Award from the American Academy of Cancer Research, which recognizes individuals with outstanding recent accomplishments in cancer research.
- Professor Zelig Eshhar, Ph.D., Chair of Immunology Research within the Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center's Division of Research and Development and Professor emeritus from the Weizmann Institute of Science, was awarded the Israel Prize in Life Sciences Research. The Israel Prize, generally regarded as the nation's highest honor, recognizes Prof. Eshhar's discovery and development of a breakthrough approach to treating diseases, particularly cancer. Last year, he was named one of the recipients of the prestigious Massry Prize not only for his pioneering efforts in immunotherapy, but also for his adoptive T cell approaches to cancer treatment.
- James S. Economou, M.D., Ph.D., Vice Chancellor for Research and Professor of Surgery, Microbiology, Immunology and Molecular Genetics, and Molecular and Medical Pharmacology at UCLA, was elected to the National Academy of Medicine, one of the highest honors in the fields of health and medicine. A tumor immunologist, Dr. Economou has more than 25 years of experience in designing complex cell- and gene therapy-based clinical trials for metastatic cancer.

"We are thrilled to acknowledge Owen's reappointment to the President's Cancer Panel, as well as Zelig's receipt of the Israel Prize, and James' election to the Institute of Medicine," said Arie Beldegrun, M.D., FACS, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Kite. "Owen's research has greatly advanced the understanding of human leukemias and immune disorders, propelling the development of approved targeted cancer therapies, including imatinib (Gleevec®). Zelig's research led to the design of leading chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) constructs and the establishment of promising therapeutic strategies that paved the way for clinical trials of CAR approaches at leading centers. Further, as founder and director of the UCLA Human Gene Medicine Program, James built one of the largest and well-respected gene therapy programs in the world." Dr. Beldegrun added, "Our team is honored to work alongside these acclaimed researchers, and we look forward to their continuing contributions to medicine."

About Kite Pharma, Inc.

Kite Pharma, Inc., is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company engaged in the development of novel cancer immunotherapy products, with a primary focus on engineered autologous cell therapy (eACT™) designed to restore the immune system's ability to recognize and eradicate tumors. Kite is based in Santa Monica, CA. For more information on Kite Pharma, please visit www.kitepharma.com.

CONTACT: Kite Pharma Cynthia M. Butitta Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer 310-824-9999 For Media: Justin Jackson For Investor Inquiries: Lisa Burns B