Ocugen, Inc. Announces New Appointments to Retina Scientific Advisory Board & Executive Leadership Team

July 21, 2025

MALVERN, Pa., July 21, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Ocugen, Inc. (Ocugen or the Company) (NASDAQ: OCGN), a pioneering biotechnology leader in gene therapies for blindness diseases, today announced updates to its Retina Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) and Executive Leadership Team to enhance external guidance from key opinion leaders and strengthen the Company's internal expertise in critical functions and as it pursues its goal of three BLAs in the next three years.

"As our novel modifier gene therapy programs continue to progress and demonstrate positive data in the clinic, it is now more important than ever to solidify an optimized Retina SAB reflecting the absolute best guidance in this space as we move closer to commercialization," said Dr. Shankar Musunuri, Chairman, CEO, and Co-founder of Ocugen. "Additionally, it's imperative that we ensure our leadership team includes top talent to most effectively execute our corporate strategy."

Three renowned retinal surgeons who are at the forefront of research and cutting-edge advancements for retinal disease are joining the Retina SAB to help the Company bring meaningful, innovative therapeutic options for patients living with serious retina diseases.

New SAB members include:

Jeffrey S. Heier, MD, Director of the Vitreoretinal Service, and Director of Retina Research at Ophthalmic Consultants of Boston. Dr. Heier is one of the leading retinal clinical researchers in the country for new treatments in exudative and non-exudative macular degeneration, diabetic macular edema, venous occlusive disease, vitreoretinal surgical techniques and instrumentation, and diagnostic imaging of the retina. Dr. Heier has contributed extensively to the ophthalmic literature, having authored or co-authored many of the landmark publications in the retinal literature, including the New England Journal of Medicine, Lancet, and numerous other journals.

Peter K Kaiser, MD, Chaney Family Endowed Chair in Ophthalmology Research, Cole Eye Institute, Cleveland Clinic and Professor of Ophthalmology Case Western Reserve School of Medicine. Dr. Kaiser is the director of the Center for Ocular Research and Evaluation (CORE) and is a major contributor to medical literature having authored seven textbooks, 30 book chapters, and more than 400 peer-reviewed manuscripts. He is Associate Editor of International Ophthalmology Clinics and serves on the editorial boards of American Journal of Ophthalmology, Retina, Retina Today, and Ocular Surgery News.

Arshad M. Khanani, MD, MA, FASRS, Managing Partner, Director of Clinical Research, and Director of Fellowship at Sierra Eye Associates and Clinical Professor at the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine. In 2021, Dr. Khanani founded the Clinical Trials at the Summit meeting to foster discussion on clinical trial design and data. Dr. Khanani has been recognized among the top 10 researchers globally on The Ophthalmologist Power List 2025 and has received numerous prestigious awards, including the Macula Society's Lawrence J. Singerman Medal in 2025 and the American Society of Retina Specialists Presidential Award.

Drs. Heier, Kaiser, and Khanani join SAB chair, Lejla Vajzovic, MD, FASRS, Director of the Duke Surgical Vitreoretinal Fellowship Program and Professor of Ophthalmology, Pediatrics, and Biomedical Engineering with Tenure at Duke University Eye Center; and existing SAB members David S. Boyer, MD, Senior Partner at Retina-Vitreous Associates Medical Group and Adjunct Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Southern California/Keck School of Medicine, and Carl D. Regillo, MD, FACS, Professor of Ophthalmology at the Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University, Chief of the Retina Service at Wills Eye Hospital, and founder and former director of the Wills Eye Clinical Retina Research Unit.

To optimize Ocugen's R&D and clinical efforts and build upon positive momentum pursuing strategic partnerships and developing commercial strategy, the Company has made notable leadership appointments.

Vijay Tammara, PhD, has joined Ocugen in the newly created position of Chief Development Officer and brings over 32 years of global regulatory leadership with deep expertise in biotechnology, biosimilars, 505(b)(2), and complex regulatory submissions. Dr. Tammara has made significant contributions to the approval of nine Marketing Authorizations (MAs)—Biologics License Applications and New Drug Applications (NDAs), two biosimilar MAs in emerging markets, three Abbreviated New Drug Applications, 12 Orphan Drug Designations, seven Qualified Infectious Drug Product Designations, and filed over 62 investigational NDAs with clearance in the first review cycle with no clinical holds. He has successfully led regulatory strategy and operations across the U.S., EU, Latin America, and Asia—including Japan, China, and South Korea. Prior to joining Ocugen, he held senior advisory and leadership roles at the FDA and life sciences companies including Sanofi, Wyeth/Pfizer, and Merck, in addition to leading his own consulting firm.

Abhi Gupta, MBA, has been named Executive Vice President, Commercial and Business Development, following the retirement of Mike Shine. Abhi has more than 20 years of experience across commercial strategy, gene therapy, and corporate development in the biopharmaceutical industry. He has led commercialization planning for transformative rAAV gene therapies and played a pivotal role in building Pfizer's $5.5B gene therapy portfolio across neuromuscular, hematologic, and cardiovascular indications. Before joining Ocugen, Mr. Gupta served as SVP and Head of Cell and Gene Therapies at Syneos Health and previously held leadership roles at Pfizer, Regeneron, and Johnson & Johnson, with a track record of successful product launches, strategic partnerships, and business development initiatives.

Ocugen is honored to partner with this distinguished group of advisors and delighted to welcome Dr. Tammara and Mr. Gupta as the Company sharpens its patient-centric focus to potentially deliver paradigm-changing gene therapies.

About Ocugen, Inc.
Ocugen, Inc. is a pioneering biotechnology leader in gene therapies for blindness diseases. Our breakthrough modifier gene therapy platform has the potential to address significant unmet medical need for large patient populations through our gene-agnostic approach. Unlike traditional gene therapies and gene editing, Ocugen's modifier gene therapies address the entire disease—complex diseases that are potentially caused by imbalances in multiple gene networks. Currently we have programs in development for inherited retinal diseases and blindness diseases affecting millions across the globe, including retinitis pigmentosa, Stargardt disease, and geographic atrophy—late stage dry age-related macular degeneration. Discover more at www.ocugen.com and follow us on X and LinkedIn.

Cautionary Note on Forward-Looking Statements
This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, which are subject to risks and uncertainties. We may, in some cases, use terms such as "predicts," "believes," "potential," "proposed," "continue," "estimates," "anticipates," "expects," "plans," "intends," "may," "could," "might," "will," "should," or other words that convey uncertainty of future events or outcomes to identify these forward-looking statements. Such statements are subject to numerous important factors, risks, and uncertainties that may cause actual events or results to differ materially from our current expectations. These and other risks and uncertainties are more fully described in our periodic filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), including the risk factors described in the section entitled "Risk Factors" in the quarterly and annual reports that we file with the SEC. Any forward-looking statements that we make in this press release speak only as of the date of this press release. Except as required by law, we assume no obligation to update forward-looking statements contained in this press release whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise, after the date of this press release.

Contact:
Tiffany Hamilton
AVP, Head of Communications
Tiffany.Hamilton@ocugen.com