Sunesis Pharmaceuticals Appoints Linda Neuman, M.D., as Vice President, Clinical Development

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SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., June 01, 2016 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (NASDAQ:SNSS) today announced that Linda Neuman, M.D., has been appointed to the role of Vice President, Clinical Development. Dr. Neuman brings 10 years of clinical practice and 13 years of industry experience to Sunesis, most recently serving as Senior Medical Director of Oncology at Puma Biotechnology.

“Linda is a demonstrated leader who has driven research success through team building, clinical strategy and execution at all phases of drug development,” said Daniel Swisher, Chief Executive Officer of Sunesis. “Her insights and experience are welcome additions to the team as we look to advance vosaroxin to European marketing approval, and accelerate the development of our kinase inhibitor pipeline, including our unique non-covalently binding BTK inhibitor, SNS-062.”

“I was drawn to this opportunity by the depth and potential of Sunesis’ pipeline,” stated Dr. Neuman. “Each of our clinical assets has the potential to address significant areas of unmet medical need in the treatment of cancer. I look forward to working with Sunesis’ entrepreneurial team to advance these programs to the market.”

At Puma Biotechnology, Dr. Neuman contributed to the development strategy for neratinib, a tyrosine kinase inhibitor under investigation for the treatment of breast cancer and other solid tumors. Prior to joining Puma in 2015, Dr. Neuman spent three years as Medical Director of Oncology at Onyx Pharmaceuticals, where she served as clinical lead on the global product development team, designing and implementing clinical development strategies on multiple development projects as well as interacting with regulators. Prior to joining Onyx, Dr. Neuman held roles of increasing responsibility at Covidien Pharmaceuticals, Millennium Pharmaceuticals and Schering-Plough.

Dr. Neuman obtained her medical degree from Southern Illinois University, where she also received her Bachelor of Science in biology. Dr. Neuman also holds a Master in Business Administration from Indiana Wesleyan University.

About Sunesis Pharmaceuticals

Sunesis is a biopharmaceutical company focused on the development and commercialization of new oncology therapeutics for the potential treatment of solid and hematologic cancers. Sunesis has built a highly experienced cancer drug development organization committed to improving the lives of people with cancer and is currently pursuing regulatory approval in Europe for its lead product candidate, vosaroxin, for the treatment of relapsed or refractory acute myeloid leukemia in patients aged 60 and older. In addition, the company is advancing its kinase-inhibitor pipeline of novel targeted therapies into the clinic.

For additional information on Sunesis, please visit http://www.sunesis.com.

This press release contains forward-looking statements, including statements related to Sunesis' corporate objectives, including the anticipated progress and potential approval of vosaroxin by the EMA, clinical development of SNS 062, potential ex-US partnership, the expected progress in its kinase inhibitor pipeline, and the sufficiency of Sunesis’ cash resources. Words such as “expect,” “look forward,” "potential," "will" and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are based upon Sunesis' current expectations. Forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties. Sunesis' actual results and the timing of events could differ materially from those anticipated in such forward-looking statements as a result of these risks and uncertainties, which include, without limitation, the risk that Sunesis may not be able to receive regulatory approval of vosaroxin in the U.S. or Europe, that Sunesis' development activities for vosaroxin could be otherwise halted or significantly delayed for various reasons, the risk that Sunesis' clinical studies for vosaroxin or other product candidates, including its pipeline of kinase inhibitors, may not demonstrate safety or efficacy or lead to regulatory approval, the risk that data to date and trends may not be

predictive of future data or results, risks related to the conduct of Sunesis' clinical trials, risks related to Sunesis' need for substantial additional funding to complete the development and commercialization of vosaroxin and other product candidates, and risks related to Sunesis' ability to raise the capital that it believes to be accessible and is required to fully finance the development and commercialization of vosaroxin and other product candidates. These and other risk factors are discussed under "Risk Factors" and elsewhere in Sunesis' Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2015, Sunesis' Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2016, when available, and Sunesis' other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Sunesis expressly disclaims any obligation or undertaking to release publicly any updates or revisions to any forward-looking statements contained herein to reflect any change in Sunesis' expectations with regard thereto or any change in events, conditions or circumstances on which any such statements are based.

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