

Sunesis Pharmaceuticals Appoints Valerie L. Pierce Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary

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SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., April 17, 2007 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq: SNSS) today announced the appointment of Valerie L. Pierce to Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary.

Ms. Pierce joins Sunesis with more than 15 years of experience focused on corporate law in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industry with senior-level responsibility at the Institute for OneWorld Health, Tularik Inc. (Amgen) and ALZA Corporation (Johnson & Johnson). In this position, she will be responsible for overseeing all legal affairs, reporting to Daniel N. Swisher, Jr., Chief Executive Officer and President.

"I am pleased to welcome Valerie to the Sunesis team. Her wealth of experience in corporate law, including business development and securities transactions, as well as legal aspects of pharmaceutical operations, will serve as an excellent complement to our existing legal and business teams," said Mr. Swisher.

Ms. Pierce most recently served as General Counsel for the Institute for OneWorld Health, a nonprofit pharmaceutical company, where she oversaw all legal matters pertaining to the organization, including negotiating all agreements, and providing counsel to management. Previously, Ms. Pierce served as Assistant General Counsel with Tularik Inc. from 2000 through the company's acquisition by Amgen in 2004, managing a five-person corporate legal and stock administration team. Among her responsibilities were public company reporting, the drafting and negotiation of legal agreements, and stock-plan administration. Prior to joining Tularik, Ms. Pierce served as Senior Corporate Counsel with ALZA Corporation and as an Associate at Jackson, Tufts, Cole & Black in the Corporate and Securities Group. Ms. Pierce received her Juris Doctor from Yale Law School and her Bachelor of Arts degree from Yale University.

Option Award Disclosure

The Compensation Committee of the company's Board of Directors approved an employment commencement grant to Ms. Pierce of a non-qualified stock option to purchase 120,000 shares of Sunesis common stock, effective April 30, 2007. This option award was granted without shareholder approval pursuant to Nasdaq Marketplace Rule 4350 (i)(1)(A)(iv) and with the following material terms: (a) an exercise price equal to the fair market value of the company's common stock on the grant date, (b) a term of ten years, and (c) a vesting schedule providing that the option is exercisable as to one-quarter of the total grant on the first anniversary of Ms. Pierce's hire, and one-forty-eighth of the total grant each month thereafter until the grant is fully vested.

About Sunesis Pharmaceuticals

Sunesis is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on the discovery, development and commercialization of novel small molecule therapeutics for oncology and other serious diseases. Sunesis has built a broad product candidate portfolio through internal discovery and in-licensing of targeted cancer therapeutics. Sunesis is advancing its product candidates through in-house research and development efforts and strategic collaborations with leading pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical companies. For further information on Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, please visit <http://www.sunesis.com>.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release may contain forward-looking statements that involve substantial risks and uncertainties. Sunesis may not actually achieve the plans, intentions or expectations contained in such forward-looking statements. Actual results or events could differ materially from the plans, intentions and expectations contained in such forward-looking statements. Sunesis does not assume any obligation to update any such forward-looking statements.

SOURCE Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

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