

## **Sunesis Pharmaceuticals Appoints Geoffrey Parker to the Board of Directors**

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SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., March 28, 2016 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq:SNSS) today announced that Geoffrey Parker has been appointed to the Sunesis Board of Directors. Mr. Parker brings over 30 years of finance and executive leadership experience to the Board including, most recently, serving as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Anacor Pharmaceuticals, Inc., which he joined in 2010 at the time of its initial public offering. Sunesis also announced that Helen Kim stepped down from her position as a Director.

“Geoff’s extensive experience in healthcare finance and operations will be invaluable to Sunesis,” said Daniel Swisher, Chief Executive Officer of Sunesis. “We welcome Geoff to our Board and look forward to his strategic counsel as we work towards achieving our future corporate objectives including in 2016 moving vosaroxin through the regulatory approval process in Europe, entering into an ex-US partnership and advancing our kinase inhibitor pipeline to meaningful data milestones. At the same time, we would like to thank Helen Kim for her significant contributions as a Director.”

“I am delighted to be joining Sunesis as a Board Member,” stated Mr. Parker. “Sunesis is at a pivotal point in its evolution with a broad pipeline of differentiated cancer therapeutics and an experienced management team and Board of Directors. I look forward to contributing to the achievement of its strategic plan and supporting Sunesis’ future growth.”

During his five years at Anacor from 2010 to 2015, Mr. Parker helped lead the company during the FDA approval and commercial launch of KERYDIN<sup>®</sup> (tavaborole) and was instrumental in securing partnerships and financing the company’s product pipeline. Prior to Anacor, Mr. Parker had significant transactional and advisory experience working with life sciences companies in various capacities at Goldman Sachs, leading the firm’s West Coast Healthcare Investment Banking practice for twelve years.

Mr. Parker currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors of ChemoCentryx, Inc. He received an A.B. from Dartmouth College in Engineering Sciences and Economics and an M.B.A. from the Stanford Graduate School of Business.

### **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>.

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*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, potential ex-US partnership, and the expected progress in its kinase inhibitor pipeline. Words such as "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 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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