

NEWS RELEASE

Altesa BioSciences, Inc., Launches Operations to Develop, Commercialize Drugs for Respiratory Viruses and Global Viral Threats

Brett Giroir, MD, former HHS Assistant Secretary for Health and Acting FDA Commissioner Appointed as CEO; Initial Funding Led by Pitango Venture Capital and GRA Venture Fund

Atlanta, GA – February 10, 2022 – Altesa BioSciences, Inc., an independently operated, for-profit biotechnology company today launched operations to develop and commercialize novel anti-viral drugs against common respiratory viruses like rhinovirus and parainfluenza, and vector-born global viral threats like Dengue fever, Yellow Fever, Zika, and Powassan.

Altesa, a privately-funded biopharmaceutical company, has entered into an innovative collaboration with Drug Innovation Ventures at Emory (DRIVE), which was formed by Emory University to develop drug candidates for viral diseases of global concern. Altesa’s DRIVE/Emory collaborators are responsible for some of the most acclaimed life-saving and commercially-successful drugs worldwide, including Emtriva and Molnupiravir. Partially owned by DRIVE/Emory, Altesa BioSciences has established an unprecedented relationship with DRIVE to license up to six lead DRIVE molecules against RNA viruses based on pre-negotiated terms beneficial both to the company and to DRIVE.

The agreements between DRIVE/Emory and Altesa were finalized in January 2022. Altesa thereafter closed a \$4 million seed funding round led by Pitango Venture Capital and joined by the GRA Venture Fund.

Dr. Brett Giroir – former U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Assistant Secretary for Health, Acting FDA Commissioner, U.S. Representative to the World Health Organization (WHO) and Admiral in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps – will serve as Altesa’s inaugural CEO. “When I first became aware of the incredible opportunity to partner with DRIVE, for unmet medical needs both here and in low-income countries, I jumped headfirst at the opportunity,” stated Giroir.

“Altesa will leverage all the point-of-care and at-home diagnostic technology we pioneered for COVID-19 at HHS for use against viral diseases that have killed millions long before the onset of this pandemic,” he continued. Dr. Giroir previously served on the White House Coronavirus Task Force and as the Nation’s “Testing Czar” in the Trump Administration during the first phase of the COVID-19 pandemic response.



George Painter, PhD, CEO of DRIVE, a discoverer of Molnupiravir and co-founder of Altesa, will serve as Chair of Altesa's Scientific Advisory Board. Dennis Liotta, PhD, one of the premier discoverers of antiviral therapeutics including emtricitabine (Emtriva™) is also a co-founder of Altesa and Member of its Scientific Advisory Board. "My number one priority is to make a difference in patients' lives," said Painter. "I am confident that we can develop safe and highly effective treatments against a broad variety of pathogenic viruses, just as we have already done for HIV/AIDS and COVID-19."

In addition to DRIVE's novel and promising pipeline, Altesa has the opportunity to in-license molecules not developed at DRIVE. Altesa previously announced a worldwide licensure deal with Vaxart, Inc. for its Phase 2 clinical stage oral antiviral molecule Vapendavir with potent activity against rhinoviruses and other respiratory enteroviruses, including Enterovirus D68 and poliovirus.

Altesa intends to accelerate clinical development of Vapendavir initially to prevent acute exacerbations of chronic respiratory diseases caused by Rhinovirus, including COPD. Over 16 million American suffer from COPD, which is the 4th leading cause of mortality in the United States and will account for over \$800 billion in direct medical expenditures between 2019 and 2038.

About Altesa

Altesa BioSciences, Inc., is a biopharmaceutical company based in Atlanta, focused on developing antivirals to address diseases of global importance. Altesa has a formal partnership with DRIVE Inc., a wholly-owned, not-for-profit drug discovery entity within Emory University. That collaboration includes a license to ALT-2023, a broadly active nucleoside analogue that is late stage preclinical development, as well as options to additional compounds addressing RNA viruses. In July 2021, Altesa in-licensed Vapendavir, a Phase 2 antiviral broadly active against enteroviruses, including rhinovirus, from Vaxart. Altesa intends to progress Vapendavir into Phase 2b trial in the coming months for treatment of rhinovirus in at-risk populations. www.altesabio.com

About DRIVE

Emory formed DRIVE to advance the development of drug candidates to address viral diseases of global concern. DRIVE applies an entrepreneurial mindset and the focus of a biotechnology to address the world's need for therapies that end pandemics and other global health threats. By taking advantage of Emory's renowned research enterprise, DRIVE increases the probability that promising drugs will be developed for the ultimate benefit of humanity. Most recently, DRIVE discovered and licensed molnupiravir – one of two FDA authorized oral anti-viral agents to treat COVID-19, co-developed by Ridgeback Biotherapeutics and now marketed by Merck.

About Pitango Venture Capital

Pitango has been investing in technology ventures since 1993 and now has more than \$2 billion under management. Pitango invests in tech and healthcare companies, in various fields and all stages. Pitango Venture Capital has invested in over 200 companies, many of which have become public or were acquired by strategic players.

About GRA Venture Fund

GRA Venture Fund, LLC is a public-private venture capital fund investing in research-driven, Georgia-based startup companies. The Fund makes seed, early-stage and mid-stage investments in companies. Fund investors are the State of Georgia, private individuals, corporations and foundations. For more information, visit graventurefund.org.

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