Ziopharm Oncology Presents Preclinical Data Supporting TCR-T Library Approach at the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer 2021 Annual Meeting

November 9, 2021

HOUSTON, Nov. 09, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Ziopharm Oncology, Inc. (“Ziopharm” or the “Company”) (Nasdaq: ZIOP), today announced the presentation of preclinical data highlighting the potential of neoantigen-specific TCR-T cells for the treatment of solid tumors at the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer 2021 Annual Meeting.

“We are pleased to share preclinical data demonstrating the versatility of our Sleeping Beauty technology to develop neoantigen-specific TCR-T cells with the potential to address a wide range of solid tumor indications,” commented Raffaele Baffa, M.D., Ph.D., Chief Medical Officer & EVP, Research & Development. “Our TCR-T library approach allows us to develop safe, effective and durable therapies for any patient with a matching neoantigen/HLA combination within our library. We are working diligently to initiate our Phase 1/2 TCR-T Library trial in the first half of 2022 as well as continue to expand our library of TCRs in order to increase the pool of eligible patients who could benefit from these therapies.”

Details of Ziopharm’s SITC 2021 presentation are as follows:

Title: *Neoantigen-specific TCR-T cells targeting shared hotspot mutations for adoptive cell therapy in common epithelial cancers*
Presenter: Drew Deniger, Ph.D., Ziopharm Oncology
Date/Time: Saturday, Nov. 13, 2021 from 7:00 a.m. – 8:30 p.m. ET
Location: Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Hall E
Abstract Number: 226

In the study presented at SITC, Ziopharm’s non-viral gene transfer technology, Sleeping Beauty, was used to develop TCR-T cells targeting EGFR, KRAS and p53 neoantigens, which are present in cancer cells but not in normal tissue, and are presented by a variety of human leukocyte antigen (HLA) molecules on the cancer cell surface. Ziopharm’s Sleeping Beauty technology exhibited greater than 60% expression of the introduced neoantigen-specific TCRs in the generated TCR-T cells. The study demonstrated that the neoantigen-specific TCR-T cells successfully targeted tumor cells expressing EGFR, KRAS and p53 neoantigens in conjunction with the matching HLA restriction. Importantly, these TCR’s did not recognize cells lacking the matching mutations and HLA restrictions.

About Ziopharm Oncology, Inc.
Ziopharm is a clinical-stage cell therapy company, focused on developing T-cell receptor (TCR) therapies for a wide range of solid tumor indications. The Company’s non-viral Sleeping Beauty gene transfer platform has enabled the development of a unique TCR-T Library. This library of neoantigen-specific TCR-T cells is able to effectively target tumor cells expressing neoantigens including KRAS and TP53, while minimizing off-target effects and toxicity. The Company has clinical and strategic collaborations with The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center and the National Cancer Institute. For more information, please visit www.ziopharm.com.

Forward-Looking Statements Disclaimer
This press release contains forward-looking statements as defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, as amended. Forward-looking statements are statements that are not historical facts, and in some cases can be identified by terms such as “may,” “will,” “could,” “expects,” “plans,” “anticipates,” and “believes.” These statements include, but are not limited to, statements regarding the Company's business and strategic plans, the timing of activities relating to the Company’s GMP facility, the execution of potential future partnerships or transactions, and the timing of the Company's research and development programs, including the anticipated dates for enrolling patients in the Company’s TCR-T clinical trial. Although Ziopharm’s management team believes that the expectations reflected in such forward-looking statements are reasonable, investors are cautioned that forward-looking information and statements are subject to various risks and uncertainties, many of which are difficult to predict and generally beyond the control of Ziopharm, that could cause actual results and developments to differ materially from those expressed in, or implied or projected by, the forward-looking information and statements. These risks and uncertainties include, among other things, changes in the Company’s operating plans that may impact its cash expenditures, the uncertainties inherent in research and development, future clinical data and analysis, including whether any of Ziopharm’s product candidates will advance further in the preclinical research or clinical trial process, including receiving clearance from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or equivalent foreign regulatory agencies to conduct clinical trials and whether and when, if at all, they will receive final approval from the U.S. FDA or equivalent foreign regulatory agencies and for which indication; the strength and enforceability of Ziopharm’s intellectual property rights; competition from other pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies as well as risk factors discussed or identified in the public filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission made by Ziopharm, including those risks and uncertainties listed in the most recent Form 10-Q and Form 10-K filed by Ziopharm with the Securities and Exchange Commission. We are providing this information as of the date of this press release, and Ziopharm does not undertake any obligation to update or revise the information contained in this press release whether as a result of new information, future events, or any other reason.

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