



Apexigen Announces Appointment of Francis Sarena as Chief Operating Officer

January 4, 2022

SAN CARLOS, Calif., Jan. 04, 2022 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Apexigen, Inc., a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering and developing a new generation of antibody therapeutics for oncology, today announced the appointment of Francis Sarena as Chief Operating Officer. Mr. Sarena will be responsible for leading strategic operations, driving business development, overseeing finance and investor relations and optimizing organizational functions.

"We are thrilled to welcome Francis, an accomplished industry veteran, during this important phase of Apexigen's evolution," said Xiaodong Yang, M.D., Ph.D., President and Chief Executive Officer of Apexigen. "His deep biopharmaceutical expertise and strong track record of enhancing operational capabilities across key business functions will be invaluable as we near several pivotal milestones. We look forward to his leadership in driving strategic planning and operational excellence."

Mr. Sarena added, "I am impressed with Apexigen's APXiMAB™ platform technology, which has created an innovative pipeline of high-quality antibody therapeutics with the potential to transform treatments for cancer patients. I am excited to join Apexigen at this exciting time and look forward to working with Apexigen's impressive team to deliver on the promise of the company's pipeline, drive long-term value and achieve its full potential."

Francis Sarena is a seasoned biotech executive with a proven track record of operational success, transactional acumen, and guiding companies through different stages to maximize performance. He has overseen strategic planning and execution, business development, investor relations, commercial, project management, legal, IP, quality and compliance and has significant executive experience in company-wide financial planning, budgeting and organizational development. Mr. Sarena spent ten years in positions of increasing responsibility at Five Prime Therapeutics, Inc. (Nasdaq: FPRX), most recently as Chief Strategy Officer. Mr. Sarena was a key leader in Five Prime's transition from a private, research-focused company to a public clinical-stage company with a growing pipeline of cancer therapies. Notably, by leveraging positive Phase 2 clinical data, Mr. Sarena was a key leader in orchestrating a \$174 million follow-on financing and a development and commercialization collaboration process for Five Prime's lead asset, which evolved into Amgen's \$1.9 billion acquisition of Five Prime. Prior, Mr. Sarena served as Vice President and General Counsel of Facet Biotech Corporation (Nasdaq: FACT), where as part of the executive team he restructured and streamlined operations to focus the company's objectives, advanced the company's pipeline past key value inflection points and negotiated the sale of Facet to Abbott Laboratories through a competitive acquisition process. Previously, Mr. Sarena served as Vice President and General Counsel of PDL BioPharma, Inc. (Nasdaq: PDLI), where he was a key leader in the successful execution of PDL's reorganization to unlock and increase shareholder value through the sale of PDL's commercial and manufacturing operations through parallel auction processes and the separation of its biotech and royalty operations. He began his career at Bingham McCutchen LLP. Mr. Sarena earned his law degree from University of California, Berkeley, School of Law and holds a B.S., *summa cum laude*, in finance from San Francisco State University.

About Apexigen

Apexigen is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering and developing a new generation of antibody therapeutics for oncology, with an emphasis on new immuno-oncology agents that may harness the patient's immune system to combat and eradicate cancer. Sotigalimab and Apexigen's other programs were discovered using Apexigen's proprietary APXiMAB™ discovery platform. This platform has enabled Apexigen and its collaboration partners to discover and develop high-quality therapeutic antibodies against a variety of molecular targets, including targets that are difficult to drug with conventional antibody technologies. Seven product or product candidates discovered using APXiMAB are currently commercially available or in clinical development, either internally by Apexigen or by its licensees. For more information, please visit www.apexigen.com.

Investor Contact:

Bruce Mackle
LifeSci Advisors
+1-646-889-1200
bmackle@lifesciadvisors.com

Apexigen Contact:

Mark Nevins
Sr. Vice President, Business Development
Apexigen, Inc.
+1-650-931-6236
mnevins@apexigen.com