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Acucela to Participate in the 16th Nomura Bio Conference

BOTHELL, Wash. (March 3, 2010) – Acucela, a clinical-stage biotechnology company focused on developing new treatments for blinding eye diseases, announced today that Ryo Kubota, M.D., Ph.D., Acucela's chairman, president and chief executive officer, will participate in the 16th Nomura Bio Conference being held in Tokyo, Japan on March 10, 2010. During the event, industry leaders will discuss global collaboration and issues affecting the industry. Dr. Kubota will present a corporate overview of Acucela and discuss the company's efforts to develop treatments for blinding eye diseases.

“We are happy to be presenting at the Nomura Bio Conference as it provides Acucela with an opportunity to discuss our ophthalmology technology and pipeline with our peers in Japan,” said Dr. Kubota. “We are looking forward to providing an overview of our current clinical programs - partnered with Otsuka Pharmaceutical - and to discussing the outlook for biotech companies in the U.S. and Japan in 2010.”

Acucela has forged a strategic partnership with Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. to co-develop ACU-4429, the company's novel visual cycle modulator (VCM), in dry age-related macular degeneration (dry AMD) as well as other potential indications in North America. Acucela and Otsuka are also collaborating on the clinical development efforts in the United States for Rebamipide, an ophthalmic suspension currently in late-stage clinical development for the treatment of dry eye, with Acucela spearheading the regulatory strategy for this program. This partnership provides Acucela with full development funding for its two lead programs.

About Nomura

Nomura is a leading financial services group and the preeminent Asian-based investment bank with worldwide reach. Nomura provides a broad range of innovative solutions tailored to the specific requirements of individual, institutional, corporate and government clients through an international network in over 30 countries. Based in Tokyo and with regional headquarters in Hong Kong, London, and New York, Nomura employs about 26,000 staff worldwide. Nomura's unique understanding of Asia enables the company to make a difference for clients through five

business divisions: retail, global markets, investment banking, merchant banking, and asset management. NSI is a member of SIPC. For further information about Nomura, please visit www.nomura.com.

About Acucela Inc.

Acucela Inc. is a clinical-stage biotechnology company focused on leveraging promising science in visual cycle modulation (VCM) to develop new methods for treating blinding eye diseases that affect tens of millions of people worldwide. The company's orally-delivered VCM therapies, which selectively target cells within the retina to protect visual acuity, have the potential to be used to treat several devastating eye diseases, including dry age-related macular degeneration (AMD), retinopathy of prematurity, Stargardt disease and diabetic retinopathy. Acucela is also developing, with Otsuka Pharmaceutical, Rebamipide ophthalmic suspension, a product candidate for dry eye. For more information, please visit www.Acucela.com.

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