



Pyxis Oncology Founded by Longwood Fund with Financing Led by Bayer

July 17, 2019

- Building on New Insights in Tumor Biology Discovered by Award-winning Cancer Researcher Thomas Gajewski, MD, PhD
- USD 22 Million Series A to Fund Pipeline of Antibodies Focused on Novel Immuno-oncology Targets

Leverkusen, Germany and Boston, Mass., July 17, 2019 – Pyxis Oncology (“Pyxis”), a newly formed immuno-oncology company, launched today with a focus on developing a new family of antibody-based immunotherapies derived from novel insights into the biology of the tumor microenvironment. Leaps by Bayer led the Company’s USD 22 million Series A financing and was joined by additional institutional and strategic investors including Agent Capital, Ipsen and Longwood Fund. Pyxis was founded by Thomas Gajewski, MD, PhD, professor of Medicine, Pathology and the Ben May Cancer Institute at the University of Chicago Medicine; Longwood Fund; and John Flavin, seasoned life sciences executive and entrepreneur; with the support of the University of Chicago Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

For more than two decades, Dr. Gajewski has studied the role of T cells in the body’s defense against cancer. His work has led to a new understanding of the tumor microenvironment and unlocked multiple new avenues to restore activity to dysfunctional T cells and turn immunologically “cold” tumors “hot.” Pyxis is applying these insights to develop a pipeline of antibodies aimed at newly discovered immuno-oncology targets. This could potentially create a new way to treat patients that don’t respond to currently available therapies.

“With our systematic approach for understanding the immunobiology of the tumor microenvironment, which is distinct from other inflammatory disease settings, we have uncovered multiple novel molecules that regulate immune responses against cancer,” said Dr. Gajewski. “These molecules represent promising immuno-oncology targets, both for T cell-inflamed tumors and also for non-T cell-inflamed or ‘cold’ tumors, for which there is a large unmet need.”

Unlike traditional immuno-oncology development programs, which in many cases originated from infectious disease inflammation models, Pyxis’s approach centers on the most relevant tumor-reactive T cells from the core of growing tumors. By focusing on the unique biology of T cells within tumors, Pyxis identified immunoregulatory targets tied directly to biology of the tumor microenvironment. Pyxis has generated data on these targets through genetic and interventional preclinical proof of concept studies that suggest the potential for new effective foundational monotherapies or use in combination with other cancer therapies.

The ultimate goal of curing or preventing cancer is an area of engagement and investment for Leaps by Bayer, as these therapies in oncology represent one of today’s most important health challenges. Dr. Juergen Eckhardt, head of Leaps by Bayer, said: “We are very excited about the potential of Pyxis’s platform. This is a powerful approach that could lead to the discovery of new targets and therefore novel drugs that can overcome current limitations in the oncology field.”

Pyxis is led by an experienced management team and Board of Directors and has assembled a world-class Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) made up of leading authorities in immunology and cancer research. Leaps by Bayer will be actively participating in the Pyxis investment via two representatives on the company’s Board, Dr. Lucio Iannone and Dr. Jak Knowles. In addition, Dr. Vemuri of Agent Capital has also joined the Board in conjunction with the financing. The Board of Directors will be chaired by John Flavin and David Steinberg, Partner at Longwood Fund, will serve as Pyxis’s Chief Executive Officer.

“Immunotherapies have revolutionized the way many cancers are treated, yet they have not been successful in addressing large groups of patients,” said Steinberg. “We believe the antibodies we develop directed against T cell and tumor targets will have the potential to help new patient populations not currently served by today’s therapies.”

Pyxis’s SAB will be chaired by Dr. Gajewski and will include:

- Michael B. Atkins, MD, Deputy Director of the Georgetown-Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Scholl Professor and Vice Chair of the Department of Oncology at Georgetown University School of Medicine.
- Lisa H. Butterfield, PhD, Vice President of the Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy and Adjunct Professor of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of California, San Francisco.
- Alan Korman, PhD, Senior Vice President of Human Immunology at Vir Biotechnology and Former Vice President of Immuno-Oncology Discovery at Bristol-Myers Squibb.
- Jason Luke, MD, FACP, Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of the Cancer Immunotherapeutics Center at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

About Gajewski and the Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Dr. Gajewski developed the concept for Pyxis in partnership with the technology commercialization team at the University of Chicago’s Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. The Polsky Center works closely with researchers to help them transform their ideas and discoveries into products, services, and ventures. Gajewski has been working with the Polsky Center for more than 10 years, licensing a variety of discoveries and being involved with a number of successful life sciences startups.

About Bayer and Leaps by Bayer

Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the life science fields of health care and nutrition. Bayer's products and services are designed to benefit people by supporting efforts to overcome the major challenges presented by a growing and aging global population. At the same time, Bayer aims to increase its earning power and create value through innovation and growth. Bayer is committed to the principles of sustainable development, and the Bayer brand stands for trust, reliability and quality throughout the world. In fiscal 2018, the Bayer global group employed around 117,000 people and had sales of 39.6 billion euros. Capital expenditures amounted to 2.6 billion euros, R&D expenses to 5.2 billion euros. For more information, go to .

[Leaps by Bayer](#), a unit of Bayer is investing into solutions to some of today's biggest problems. Previous Leaps investments into potentially breakthrough technologies include Casebia Therapeutics (CRISPR/Cas technology to cure severe genetic disorders), BlueRock Therapeutics (iPSC technology to cure cardiovascular and CNS diseases), Joyn Bio (probiotics for plants to enable for chemical fertilizer-free farming), Khloris (iPSC as cancer vaccination agents for potential prevention or cure) and Century Therapeutics (iPSCs for allogeneic cell therapy of cancer).

About Agent Capital

Agent Capital is a leading healthcare venture capital firm focused on investing in novel, differentiated therapeutics and treatments that address unmet patient needs. From preclinical to commercial, the firm makes direct equity investments across all stages of development in companies with strong fundamentals to generate superior returns for investors. www.agentcapital.com

About Ipsen

Ipsen is a global specialty-driven biopharmaceutical group focused on innovation and specialty care. The group develops and commercializes innovative medicines in three key therapeutic areas – Oncology, Neuroscience and Rare Diseases. Its commitment to Oncology is exemplified through its growing portfolio of key therapies for prostate cancer, neuroendocrine tumors, renal cell carcinoma and pancreatic cancer. Ipsen also has a well-established Consumer Healthcare business. With total sales over €2.2 billion in 2018, Ipsen sells more than 20 drugs in over 115 countries, with a direct commercial presence in more than 30 countries. Ipsen's R&D is focused on its innovative and differentiated technological platforms located in the heart of the leading biotechnological and life sciences hubs (Paris-Saclay, France; Oxford, UK; Cambridge, US). The Group has about 5,700 employees worldwide. Ipsen is listed in Paris (Euronext: IPN) and in the United States through a Sponsored Level I American Depositary Receipt program (ADR: IPSEY). For more information on Ipsen, visit www.ipсен.com.

About Longwood Fund

Longwood Fund is a leading life science venture capital fund. Longwood's mission is to identify technologies and found companies that make a difference in the lives of patients, and also create significant value for investors. www.longwoodfund.com

About Pyxis Oncology

Pyxis Oncology is an immuno-oncology company focused on developing novel therapies to help patients defeat difficult to treat cancers. Built on the ground-breaking research of Dr. Thomas Gajewski, Pyxis is pursuing promising novel targets derived from the latest insights into the tumor microenvironment. Pyxis has generated preclinical data on these targets and is developing a pipeline of novel antibodies with the potential to help new patient populations not currently served by today's immunotherapies. www.pyxisoncology.com.

Note to editors:

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Find more information at www.bayer.com.

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Forward-Looking Statements

This release may contain forward-looking statements based on current assumptions and forecasts made by Bayer management. Various known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors could lead to material differences between the actual future results, financial situation, development or performance of the company and the estimates given here. These factors include those discussed in Bayer's public reports which are available on the Bayer website at www.bayer.com. The company assumes no liability whatsoever to update these forward-looking statements or to conform them to future events or developments.