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Avalanche Biotechnologies Announces Appointment of Samuel B. Barone, M.D., as Chief Medical Officer

MENLO PARK, Calif., July 1, 2014 -- Avalanche Biotechnologies, Inc., a leader in the development of innovative gene therapies for serious eye diseases such as wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD), today announced the appointment of Samuel B. Barone, M.D. in the role of Chief Medical Officer. Dr. Barone will lead the company's clinical development programs, including advancing Avalanche's lead product, AVA-101 for the treatment of wet AMD. Dr. Barone will report to Thomas Chalberg, Ph.D., Avalanche's Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer.

"We are thrilled to have Dr. Barone join Avalanche as our Chief Medical Officer," said Dr. Chalberg. "A board-certified ophthalmologist specializing in the treatment of retina and macular diseases, Dr. Barone brings an impressive combination of clinical skills as a vitreoretinal surgeon, clinical trial expertise, and regulatory understanding. With his highly relevant technical background and breadth of experience, Dr. Barone will play a critical role in helping Avalanche fulfill its mission of developing a new class of medicines for the treatment of patients suffering from sight-threatening and blinding diseases."

Prior to joining Avalanche, Dr. Barone worked for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as a Medical Officer in the Office of Cellular, Tissue and Gene Therapies. During his tenure at the FDA, Dr. Barone's responsibilities included the review of clinical investigations of stem cell and gene therapy products targeting ophthalmic diseases, particularly diseases of the retina. Concurrent with his work at the FDA, Dr. Barone was active in clinical practice as an ophthalmologist and vitreoretinal surgeon at Retina Associates P.C. Previously, Dr. Barone received several military honors for his service on active duty as a flight surgeon for the United States Air Force service personnel at Andrews Air Force Base and at bases in Korea, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Dr. Barone received his B.S. in Biology from Boston College and his M.D. from The Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine. Following his military service, Dr. Barone completed a residency in ophthalmology at The New York Eye and Ear Infirmary, where he served as Chief Resident, as well as a medical and surgical retina fellowship at the University of California, San Diego.

About Avalanche Biotechnologies, Inc.

Founded in 2006, Avalanche Biotechnologies, Inc., is a privately held, clinical-stage biotechnology company focused on discovering and developing novel gene therapies to transform the lives of patients with sight-threatening ophthalmic diseases. Avalanche's lead product, AVA-101, is currently under development in a Phase 2a trial for wet age-related macular degeneration. Avalanche's Ocular BioFactory™ platform technology is a proprietary adeno-associated virus (AAV)-based gene therapy discovery and development technology optimized for ophthalmology that utilizes a directed evolution approach to generate novel drug candidates. The company is headquartered in Menlo Park, California. For more information, please visit www.avalanchebiotech.com.

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