



## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Third Rock Ventures Launches SAGE Therapeutics to Address CNS Disorders with Critical Unmet Needs**

*SAGE Teams with CNS Expert Steven Paul, M.D.; Secures \$35 million Series A to Accelerate Treatments for CNS Conditions; Expects to Launch First of Several Clinical Programs in 2012*

**Boston, Mass. – October 18, 2011 – [Third Rock Ventures, LLC](#)** today announced the formation of [SAGE Therapeutics](#). The company was launched with a \$35 million Series A financing. SAGE's efforts focus on advancing a broad pipeline of new, critically needed treatments for some of the most disabling central nervous system (CNS) disorders such as schizophrenia, depression, pain and traumatic brain injury (TBI). SAGE Therapeutics is founded on a proprietary Positive and Negative Allosteric Modulator (PANAM) chemistry platform that will enable the rapid development of a novel class of allosteric receptor modulators. Steven Paul, M.D., the former executive vice president for science and technology and president of Lilly Research Laboratories and a former scientific director of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and Douglas Covey, Ph.D., professor of biochemistry at the Washington University School of Medicine, are founders of the company.

“Despite many scientific advances in neuroscience, discovering new treatments in the CNS space has historically been one of the most challenging areas of drug development,” said Dr. Paul. “Nevertheless, CNS disorders remain one of the largest underserved markets in the world, burdened with a tremendous degree of patient unmet need. We at SAGE see a unique opportunity to integrate decades of compelling science and clinical validation to build a rich CNS product pipeline, and we are committed to bringing these important medicines to patients.”

GABA and glutamate are the primary inhibitory and excitatory neurotransmitters in the brain, and imbalances caused by over- or under- activity of these key neurotransmitter systems are believed to underlie the development of many CNS disorders. SAGE Therapeutics' PANAM chemistry platform will enable the rapid development of novel allosteric receptor modulators that fine tune and balance the neuronal activity that is disrupted in these disorders. Specifically, SAGE Therapeutics is focused on non-benzodiazepine and non-glycine approaches to modulating GABA and glutamate receptors respectively. SAGE Therapeutics' approach leverages extensive knowledge in chemistry, molecular and *in vivo* pharmacology, formulation technology, biomarker data and compelling clinical proof of concept established for several of its lead programs - all of which will enable SAGE Therapeutics to accelerate the clinical development of its pipeline.

“Our goal is to truly impact and improve patients’ lives,” said Kevin Starr, partner at Third Rock Ventures and interim chief executive officer of SAGE Therapeutics. “Our team has consolidated and evaluated some of the most important work from the last decade of discoveries in allosteric modulation of the important CNS pathways and is now positioned to build on a broad pipeline of novel CNS programs. With this solid foundation in place, we are poised to enter the clinic in the next two years. One of the key ingredients to building successful biotech companies is to work with great people and assemble the leading thinkers in the field. We are delighted to be collaborating with Steve, Doug and our full team of advisors to achieve our ultimate goal in delivering important medicines to patients.”

Joining Drs. Paul and Covey as advisors to SAGE Therapeutics are Jim Audia, Ph.D., chief scientific officer of Constellation Pharmaceuticals; David Farb, Ph.D., professor and chair of pharmacology at Boston University School of Medicine; A. Leslie Morrow, Ph.D., professor of pharmacology and psychiatry at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine; Christine Marx, M.D., associate professor of psychiatry at Duke University; Stephen Moss, Ph.D., professor of neuroscience at Tufts University; Michael Rogawski, M.D., Ph.D., professor and chair of neurology at University of California at Davis; Scott Runyon, Ph.D., principal investigator at RTI International; Donald Stein, Ph.D., professor of emergency medicine at Emory University; Steven Traynelis, Ph.D., professor of pharmacology at Emory University; and Charles Zorumski, M.D., Ph.D., professor and chair of psychiatry at Washington University.

While CNS is one of the largest global healthcare markets, the current landscape of CNS treatments poorly address some of the greatest of unmet medical needs, and many currently marketed CNS medicines still cause significant side effects and adverse events. For example, fully two-thirds of depressed patients either fail to respond at all or have an inadequate response to current antidepressant medications. Similar low response rates typify the treatment of schizophrenia, and all current treatments for schizophrenia produce undesirable side effects including weight gain and associated diabetes. Most importantly they fail to address some of the most disabling symptoms of schizophrenia, the so-called negative and cognitive symptoms. In addition, each year an estimated 1.7 million people sustain a brain injury (TBI) from accidents, sports activities and military combat. Of those, 52,000 die, another 275,000 are hospitalized and nearly 1.4 million (or 80 percent) are treated in an emergency care setting. Currently, there are no approved neuroprotective treatments for TBI.

### **About SAGE Therapeutics**

SAGE Therapeutics is a central nervous system (CNS) product focused company building a portfolio of new therapies to meet the growing unmet need in a range of CNS disorders, including schizophrenia, depression, pain and traumatic brain injury. SAGE Therapeutics’ proprietary Positive and Negative Allosteric Modulator (PANAM) chemistry platform targets the primary excitatory and inhibitory neurotransmitter systems in the brain and enables the development of allosteric modulators that fine tune and balance neuronal activity that is disrupted in CNS disorders. Specifically, SAGE Therapeutics is focused on non-benzodiazepine and non-glycine approaches to modulating GABA and glutamate receptors respectively. SAGE Therapeutics’ approach leverages extensive knowledge in chemistry, molecular and *in vivo* pharmacology, formulation technology, biomarker data and compelling clinical proof of concept established for several of its lead programs - all of which will enable SAGE Therapeutics to

accelerate the clinical development of its pipeline and bring important medicines to patients. SAGE Therapeutics is a private company launched in 2011 by a proven team of R&D leaders, renowned CNS experts and Third Rock Ventures. For more information, please visit [www.sagerx.com](http://www.sagerx.com).

### **About Third Rock Ventures**

Third Rock Ventures is a venture capital firm founded in 2007 with the mission to launch transformative life sciences companies. With more than \$800 million and two funds under management, the firm is focused on working with passionate entrepreneurs to build exceptional companies working in areas of disruptive science that will make a difference in the lives of patients. The firm has assembled a team with deep expertise and a proven track record of building respected and successful life sciences companies. With decades of complementary, cross-functional operational and leadership experience, the Third Rock team actively engages with its portfolio companies to provide hands-on strategy and experience to successfully launch companies with the best vision, science, operations, people and culture. With offices in Boston, MA and San Francisco, CA, Third Rock is well positioned geographically to closely collaborate with its portfolio companies to achieve their goals. To learn more about Third Rock and its portfolio companies, please visit [www.thirdrockventures.com](http://www.thirdrockventures.com).

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