



Reza Afkhami Joins 23andMe as Chief Corporate Development Officer

May 8, 2023

Afkhami joins 23andMe with more than 20 years of experience in corporate development and strategy

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., May 08, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- 23andMe Holding Co. (Nasdaq: ME) ("23andMe"), a leading human genetics and biopharmaceutical company, today announced the appointment of Reza Afkhami as its Chief Corporate Development Officer overseeing corporate development efforts across its therapeutics, research services and consumer groups. Afkhami will be responsible for spearheading and driving a wide range of industry collaborations for the Company.

23andMe Therapeutics has a pipeline of genetically validated discovery and clinical programs, which it intends to advance through collaborations with pharmaceutical companies. Furthermore, 23andMe hopes to help the pharmaceutical industry improve its R&D productivity through genetically-driven target identification and portfolio prioritization. Beyond that work, the Company plans to support patient recruitment and disease awareness campaigns. 23andMe is pursuing strategic collaborations in digital health and wellness, clinical testing and data collection that will continue to enhance its consumer offerings and best in class direct-to-consumer preventive health services. The ultimate goal of these future collaborations will be to form an ecosystem of consumers, healthcare professionals, and drug developers who can together leverage the genetic revolution to dramatically improve human health.

Before joining 23andMe, Afkhami was Senior Vice President of Corporate Development and Strategy at Global Blood Therapeutics, a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on innovative therapies for the treatment of sickle cell disease. He led business development, licensing, and strategy for the company. He also played a key role in Pfizer's acquisition of Global Blood Therapeutics in late 2022.

"Reza comes to 23andMe at a perfect time as we sunset the exclusive discovery period of our collaboration with GSK in July and begin exploring new partnerships that leverage our unique genetic insights," said Anne Wojcicki, Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of 23andMe. "Reza's vast experience in the biotech world complements our world class research and therapeutics development expertise."

Afkhami brings over 20 years of corporate strategy and business development experience across the therapeutics industry. Prior to Global Blood Therapeutics, Afkhami served as Vice President of Corporate Development and Strategy at Surrozen, a biotechnology company focused on developing tissue-specific antibodies to create therapies for a range of diseases. He has held numerous positions overseeing global commercial strategy and planning, led teams handling business development and market intelligence, and managed and supported partnerships to help to grow a company from early-stage drug discovery to a fully integrated biopharmaceutical company.

"I'm excited by the innovative approach that 23andMe brings to drug discovery and development, and the power that genetics can play in leading us to new medical treatments," said Afkhami. "I look forward to helping make 23andMe's mission a reality by allowing many more consumers and patients to truly benefit from the human genome."

Afkhami holds a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree from Georgetown University, and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree from the University of California, Berkeley.

About 23andMe

23andMe is a genetics-led consumer healthcare and therapeutics company empowering a healthier future. For more information, please visit www.23andMe.com.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, including, without limitation, statements regarding the future performance of 23andMe's businesses in consumer genetics and therapeutics and the growth and potential of its proprietary research platform. All statements, other than statements of historical fact, included or incorporated in this press release, including statements regarding 23andMe's strategy, financial position, funding for continued operations, cash reserves, projected costs, plans, and objectives of management, are forward-looking statements. The words "believes," "anticipates," "estimates," "plans," "expects," "intends," "may," "could," "should," "potential," "likely," "projects," "predicts," "continue," "will," "schedule," and "would" or, in each case, their negative or other variations or comparable terminology, are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words. These forward-looking statements are predictions based on 23andMe's current expectations and projections about future events and various assumptions. 23andMe cannot guarantee that it will actually achieve the plans, intentions, or expectations disclosed in its forward-looking statements and you should not place undue reliance on 23andMe's forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements involve a number of risks, uncertainties (many of which are beyond the control of 23andMe), or other assumptions that may cause actual results or performance to differ materially from those expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements. The forward-looking statements contained herein are also subject generally to other risks and uncertainties that are described from time to time in the company's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including under Item 1A, "Risk Factors" in the company's most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and in its subsequent reports on Forms 10-Q and 8-K. The statements made herein are made as of the date of this press release and, except as may be required by law, 23andMe undertakes no obligation to update them, whether as a result of new information, developments, or otherwise.

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