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Athersys CEO to Speak at the 2018 Brain Health Summit

Event held in conjunction with Super Bowl LII will focus on key issues in neurological medicine and women's brain health

CLEVELAND, Ohio, Jan. 29, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Athersys, Inc. (NASDAQ:ATHX) announced today that Gil Van Bokkelen, Chairman and CEO, will be a speaker and panelist at the 2018 Brain Health Summit organized by the Brain Treatment Foundation (BTF). The summit will take place at 11:00 a.m. CST on February 3rd in Minneapolis.

Dr. Gil Van Bokkelen will participate with other thought leaders and policy experts to discuss important issues in brain health. In addition, he will discuss the Company's investigational therapy, MultiStem[®], for the treatment of ischemic stroke and other neurological injuries. Panel discussions will focus on brain trauma in athletes, women's brain health, and gender differences in stroke incidence and brain trauma.

The summit is a platform to bring together leaders and executives from the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, academic and government communities to discuss the important global issue of brain health. Taking place during Super Bowl week, the summit attracts attendees including former professional athletes, representatives from the military and media, as well as NFL executives. In addition to Dr. Van Bokkelen, the line-up of speakers includes Dr. Jessica Schwartz of Harvard as the moderator, U.S. Representative Tim Walz (Minnesota), former NFL quarterback Gus Frerotte and professional soccer player Rianne Schorel.

The Brain Health Summit is organized by Nicole Fisher, who runs the Global Brain Health Coalition (GBHC), the advocacy and awareness division of BTF, and is a senior policy advisor on Capitol Hill, as well as an expert on health reform, technology and brain health. The mission of the BTF-GBHC is to become a leading global voice for brain health awareness and empowerment by converging cutting edge science, clinical research, social and policy impact.

The Summit is held in conjunction with the annual Leigh Steinberg Super Bowl event, where Summit attendees will meet and interact with leading entrepreneurs focused on technology and health, as well as clinical experts, politicians, NFL owners, coaches, athletes and celebrities.

"We use the Super Bowl as a stage to call attention to important and timely topics associated with brain health," said Leigh Steinberg, CEO of Steinberg Sports and Entertainment. "I have been hosting events and speaking for more than 20 years about improving health, particularly brain health. This year, will be another key event to move the conversation about women's health forward, and I'm excited to be teaming up with those making a real difference. Through this event, together with speakers like Dr. Van Bokkelen, we can increase awareness, educate and advocate."

Nicole Fisher, Dr. Van Bokkelen and other panel participants will also participate in a special media event held the day before the Summit, which provides an opportunity to be involved in a series of interviews with journalists covering Super Bowl LII to increase awareness of brain health and the Company's neurological programs.

"The Brain Health Summit is an opportunity to build awareness around the important work we are doing in the treatment of stroke, neurological trauma, and other areas where there is significant unmet medical need," said Dr. Van Bokkelen. "Based on a growing body of evidence and the favorable regulatory designations our programs have received, we believe we are well positioned to advance clinical care for stroke, neurological injury and other indications in the critical care spectrum, where new and more effective solutions are desperately needed."

About Brain Treatment Foundation's GBHC

GBHC is a non-profit organization and is part of the Brain Treatment Foundation. Founded in 2012, the organization serves as a platform to spread awareness about brain health and fosters the critical discussions and partnerships needed to

enhance research, treatment efforts, and prevention through a global campaign uniting people who are passionate about the cause.

About MultiStem®

MultiStem® cell therapy is a patented regenerative medicine product in clinical development that has shown the ability to promote tissue repair and healing in a variety of ways, such as through the production of therapeutic factors produced in response to signals of inflammation and tissue damage. MultiStem therapy's potential for multidimensional therapeutic impact distinguishes it from traditional biopharmaceutical therapies focused on a single mechanism of benefit. The therapy represents a unique "off-the-shelf" stem cell product that can be manufactured in a scalable manner, may be stored for years in frozen form, and is administered without tissue matching or the need for immune suppression. Based upon its efficacy profile, its novel mechanisms of action, and a favorable and consistent safety profile demonstrated in clinical studies, MultiStem therapy could provide a meaningful benefit to patients, including those suffering from serious diseases and conditions with unmet medical need.

About Athersys

Athersys is an international biotechnology company engaged in the development of therapeutic products designed to extend and enhance the quality of human life. The Company is developing its MultiStem® cell therapy product, a patented, adult-derived "off-the-shelf" stem cell product, initially for disease indications in the neurological, cardiovascular, and inflammatory and immune disease areas, and has several ongoing clinical trials evaluating this potential regenerative medicine product. Athersys has forged strategic partnerships and a broad network of collaborations to further advance MultiStem cell therapy toward commercialization. More information is available at www.athersys.com. Follow Athersys on Twitter at www.twitter.com/athersys.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 that involve risks and uncertainties. These forward-looking statements relate to, among other things, the expected timetable for development of our product candidates, our growth strategy, and our future financial performance, including our operations, economic performance, financial condition, prospects, and other future events. We have attempted to identify forward-looking statements by using such words as "anticipates," "believes," "can," "continue," "could," "estimates," "expects," "intends," "may," "plans," "potential," "should," "suggest," "will," or other similar expressions. These forward-looking statements are only predictions and are largely based on our current expectations. A number of known and unknown risks, uncertainties, and other factors could affect the accuracy of these statements. You should not place undue reliance on forward-looking statements contained in this press release, and we undertake no obligation to publicly update forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

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