



## Aastrom Commends Expansion of Federal Support for Stem Cell Research

ANN ARBOR, Mich., March 10, 2009 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Aastrom Biosciences, Inc. (Nasdaq:ASTM), a leading developer of autologous adult stem cell treatments for severe chronic cardiovascular diseases, today commended the expansion of federal support designed to advance stem cell research. The Company is particularly pleased to note the willingness of the new Administration and Congress to consider possible legislative activity with respect to federal funding for specific lines of stem cell research. This significant new activity underscores the enormous potential of all stem cell therapeutics.

Aastrom's clinical development platform involves the use of autologous or patient-specific adult stem cell populations. The Company has developed a unique approach to stem cell therapy development based on its proprietary Tissue Repair Cell (TRC) technology. From a small sample of bone marrow-derived stem cells taken from a patient, the TRC technology is used to generate an enhanced population of stem and early progenitor cells for specific therapeutic applications. The TRC-based cell product is then injected back into the same patient. Current clinical development efforts at Aastrom are focused primarily on the treatment of cardiac and vascular diseases, such as dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) and critical limb ischemia (CLI). The Company is currently conducting a U.S. Phase II clinical trial known as the IMPACT-DCM study to evaluate the use of its Cardiac Repair Cells (CRCs) for the treatment of DCM, a severe form of chronic heart failure, and a U.S. Phase IIb clinical trial known as the RESTORE-CLI study to evaluate the use of its Vascular Repair Cells (VRCs) for the treatment of CLI, the most severe form of peripheral arterial disease (PAD).

"We are very pleased to see that the support for stem cell research is positioned to expand in the years ahead. While the Administration's action this week primarily focuses on funding for embryonic stem cell research, this level of interest also benefits research into therapeutic applications of stem cells from other sources," said George W. Dunbar, President and CEO of Aastrom. "Grant funding from the federal government is a vital source support required to sustain new clinical research. Medical breakthroughs in this sector have the potential of providing enormous benefit to patients. We look forward to reporting advancements in our clinical development efforts in the future."

About Aastrom Biosciences, Inc.

Aastrom is a leader in the development of autologous cell products for the repair or regeneration of human tissue. The Company's proprietary Tissue Repair Cell (TRC) technology involves the use of a patient's own cells to manufacture products to treat a range of chronic diseases and serious injuries. Aastrom's TRC-based products contain increased numbers of stem and early progenitor cells, produced from a small amount of bone marrow collected from the patient. The TRC technology platform has positioned Aastrom to advance multiple products into clinical development. The Company's ongoing development activities focus on applying TRC technology to cardiac and vascular tissue regeneration. A Phase II clinical trial with dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) patients (the IMPACT-DCM trial) and a Phase IIb clinical trial with critical limb ischemia (CLI) patients (the RESTORE-CLI trial) are currently underway.

The Aastrom Biosciences, Inc. logo is available at <http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=3663>

This document contains forward-looking statements, including, without limitation, statements concerning clinical trial strategies, potential partnering activities, product development objectives, potential advantages of TRC technology and TRC-based products, and potential product applications, which involve certain risks and uncertainties. The forward-looking statements are also identified through use of the words "intends," "expect," "expected," "should," "anticipated," and other words of similar meaning. Actual results may differ significantly from the expectations contained in the forward-looking statements. Among the factors that may result in differences are clinical trial results, potential product development difficulties, the effects of competitive therapies, regulatory approval requirements, the availability of financial and other resources and the allocation of resources among different potential uses. These and other significant factors are discussed in greater detail in Aastrom's Annual Report on Form 10-K and other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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