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Astex Pharmaceuticals Announces the Appointment of President Harren Jhoti, PhD to the BioIndustry Association Board of Directors

DUBLIN, Calif., Oct. 10, 2012 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Astex Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq:ASTX), a pharmaceutical company dedicated to the discovery and development of novel small molecule therapeutics, announced that Harren Jhoti, PhD, president and director of Astex Pharmaceuticals, was appointed to the BioIndustry Association (BIA) Board of Directors.

About Harren Jhoti, PhD

Dr. Harren Jhoti has served as Astex Pharmaceuticals president and member of the Board of Directors since the company's formation in July 2011. He co-founded Astex Therapeutics in 1999 and was chief scientific officer until November 2007 when he was appointed chief executive. Dr. Jhoti was awarded the Prous Institute-Overton and Meyer Award for New Technologies in Drug Discovery by the European Federation for Medicinal Chemistry in 2012 and was also named by the Royal Society of Chemistry as "Chemistry World Entrepreneur of the Year" for 2007. He has published widely including in leading journals such as Nature and Science and has also been featured in TIME magazine after being named by the World Economic Forum a Technology Pioneer in 2005. Dr. Jhoti served as a non-executive director of Iconix Inc. Before starting up Astex Therapeutics in 1999, he was head of Structural Biology and Bioinformatics at GlaxoWellcome in the United Kingdom (1991-1999). Prior to Glaxo, Dr. Jhoti was a post-doctoral scientist at Oxford University. He received a BSc (Hons) in Biochemistry in 1985 and a PhD in Protein Crystallography from the University of London in 1989.

About BioIndustry Association

Founded over 20 years ago at the infancy of biotechnology, the BioIndustry Association (BIA) is the trade association for innovative enterprises involved in UK bioscience. Members include emerging and more established bioscience companies; pharmaceutical companies; academic, research and philanthropic organizations; and service providers to the bioscience sector. The BIA represents the interests of its members to a broad section of stakeholders, from government and regulators to patient groups and the media. The BIA's goal is to secure the UK's position as a global hub and as the best location for innovative research and commercialization, enabling a world-leading research base to deliver healthcare solutions that can truly make a difference to people's lives. For further information, please go to www.bioindustry.org

About Astex Pharmaceuticals

Astex Pharmaceuticals is dedicated to the discovery and development of novel small molecule therapeutics with a focus on oncology. The Company is developing a proprietary pipeline of novel therapies and is creating de-risked products for partnership with leading pharmaceutical companies. Astex Pharmaceuticals co-developed DACOGEN® (decitabine) for Injection and receives significant royalties on global sales from Eisai in North America and from Janssen-Cilag in the rest of the world.

The Astex Pharmaceuticals, Inc. logo is available at <http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=12273>

For more information about Astex Pharmaceuticals, Inc., please visit <http://www.astx.com>.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains "forward-looking statements" as defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. The reader is cautioned not to rely on these forward-looking statements. These statements are based on current expectations of future events. If underlying assumptions prove inaccurate or unknown risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results could vary materially from the expectations and projections of Astex Pharmaceuticals and its marketing partners. Risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to, general industry conditions and competition; technological advances, new products and patents attained by competitors; challenges inherent in new product development, including obtaining regulatory approvals; challenges to patents; changes in behavior and spending patterns or financial distress of purchasers of health care products and services; changes to governmental laws and regulations and domestic and foreign health care reforms; trends toward health care cost containment; and increased scrutiny of the health care industry by government agencies. A further list and description of these risks, uncertainties and other factors can be found in the Astex Pharmaceuticals Annual Report on

Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2011. Copies of this Form 10-K, as well as subsequent filings, are available online at www.sec.gov, www.astx.com or on request from Astex Pharmaceuticals. Astex Pharmaceuticals is not required to update any forward-looking statements as a result of new information or future events or developments.

CONTACT: Timothy L. Enns

Astex Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

Senior Vice President

Corporate Communications & Marketing

Tel: +1 (925) 560-2810

E-mail: tim.enns@astx.com

Susanna Chau

Astex Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

Manager

Investor Relations

Tel: +1 (925) 560-2845

E-mail: susanna.chau@astx.com

Alan Roemer

The Trout Group

Managing Director

Tel: +1 (646) 378-2945

E-mail: aroemer@troutgroup.com

Kari Watson

MacDougall Biomedical Communications

Senior Vice President

Tel: +1 (781) 235-3060

E-mail: kwatson@macbiocom.com