



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Artisan Pharma, Inc. Raises \$39 Million in a Series A
Financing Led by NGN Capital LLC**

**-Artisan Pharma Formed as Result of Partnership Between
NGN Capital and Asahi Kasei Pharma Corporation-**

Framingham, Mass, September 6, 2006 - Artisan Pharma, Inc. ("Artisan") today announced a Series A financing of \$39 million led by NGN Capital LLC in a syndicate with JAFCO, New Leaf Venture Partners, Bio*One Capital and NovaQuest (Quintiles). Artisan's mission is to in-license clinical-stage products for development and commercialization in critical care and hospital-based markets.

As part of the financing, Asahi Kasei Pharma Corporation ("AKP") has licensed a late-stage clinical development biologic, ART-123, to Artisan. The license includes development and commercialization rights to all pharmaceutical applications worldwide except for Japan, China, Taiwan and Korea, where AKP retains all rights. Apeiron Partners LLC advised AKP on the structuring and financing of Artisan. Financial terms have not been disclosed.

Jeffrey D. Wager, M.D., will serve as President and Chief Executive Officer of Artisan, leading a seasoned management team of U.S. and Japanese professionals with deep experience in the clinical development of protein drugs. This team will be complemented by an advisory board of key opinion leaders in the field. The new company will be initially based in Framingham, MA.

"The formation of Artisan combines a clinically advanced biologic product from Japan with a highly strategic and experienced group of investors from the U.S. and Asia. This syndicate will enable Artisan to strategically develop ART-123, acquire additional marketed or late-stage products and to leverage unique, regional resources with a global relationship network," stated Dr. Wager.

ART-123 is a novel, recombinant, soluble, human thrombomodulin being developed for the treatment of DIC (disseminated intravascular coagulation) in sepsis and DVT (deep vein thrombosis). ART-123 uniquely targets both coagulation and systemic inflammatory pathways and holds great promise as a self-regulating treatment of DIC in sepsis. Phase 3 studies have been completed for ART-123 in Japan for DIC and AKP recently filed a Japanese NDA. Artisan plans on initiating Phase 2b studies of ART-123 for DIC in sepsis in the US early next year. Approximately 1.8 million patients in the United States and Europe suffer from sepsis annually, with approximately 30 percent of them developing DIC. For those that do, prognosis is poor.

Georg Nebgen, Managing General Partner of NGN Capital, commented, "Artisan is a quite rare case where a pharmaceutical company spins out a very late stage biologic product with blockbuster potential and teams with venture capital investors to form a company around it." John Costantino, Managing General Partner of NGN Capital, continued, "The formation of Artisan is a great example of NGN Capital's ability to create innovative and strategic alternatives for the healthcare industry and identify attractive new opportunities in drug development."

Kei Oe, President of AKP, said, "The formation of Artisan is an innovative approach to support the continued development of ART-123 outside AKP's principal markets - especially in the US and the EU. We are looking forward to the successful completion of a clinical program and the subsequent commercialization of ART-123 by Artisan."

Artisan's board will include Drs. Wager and Nebgen, John Costantino, Dr. Philippe Chambon of New Leaf Venture Partners, Hironori Hozoji of JAFSCO and a nominee from Bio*One Capital. The company will add two additional, independent members to its board of directors.

About Artisan Pharma, Inc.

Artisan Pharma is a biopharmaceutical company dedicated to bringing best-in-class critical care and hospital-based therapeutics to patients. Artisan's strategy is to acquire clinical stage or marketed drugs and develop them for markets with clear unmet medical needs.

www.artisanpharma.net

About NGN Capital

NGN Capital is a global healthcare venture capital investment firm presently managing a \$250 million Fund. NGN has investment capabilities across a broad spectrum of healthcare segments, including drug products, medical devices, and healthcare services, with an emphasis on later-stage opportunities. NGN has offices in New York, NY, Heidelberg, Germany, and Greenwich, CT. More information on NGN can be found at

www.ngncapital.com

About JAFCO

Founded in 1973, JAFCO has managed \$4.2 billion in over 60 investment funds globally through its offices in Japan, North America, China, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and other parts of the world. The charter of JAFCO is to invest in U.S. based later stage biopharmaceutical and medical device companies and create significant values of investee companies through partnerships with Japanese companies. www.jafco.co.jp

About NLV Partners

NLV Partners is a life science-dedicated venture capital firm with offices in Menlo Park and New York. Founded by the former members of Sprout Group's Healthcare Technology venture team, NLV Partners invests primarily in companies focused on clinical-stage biopharmaceutical products, early-stage medical devices, and molecular diagnostics. In addition, the NLV Partners team continues to manage the existing \$800 million healthcare technology portfolio of Sprout Group.

www.nlvpartners.com

About Bio*One Capital

Bio*One Capital is a leading, dedicated biomedical sciences investment management company in Asia with a worldwide presence. With funds of over \$600 million (U.S.), investments are focused on promising and innovative global biomedical companies where Bio*One Capital can play a value adding role in bridging and supporting companies' growth strategies in Asia through their operations in Singapore. A part of the Singapore Economic Development Board, Bio*One Capital oversees a portfolio of over 60 companies in US, Europe, Singapore and Asia.

www.biolcapital.com

About NovaQuest

NovaQuest, the strategic partnering group of Quintiles Transnational Corp., is dedicated to generating alternative growth strategies for pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies and offers them a better business approach to derive the most value from their product portfolios. www.novaquest.com

About Asahi Kasei Pharma

AKP, headquartered in Tokyo, Japan, is a research-based healthcare innovator that discovers, develops, manufactures, and markets products for the pharmaceutical, pharmaceutical intermediate, diagnostics, biopharmaceutical/biological filtration, medical device, medical nutrition, and contact lens markets. AKP is a wholly owned business unit of Asahi Kasei Corporation, a \$12 billion (U.S.) technology company that provides innovative, science-based solutions to a diverse range of markets including chemicals and plastics, apparel, housing and construction, healthcare, and electronics.

About Apeiron Partners

Apeiron Partners LLC is a boutique investment bank focused exclusively on the life sciences. Apeiron Partners has designed and negotiated a wide variety of transactions in all three major life science markets of North America, Europe and Japan. With an extensive relationship network, Apeiron enables its clients to pursue partnering, M & A and investment opportunities worldwide. www.apeironpartners.com

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