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DAVIES Appoints Pharma/Biotech Practice Leader

Experienced Agency Veteran Michael Wong Hired for Lead Critical Healthcare Position

SANTA BARBARA, CALIF. (JANUARY 22, 2009) – DAVIES, a national public affairs firm with specialty practice areas in Healthcare, Real Estate, and Energy & Natural Resources, today announced the addition of Michael Wong, JD to the firm’s healthcare team as Pharma/Biotech practice leader.

Wong leads the Pharma/Biotech Practice, creating and implementing strategic communications for pharmaceutical and biotech clients involved in crisis, high stake issues, and key product and corporate initiatives that affect client reputation, revenue and business success. Michael has helped solve the toughest business problems and reputation challenges for his clients. This has been achieved by motivating healthcare providers, patients, and third party advocates to maintain formulary status, minimize damage and bolster corporate and brand reputational value due to an adverse event, and ignite community support for corporate and product promotional programs.

Wong brings more than 20 years of experience as a business and C-suite counselor for pharmaceutical and biotech clients including Novartis, GlaxoSmithKline, Bayer, Merck, Medtronic and Boehringer Ingelheim. Most recently, Wong was Healthcare Practice Leader for GCI Group. His career includes senior healthcare positions at some of the leading healthcare agencies – Fleishman Hillard and Ruder Finn – as well as serving as Director of Public Affairs at Abbott.

This addition complements DAVIES announcement of 26.8 percent year-over-year revenue growth and 40 percent increase in healthcare billings. “Michael’s addition to our healthcare team is an exciting launch for our Pharma/Biotech Practice,” said Brandon Edwards, President/COO of DAVIES. “Michael brings leadership to this practice and helps us better define those solutions which are most critically needed by pharmaceutical and biotech companies. This is the perfect move to build on our client wins in 2008, and offer insight and capabilities to a market segment in desperate need of fresh thinking and new strategies.”

A former practicing attorney, Wong is known for his smart, business-savvy thinking, strategic insight for defending corporate reputations, and for tackling thorny matters that threaten corporate and brand position. “I joined DAVIES because this firm has a unique attitude and approach to creating award-winning strategies that enhance and protect corporate reputation, revenue and business success,” Wong said. “My legal background will also be valued by clients facing issues, crises and litigation. No other agency seems to be tackling critical issues in quite the same way.”

Wong's appointment to the DAVIES healthcare team comes at a critical point as the new Obama administration looks at healthcare reform. "The question is who will benefit and who will lose from these reforms," said Wong. "For example, increased cost consciousness will tilt the treatment paradigm in favor of spending prevention dollars today, and away from costly long-term treatment plans. This leads to even greater price sensitivity and increased pressures on branded drugs to get on and stay on formulary and preferred status. This will be especially true for indications for cancer, HIV and rare diseases, where treatment costs are high."

Wong's appointment to DAVIES is the latest announcement in a banner year for the firm. Fostering an award-winning culture, DAVIES has continued scoring the highest marks among public affairs and public relations agencies nationally in several categories when rated by its own employees. For the fourth consecutive year, DAVIES was ranked "The Best Agency to Work For" in its category. In addition DAVIES claimed the top ranking as "Best U.S. Consultancy to Work For" by *The Holmes Report*. DAVIES also ranks in the top 25 firms in the nation by *PRWeek*.

ABOUT DAVIES

DAVIES ranks among the fastest growing strategic communications firms in the United States with specialized industry practice groups in Healthcare, Real Estate, Energy & Natural Resources and a newly announced Crisis Management specialty. DAVIES utilizes highly targeted grassroots and communication programs to help their clients successfully manage defining and high stakes issues. The firm employs 50 professionals in its Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, Washington D.C., and Sacramento offices, and can be found online at www.DaviesPublicAffairs.com.

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