Variant Bio Appoints Craig T. Basson, MD, PhD, to Advance Genomics-Driven Clinical Programs

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- *Proven R&D leader with a track record of advancing multiple best-in-class therapies from discovery to late-stage development*
- *Positions Variant Bio to accelerate translation of genetic discoveries into differentiated clinical programs*

SEATTLE, Jan. 21, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Variant Bio, a genomics-driven AI drug discovery company, today announced the appointment of Craig T. Basson, MD, PhD, as Chief Medical Officer and President of R&D. Dr. Basson brings more than 25 years of leadership experience across academic medicine, global pharmaceutical development, and biotechnology, with deep expertise in cardiovascular and metabolic disease, human genetics, and translational science.

Dr. Basson most recently served as Chief Medical Officer at Bitterroot Bio, a cardio-immunology company, where he built the clinical development strategy from inception and rapidly advanced the lead program through Phase 1 and into Phase 2 clinical testing. Prior to that, he was Chief Medical Officer of Boston Pharmaceuticals, helping scale the company from an early-stage organization into a multi-program clinical biotech, overseeing development across general medicine and oncology, working closely with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and ultimately serving as interim Co-Chief Executive Officer.

Prior to Bitterroot Bio, Dr. Basson spent a decade at Novartis, joining in 2010 as Global Head of Cardiovascular Translational Medicine and later leading the combined Cardiovascular and Metabolism early development organization. His teams supported more than ten successful proof-of-concept studies and advanced multiple therapies through development, including Entresto, Leqvio, Ilaris, and pelacarsen. He also contributed to major outcomes programs, including the landmark CANTOS trial.

Dr. Basson earned both his MD and PhD at Yale University and completed medical training at Johns Hopkins University and Brigham and Women's Hospital. He spent 14 years at Weill Cornell Medicine leading research on the genetic basis of cardiovascular disease, with contributions recognized by election to the American Society of Clinical Investigation and designation as an Established Investigator of the American Heart Association.

At Variant Bio, Dr. Basson will direct research and lead clinical strategy and development as the company advances therapeutics informed by their Inference AI discovery platform and insights from studies with populations around the world.

"Craig's career uniquely spans deep human genetics, rigorous clinical science, and successful drug development at scale," said Andrew Farnum, Chief Executive Officer of Variant Bio. "His leadership and experience translating genetic insights into medicines will be instrumental as we move our programs into the clinic."

Dr. Basson added, "Variant Bio's ability to uncover actionable insights from large-scale human genomics represents a powerful opportunity to improve how medicines are discovered and developed. I'm excited to help translate this science into meaningful benefits for patients."

About Variant Bio Variant Bio is developing life-saving therapies by studying the genes of people with exceptional health-related traits. By identifying communities with unique genetic architectures and outlier phenotypes, Variant Bio has identified novel human genetic evidence that is the basis for programs with breakthrough potential across multiple therapeutic areas. The company's research is powered by its proprietary Inference platform, which integrates across deep phenotyping and multi-omic data using statistical genetics and AI/ML approaches to identify and validate therapeutic targets. With ethics at its core, the company launched an unprecedented benefit-sharing program in 2020, in which it has pledged

tangible benefits that directly impact the communities it partners with throughout the world. Follow Variant Bio's news and updates at **www.variantbio.com** and via its **blog**, on **X/Twitter** @VariantBio, on **Instagram** @variant_bio, and on **LinkedIn**.

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