

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP

Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

| OMB APPROVAL | |
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|---|---|--|
| 1. Name and Address of Reporting Person* <u>GCE Holdings LLC</u> (Last) (First) (Middle) <u>47 HULFISH STREET</u> <u>SUITE 310</u> (Street) <u>PRINCETON NJ 08542</u> (City) (State) (Zip) | 2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol <u>ACURA PHARMACEUTICALS, INC [ACUR]</u> | 5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable) Director <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10% Owner Officer (give title below) Other (specify below) |
| | 3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year) <u>03/23/2012</u> | |
| | 4. If Amendment, Date of Original Filed (Month/Day/Year) | 6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form filed by One Reporting Person <input type="checkbox"/> Form filed by More than One Reporting Person |

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed Of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | | | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|---|------------|-----------------------|---|--|---|
| | | | Code | V | Amount | (A) or (D) | Price | | | |
| Common Stock | 03/23/2012 | | s | | 12,565 | D | \$3.72 ⁽¹⁾ | 32,586,036 | D ⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾ | |
| Common Stock | 03/26/2012 | | s | | 20,000 | D | \$3.82 ⁽²⁾ | 32,566,036 | D ⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾ | |

Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) | | 7. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 3 and 4) | 8. Price of Derivative Security (Instr. 5) | 9. Number of derivative Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 4) | 10. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 11. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|--|-----------------|---|--|--|---|--|
| | | | | | | Date Exercisable | Expiration Date | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Explanation of Responses:

- The price reported in Column 4 is a weighted average price. These shares were sold in multiple transactions at prices ranging from \$3.65 to \$3.75, inclusive. The reporting person undertakes to provide to Acura Pharmaceuticals, or the staff of the Securities and Exchange Commission, upon request, full information regarding the number of shares sold at each separate price within the ranges set forth in footnotes (1) and (2) to this Form 4.
- The price reported in Column 4 is a weighted average price. These shares were sold in multiple transactions at prices ranging from \$3.76 to \$3.91, inclusive.
- Galen Partners III, L.P., Galen Partners International III, L.P. and Galen Employee Fund III, L.P. (collectively, "Galen"), Care Capital Investments II, LP and Care Capital Offshore Investments II, LP (collectively, "Care Capital") and Essex Woodlands Health Ventures Fund V, L.P. ("Essex") own approximately 39.8%, 30.6% and 29.6%, respectively, of the membership interests in GCE Holdings LLC.
- The following natural persons exercise voting, investment and dispositive rights over the securities held of record by GCE Holdings LLC: (i) Galen Partners III, L.P., Galen Partners International III, L.P. and Galen Employee Fund III, L.P., L. John Wilkerson, David W. Jahns, and Zubeen Shroff; (ii) Care Capital Investments II, LP and Care Capital Offshore Investments II, LP: Jan Leschly, Richard Markham, Argeris Karabelas and David Ramsay; and (iii) Essex Woodlands Health Ventures Fund V, L.P.: Immanuel Thangaraj, James L. Currie and Martin P. Sutter. Amounts for GCE Holdings, LLC exclude 1,786,481 shares underlying warrants, exercisable at \$3.40 per share, and also exclude any shares held directly by Galen, Care Capital or Essex.

/s/ David R. Ramsay 03/27/2012

** Signature of Reporting Person Date

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4 (b)(v).

** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB Number.