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Frances K. Heller Rejoins Zafgen Board of Directors

BOSTON, Sept. 18, 2014 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Zafgen, Inc. (Nasdaq:ZFGN), a biopharmaceutical company dedicated to significantly improving the health and well-being of patients affected by obesity, today announced that Frances K. Heller will rejoin Zafgen's Board of Directors and will also be a member of the Audit Committee. Ms. Heller previously served as a Zafgen director from October 2011 to December 2012, and left the Board as she joined Bristol-Myers Squibb to lead its business development group. Zafgen's Board currently includes eight directors, seven of whom are independent.

Ms. Heller has led a number of strategic transactions and partnerships across a broad range of molecular modalities and in various therapeutic areas during her career. Most recently, she was senior vice president of business development at Bristol-Myers Squibb and a Trustee of the Bristol Myers Foundation. In addition, she currently serves as a Trustee of the Dana Farber Cancer Institute.

"We are delighted to have Ms. Heller rejoin our Board of Directors," said Dr. Thomas Hughes, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer of Zafgen. "Fran brings a wealth of business development experience, as well as a deep working knowledge of Zafgen's programs from her prior work on our Board. We look forward to working with her again, and to be able to leverage her strategic and tactical capabilities as we further advance our programs and build our company's capabilities."

"Zafgen has made significant advancements in recent years, in both the development of beloranib and its growth from a virtual company to a publicly traded company," said Ms. Heller. "I am thrilled to rejoin Zafgen's Board at this exciting time and to lend my expertise to an already outstanding team as the Company continues to cultivate its business development strategy for beloranib and its earlier stage programs."

Prior to joining Bristol-Myers Squibb, Ms. Heller was executive vice president of business development at Exelixis Pharmaceuticals and before Exelixis, Ms. Heller was head of strategic alliances at Novartis Pharmaceuticals, where she was responsible for transactions with partners in the pharmaceutical and biotech industries, as well as academic institutions worldwide. She is a member of the California State Bar and licensed by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. She holds a B.S. in biology from Tulane University, an M.A. in biology from American University and a J.D. from Golden Gate University School of Law.

About Zafgen

Zafgen (Nasdaq:ZFGN) is a biopharmaceutical company dedicated to significantly improving the health and well-being of patients affected by obesity. Beloranib, Zafgen's lead product candidate, is a novel, first-in-class, twice-weekly subcutaneous injection being developed for the treatment of multiple indications, including severe obesity in Prader-Willi syndrome, obesity caused by hypothalamic injury, including craniopharyngioma-associated obesity, and severe obesity in the general population. Zafgen was founded in 2005 to explore novel approaches to obesity therapeutics, including agents known to inhibit MetAP2 that had been found to drive unprecedented weight loss and metabolic improvements in mice. The Company is located in Boston, MA.

Safe Harbor Statement

Various statements in this release concerning Zafgen's future expectations, plans and prospects, including without limitation, Zafgen's expectations regarding beloranib as a treatment for PWS and other forms of severe obesity, its expectations with respect to the timing and success of its clinical trials, the expected timing of additional clinical trials, its plans regarding commercialization of beloranib and its expectations relating to available cash and cash equivalents at the end of 2014 may constitute forward-looking statements for the purposes of the safe harbor provisions under The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 and other federal securities laws. Forward-looking statements can be identified by terminology such as "anticipate," "believe," "could," "could increase the likelihood," "estimate," "expect," "intend," "is planned," "may," "should," "will," "will enable," "would be expected," "look forward," "may provide," "would" or similar terms, variations of such terms or the negative of those terms. Actual results may differ materially from those indicated by these forward-looking statements as a result of various important factors, including, without limitation, Zafgen's ability to successfully demonstrate the efficacy and safety of its drug candidates, the pre-clinical and clinical results for its product candidates, which may not support further development of product candidates, actions of regulatory agencies, which may affect the initiation, timing and progress of clinical trials, obtaining, maintaining and protecting intellectual property, Zafgen's ability to enforce its patents against infringers and defend its patent portfolio against challenges from third parties, competition from others developing products for similar uses, Zafgen's ability to manage operating expenses, Zafgen's ability to obtain additional funding to support its business activities and establish and maintain strategic business alliances and new business initiatives, Zafgen's dependence on third

parties for development, manufacture, marketing, sales and distribution of products, the outcome of litigation, and unexpected expenditures, as well as those risks more fully discussed in the section entitled "Risk Factors" in the final prospectus related to Zafgen's initial public offering filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) of the Securities Act, as well as discussions of potential risks, uncertainties, and other important factors in Zafgen's subsequent filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. In addition, any forward-looking statements represent Zafgen's views only as of today and should not be relied upon as representing its views as of any subsequent date. Zafgen explicitly disclaims any obligation to update any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

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