Zentalis Pharmaceuticals Appoints Oncology Clinical Development Veteran Dr. Kimberly Blackwell as Chief Executive Officer

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Dave Johnson appointed as Chairman of the Board

Anthony Sun, MD, former CEO of Zentalis, to remain CEO of joint venture, Zentera Therapeutics

NEW YORK and SAN DIEGO, May 16, 2022 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Zentalis Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq: ZNTL), a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering and developing small molecule therapeutics targeting fundamental biological pathways of cancers, today announced that oncology clinical development veteran Kimberly Blackwell, MD, will succeed Anthony Sun, MD, as Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Dr. Blackwell is a current member of Zentalis' Board and previously served as Chief Medical Officer of Tempus Labs and held clinical development leadership roles at Eli Lilly and Company. In addition, Board member Dave Johnson has been appointed Chairman.

"We are confident that Zentalis – with its potentially best-in-class candidates, committed team and cash runway – is well-positioned to create long-term value for its shareholders and to achieve our collective goal of improving the lives of cancer patients. Since joining the Board, Kim has played a key role in executing Zentalis' clinical strategy and has assisted in advancing the development of its differentiated oncology therapeutics. As Zentalis focuses its resources on its Wee1 inhibitor ZN-c3 and BCL-2 inhibitor ZN-d5, Kim's strong background in cancer drug development will enable us to rapidly accelerate our clinical strategy," commented Dave Johnson, Chairman of Zentalis Pharmaceuticals. "On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Tony for his contributions to Zentalis. We look forward to our continued relationship, as he maintains his leadership role at Zentera Therapeutics, Zentalis' joint venture, advancing the development of Zentalis' oncology candidates in Asia."

"I am excited to lead Zentalis, an organization that has an extremely talented team, immense support from its investors, and an impressive pipeline of oncology candidates. The Zentalis team has accomplished an incredible amount since the Company's founding in 2015 and my focus will be to accelerate the clinical development of our lead candidates ZN-c3 and ZN-d5, assets we believe have vast potential to help patients. We look forward to providing more details on our clinical prioritizations in the coming months," commented Dr. Kimberly Blackwell, Chief Executive Officer of Zentalis Pharmaceuticals.

"I am honored to have co-founded Zentalis and am extremely proud of the strong foundation we have built for this organization to grow," said Dr. Anthony Sun, Chief Executive Officer of Zentera Therapeutics. "Zentalis has an exciting future, with promising lead assets, and I look forward to advancing these therapies in Asia as CEO of Zentera."

About Kimberly Blackwell, MD
Dr. Blackwell has been an independent director of Zentalis since 2020. Until assuming the CEO role at Zentalis, she served as Chief Medical Officer at Tempus, a privately held precision medicine company. In that role, she led medical and clinical development teams working with various pharmaceutical companies incorporating precision diagnostics, large data sets, and biological modeling into their drug discovery and development programs. Prior to Tempus, Dr. Blackwell was Vice President of Early Phase Oncology and Immuno-oncology at Eli Lilly, where she oversaw the clinical development teams in all early-stage cancer therapeutics. Prior to joining Eli Lilly, she was a tenured professor of oncology at Duke University School of Medicine and her clinical contributions led to several now FDA-approved medications for breast cancer and supportive care.

About Dave Johnson
Mr. Dave Johnson has more than 25 years of experience in the biopharmaceutical industry. Most recently, he was chairman of the preclinical precision oncology-focused company, Lengo Therapeutics, which was acquired by Blueprint Medicines in December 2021 in a transaction valued at up to $465M. Prior to Lengo, Dave was CEO of VelosBio an oncology-focused biopharmaceutical company that he founded in December 2017. VelosBio created novel monoclonal antibody-based therapeutics, rapidly moving its lead ROR1-directed antibody-drug-conjugate zilovertamab vedotin from pre-IND through Phase 1 clinical validation leading to the company's acquisition by Merck in December 2020 for $2.75B. Before Velos, Mr. Johnson was with Acerta Pharma, an oncology-focused pharmaceutical company focused on covalent small-molecule technology, where he rose to CEO. At Acerta, he built out all facets of the corporation to accelerate the development of Bruton tyrosine kinase inhibitor, acalabrutinib (Calquence™), rapidly moving from early- to late-stage clinical development and launching four global registration-directed trials, including the accelerated approval study that led to acalabrutinib's first regulatory approval. Dave's tenure at Acerta culminated in the execution of a strategic transaction with AstraZeneca valued at $7B.

About Zentalis Pharmaceuticals
Zentalis Pharmaceuticals, Inc. is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering and developing small molecule therapeutics targeting fundamental biological pathways of cancers. The Company is developing a broad pipeline of potentially best-in-class oncology candidates, all internally discovered, which include ZN-c3, a Wee1 inhibitor for advanced solid tumors, ZN-d5, a BCL-2 inhibitor for hematologic malignancies and related disorders, ZN-c5, an oral selective estrogen receptor degrader (SERD) for ER+/HER2- breast cancer, ZN-e4, an EGFR inhibitor for non-small cell lung carcinoma (NSCLC) and a heterobifunctional degrader of BCL-xL for solid and hematological malignancies. The Company has licensed ZN-c3, ZN-d5 and ZN-c5 to its joint venture, Zentera Therapeutics, to develop and commercialize these candidates in China. Zentalis has operations in both New York and San Diego.

For more information, please visit www.zentalis.com. Follow Zentalis on Twitter at @ZentalisP and on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/company/zentalis-pharmaceuticals.

Forward-Looking Statements
This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. All statements contained in this press release that do not relate to matters of historical fact should be considered forward-looking statements, including without limitation statements regarding our expectations surrounding the development, potential, safety, efficacy, and regulatory and clinical progress of our product candidates in the United States and globally; creating long-term value for shareholders; and the impact of management and personnel changes on our business, operations and financial results. These statements are neither promises nor guarantees, but involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other important factors that may cause our actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements, including, but not limited to, the following: our limited operating history, which may make it difficult to evaluate our current business and predict our future success and viability; we have and expect to continue to incur significant losses; our need for additional funding, which may not be available; our substantial dependence on the success of our lead product candidates; the outcome of preclinical testing and early trials may not be predictive of the success of later clinical trials; failure to identify additional product candidates and develop or commercialize marketable products; potential unforeseen events during clinical trials could cause delays or other adverse consequences; risks relating to the regulatory approval process or ongoing regulatory obligations; failure to obtain U.S. or international marketing approval; our product candidates may cause serious adverse side effects; inability to maintain our collaborations, or the failure of these collaborations; our reliance on third parties; effects of significant competition; the possibility of system failures or security breaches; risks relating to intellectual property; our ability to attract, retain and motivate qualified personnel, and risks relating to management transitions; significant costs as a result of operating as a public company; the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely impacted and may continue to adversely impact our business, including our preclinical studies and clinical trials; and the other important factors discussed under the caption “Risk Factors” in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2022 filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and our other filings with the SEC. Any such forward-looking statements represent management’s estimates as of the date of this press release. While we may elect to update such forward-looking statements at some point in the future, we disclaim any obligation to do so, even if subsequent events cause our views to change.

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