Design Therapeutics Expands Board of Directors with Key Appointments

June 7, 2021

CARLSBAD, Calif., June 07, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Design Therapeutics, Inc. (Nasdaq: DSGN), a biotechnology company developing treatments for degenerative genetic disorders, today announced the appointments of industry veterans, Heather Behanna, Ph.D., principal of SR One, and Deepa Prasad, managing director of WestRiver Group, to its board of directors effective June 15, 2021.

“We are delighted to further strengthen the Design team with the appointments of both Heather and Deepa to our board of directors, who bring a wealth of experience and insights in corporate and financial strategy and biotechnology company growth,” said João Siffert, M.D., president and chief executive officer of Design Therapeutics. “Over the course of 2021, we have continued to progress our pipeline of novel GeneTAC™ therapeutic candidates, and their expertise will be invaluable as we look to make the important transition to a clinical-stage company with the anticipated initiation of clinical development for our Friedreich ataxia program in the first half of next year.”

Dr. Behanna currently serves as a principal at SR One Capital Management, concentrating on early-stage innovative therapeutic opportunities. Dr. Behanna is currently a board member of Second Genome and Entasis Therapeutics (ETTX) and a board observer of Dren Bio. Prior to SR One, she was with Sofinnova Investments, and prior to that, was an equity research analyst at Wedbush and JMP Securities, focused primarily on therapies for rare disease. Dr. Behanna was formerly a chemist at the Astellas Research institute and adjunct faculty at the Feinberg Northwestern School of Medicine. Dr. Behanna received her Ph.D. in chemistry at Northwestern University, MSc. in organic chemistry at the Weizmann Institute of Science and B.S. from Tufts University.

“Friedreich ataxia is devastating, with no cure or approved disease-modifying treatment option today. I am highly encouraged by the opportunity enabled by Design’s approach to address the underlying cause of this disease,” said Dr. Behanna. “I look forward to working alongside the entire team to help guide the business strategy and development plans, so that we may potentially deliver the first treatment to increase endogenous frataxin for patients with Friedreich ataxia.”

Ms. Prasad currently serves as a managing director at WestRiver Group (WRG), where she leverages her more than 20 years of investing and operating experience to focus on investments in healthcare innovation across biotech and digital health and artificial intelligence. Prior to WRG, Ms. Prasad served as chief of staff at Blue Shield, regional vice president and general manager for Optum, head of managed care at the California Hospital Association, and Coherus Biosciences (CHRS) where she led financial strategy and business development. She began her career in investment banking working with biotech and pharma companies on private placements and buyside and sellside mergers and acquisitions. She currently serves on the Grant Funding Committee for UC Davis and as a charter member for TiE, a non-profit global network of entrepreneurs and venture capitalists. Ms. Prasad earned her bachelor’s degree in business administration at the University of California, Berkeley and her M.B.A. from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University with emphasis in finance and health industry management.

“Design’s proprietary GeneTAC platform has a unique opportunity to address the root cause of genetic diseases driven by inherited nucleotide repeat expansions and make a significant impact on the lives of those affected,” said Ms. Prasad. “The team has made remarkable progress since its founding in 2017, and I am pleased to partner with the Design team and board of directors, so that we may bring forward a new class of small molecule therapeutics that provide a potentially disease-modifying therapy for these patients.”

About Design Therapeutics
Design Therapeutics is a biotechnology company developing a new class of therapies based on a platform of gene targeted chimera (GeneTAC™) small molecules. Our GeneTAC molecules are designed to either turn on or turn off a specific disease-causing gene to address the underlying cause of disease. The company’s lead program is focused on the treatment of Friedreich ataxia, followed by a program in myotonic dystrophy type-1 and discovery efforts for multiple other serious degenerative disorders caused by nucleotide repeat expansions. For more information, please visit designtx.com.

Forward Looking Statements
Statements in this press release that are not purely historical in nature are "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements include, but are not limited to, statements related to: the progress and expected timing of Design’s development programs and any clinical trials; the effectiveness of Design’s GeneTAC program in the treatment of Friedreich ataxia and myotonic dystrophy type-1; and the potential advantages of these GeneTAC programs. Because such statements are subject to risks and uncertainties, actual results may differ materially from those expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. Words such as "believes," "anticipates," "plans," "expects," "intends," "will," "goal," "potential" and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are based upon Design’s current expectations and involve assumptions that may never materialize or may prove to be incorrect. Actual results and the timing of events could differ materially from those anticipated in such forward-looking statements as a result of various risks and uncertainties, which include, without limitation, risks associated with the process of discovering, developing and commercializing therapies that are safe and effective for use as human therapeutics and operating as a development stage company; Design’s ability to develop, initiate or complete preclinical studies and clinical trials for, obtain approvals for and commercialize any of its product candidates; the risk that early research or clinical trials do not demonstrate safety and/or efficacy in later preclinical studies or clinical trials; uncertainties associated with performing clinical trials, regulatory filings and applications; changes in Design’s plans to develop and commercialize its product candidates; Design’s ability to raise any additional funding it will need to continue to pursue its business and product development plans; regulatory developments in the United States and foreign countries; Design’s reliance on key third parties, including contract manufacturers and contract research organizations; Design’s ability to obtain and maintain intellectual property protection for its product candidates; the loss of key scientific or management personnel; competition in the

industry in which Design operates; and general market conditions. For a more detailed discussion of these and other factors, please refer to Design's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. You are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date hereof. All forward-looking statements are qualified in their entirety by this cautionary statement and Design undertakes no obligation to revise or update this press release to reflect events or circumstances after the date hereof, except as required by law.

Contact:
Alicia Davis
THRUST Strategic Communications
(910) 620-3302
alicia@thrustsc.com