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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MARYLAND STEM CELL RESEARCH COMMISSION ISSUES
2012 REQUESTS FOR APPLICATIONS (RFAs) AT FOURTH
ANNUAL STEM CELL SYMPOSIUM**

Symposium provided an opportunity for the public to learn about Maryland's stem cell research program and FY 2012 RFAs

TOWSON, Md.(Oct. 6, 2011) – Today, approximately 400 individuals attended the **Fourth Annual Maryland Stem Cell Research Symposium** presented by the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission (Commission) at Towson University. Symposium attendees included bioethicists, patient advocates, government officials, representatives from State agencies and scientists from academic institutions, biotechnology companies and not-for-profit organizations. The Commission also released its 2012 Requests for Applications (RFAs) at the symposium.

“Our Fourth Annual Maryland Stem Cell Research Symposium showcased the remarkable breadth of human stem cell research that our world class investigators are conducting, and provided Marylanders the opportunity to witness advancements in this rapidly evolving field,” said Margaret Conn Himelfarb, MPH, chair of the Commission. “We are also pleased to issue our RFAs today, which will continue to fund cutting-edge stem cell research targeting devastating human diseases and conditions.”

The symposium took place at Towson University's West Village Commons and featured research supported by the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund (MSCRF). The agenda included presentations and poster sessions by researchers awarded MSCRF grants. Symposium sessions covered bioethics in human stem cell research, the use of stem cells in disease modeling and treatment, and translating research to the clinic.

The agenda included remarks by: Dr. Laura Herrera, Chief Medical Officer for the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (representing Governor Martin O'Malley); Del. John Bohanan, Jr. (D-St. Mary's); Kevin Kamenetz, Baltimore County Executive; and Marcia Welsh, interim President of Towson University. The Kellermann Memorial Lecture, which honors the late stem cell research advocate and founding Commission member John L. Kellermann III, was delivered by Dr. Curt I. Civin. Civin, associate dean for research at the University of Maryland

School of Medicine and director of the Center for Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine, spoke about emerging research in hematopoietic stem-progenitor cells, cells derived from bone marrow that give rise to all blood cell types.

Established under the Maryland Stem Cell Research Act of 2006, the MSCRF is currently budgeted to commit up to \$12.4 million, in aggregate, in FY 2012 to fund Grants under all of its RFAs. In its sixth round of funding, the Commission today released three new RFAs, seeking applications for basic, translational and clinical research involving human stem cells of all types, as defined in the Maryland Stem Cell Research Act. Investigators affiliated with Maryland-based organizations of all types are eligible to apply, including public and private for-profit and not-for-profit universities, colleges, research institutes, companies and medical centers.

RFA-MD-12-1 is soliciting applications for Investigator-Initiated Research Grants, which are designed for investigators with preliminary data supporting the grant application. Investor-Initiated Research Grants provide up to \$600,000, budgeted over a maximum of three years.

RFA-MD-12-2 is soliciting applications for Exploratory Research Grants, which are designed for investigators who are new to the stem cell field (young investigators and investigators from other fields), and for new hypotheses, approaches, mechanisms or models that may differ from current thinking in the stem cell field, with little or no preliminary data supporting the application. These Exploratory Research Grants provide up to \$100,000 of direct costs per year, for up to two years.

RFA-MD-12-3 is soliciting applications for post-doctoral fellows who wish to conduct research in Maryland. Post-doctoral Fellowship awards provide up to \$55,000 per year, for up to two years, including all direct, indirect and fringe benefits costs.

The work funded under these RFAs must be conducted in Maryland. The scientists and clinicians conducting this work must be employed or retained by an eligible Maryland-based organization while the work is ongoing. Such employment or retainer may be permanent or temporary, full-time or part-time. Individuals from underrepresented minorities and individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

All principal investigators funded under these RFAs will be required to present their interim and final research results at an annual in-state symposium and in annual reports to the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund.

New cell lines initially developed with funding under these RFAs must be shared with other qualified researchers.

Key Dates:

- Required Letter of Intent Submission Deadline: 11:59 p.m., November 14, 2011
- Application Submission Deadline: 11:59 p.m., January 16, 2012
- Peer Review Date(s): March 2012
- Commission Review Date: May 7, 2012
- Earliest Anticipated Start Date: June 2012

For more information about the 2012 RFAs, visit the MSCRF Web site at www.mscref.org.

NOTE FOR EDITORS:

- Photographs of the day's events and VIP speakers can be obtained by contacting Kelly Cahill at 410-504-8312 or kcahill@mghus.com.

About the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission

The Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund (MSCRF) was established by the State of Maryland under the Maryland Stem Cell Research Act of 2006 to promote State-funded stem cell research and cures through grants and loans to public and private entities in the State. Administered by The Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO), the MSCRF is overseen by an independent Commission that sets policy and develops criteria, standards and requirements for applications to the Fund. The current MSCRF budget for FY 2012 is \$12.4 million. For more information about the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund and a list of Commission members, please visit www.mscref.org.

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