



Media Contact:
Kathleen Shaffer
410-902-5053
kshaffer@mghus.com

Kelly Cahill
410-504-8312
kcahill@mghus.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission Funds 40 New Proposals in FY 2012

*Awards to advance regenerative medicine
address diverse, debilitating diseases and conditions*

COLUMBIA, Md. (May 17, 2012) – The Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission (Commission) has completed its review of the 179 applications received in response to its three FY 2012 Requests for Applications (RFAs). The board of directors of the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO) approved the Commission's recommendation to fund 40 new proposals with the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund's (MSCRF) \$12.4 million FY 2012 budget.

"We are pleased to announce our grant awards for FY 2012," said Margaret Conn Himelfarb, MPH, chair of the Commission. "These projects address a diverse array of debilitating and costly diseases and conditions, some of which are traditionally underfunded. Maryland's investment in cutting-edge stem cell research continues to advance the field and strengthens our State's national leadership position in the life sciences. We are grateful to Governor Martin O'Malley and the Maryland General Assembly for recognizing the tremendous economic and humanitarian benefits of this pioneering research."

This funding cycle, the Commission gave priority to proposals that focus on advancing regenerative medicine by selecting promising research that targets sickle cell anemia, schizophrenia, type 1 diabetes, nerve injury, Parkinson's disease, Crohn's disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), heart disease, osteoarthritis, Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS), retinal disease, and other debilitating medical conditions. Continuing the collaboration initiated last year with the California Institute of Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), the MSCRF will also support a Maryland researcher working with CIRM-funded scientists to study stem cell differentiation and bone repair.

This year's MSCRF awards include:

- 9 Investigator-Initiated Research Grants (RFA-MD-12-1) – providing up to \$600,000 in direct costs over a maximum of three years to investigators with preliminary data to support their hypotheses.
- 17 Exploratory Research Grants (RFA-MD-12-2) – providing up to \$200,000 in direct costs over a maximum of two years to researchers with novel approaches, mechanisms or models that may differ from current thinking in the field and/or new hypotheses that have little or no preliminary data.
- 14 Post-Doctoral Fellowship Research Grants (RFA-MD-12-3) – providing post-doctoral fellows up to \$55,000 per year, for up to two years.

-- more --

All MSCRF-funded research must be conducted in Maryland and must involve human stem cells.

For a complete list of the names of the Principal Investigators (PIs), their project titles and institutions, please visit the MSCRF Web site <http://www.mscref.org/content/awardees/2008.cfm>.

Each grant awarded by the Commission is contingent upon the PI obtaining all applicable ethical approvals to conduct the specified research, as well as a signed agreement with TEDCO that describes the scope of the project, requirements for sharing any cell line(s) developed with MSCRF funding and a commitment to publish results.

The final amount of each award will be determined during the due diligence process and will be listed in the MSCRF annual report scheduled for release in December 2013. All currently funded MSCRF researchers are required to present their findings at the 5th Annual Maryland Stem Cell Research Symposium to be held on October 4 - 5, 2012 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Annapolis.

In response to requests from the biotech industry, the Commission also announced today that the pre-application deadline for RFA-MD-13-4 has been extended to November 15, 2012. RFA-MD-13-4 is a new MSCRF funding program developed to support for-profit companies interested in conducting pre-clinical and clinical human stem cell research in Maryland. For more information, visit www.mscref.org/content/fundingopps/PreClinicalClinicalGrants.cfm.

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 2013 is \$10.4 million. For more information about the MSCRF and a list of Commission members, please visit www.mscref.org.

###