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## Scientists from the State of Maryland and California Meet to Discuss Best Practices and Advancements in Stem Cell Research

*Workshop facilitated by The Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO) and The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) brings researchers together in Baltimore*

**COLUMBIA, Md. (Mar. 12, 2010)** – More than 120 stem cell researchers from Maryland and California met in Baltimore today to discuss best practices and advancements in stem cell research. The meeting entitled, “Workshop on Tools & Technologies for Bottlenecks in Stem Cell Research,” was supported by the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO), which administers the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund (MSCRF); the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), which serves as California’s stem cell agency; MdBio Foundation, Inc.; the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC); and the Maryland Biotechnology Center. Today’s event brought together Maryland and California stem cell scientists as the two state’s enter into the next stage in the bi-coastal collaboration to advance stem cell research.

“Today’s gathering of Maryland and California stem cell researchers marks the beginning of an important and rewarding relationship for both states,” said Governor Martin O’Malley. “Critical innovations and advancements in science and medicine must go beyond state borders to be successful. This workshop demonstrates the dedication of Maryland and California to the promise and potential of stem cell research.”

“This revolutionary science has the potential to save millions of lives from debilitating diseases such as Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s and Multiple Sclerosis,” said Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. “This collaborative workshop will unite some of the best minds in the field from California and Maryland to collaborate and advance stem cell research. I look forward to seeing the successes and solutions that develop from this partnership to help treat some of today’s most life-threatening diseases.”

The goals of the workshop centered on the development of new tools and technologies to overcome common hurdles in stem cell research, supporting innovative translational research and driving the development of novel therapeutic approaches for using stem cells. Researchers from both states were encouraged to network and share their findings thus far. Featured panel discussions also took place on the topics of gene therapy technologies, in vivo imaging technologies, disease models, and scale up and cell separation technologies. Key speakers included: Dr. John Robson, vice president for operations for CIRM, Dr. Dan Gincel, director of the MSCRF, as well as many researchers from universities and companies from Maryland and California. To view the detailed agenda and full list of presenters, visit <http://www.mscref.org/content/info/meetings.cfm>.

The bi-coastal collaboration with TEDCO and CIRM makes it easier for researchers in Maryland and California to partner and obtain joint funding to broaden the potential pool of expertise that can be applied toward research of cures and treatments for some of today’s most debilitating diseases. Governor O’Malley announced the bi-coastal collaboration September 2009 at The World Stem Cell Summit, where he received The Genetics Policy Institute’s (GPI) National Leadership Award for his commitment to stem cell research. TEDCO and CIRM are working to finalize a joint Request for Applications (RFA) that will facilitate this kind of teamwork. When announced, the Maryland/California joint RFA will be the first of its kind in stem cell research.

“Maryland’s partnership with CIRM ensures that events like today’s workshop will continue to bring together some of the best and brightest stem cell researchers, all of whom are working toward common goals,” said Dr. Dan Gincel, director of the MSCRF. “We are very pleased with the outcome of today’s meeting and feel that it has been extremely conducive to the work of our state’s researchers.”

“Our experience in working with international funding partners is that this type of collaboration does bring scientists together in a way that expands their research horizons, taking them and the field in new directions,” said Dr. Robson. “This workshop with Maryland is the first with scientists from another state in the U.S. and we expect it, too, will bring researchers together and accelerate the field of regenerative medicine.”

**The Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO)**, an independent entity, was established by the Maryland General Assembly in 1998 to facilitate the creation of businesses and foster their growth in all regions of the State. TEDCO's role is to be Maryland's leading source of funding for seed capital and entrepreneurial business assistance for the development, transfer and commercialization of technology. TEDCO connects emerging technology companies with federal laboratories, research universities, business incubators and specialized technical assistance. For the fifth consecutive year, TEDCO was recognized as the most active seed/early-stage investor in the nation in the August 2008 issue of Entrepreneur magazine and received the national Excellence in Technology-Based Economic Development award from the State Science and Technology Institute (SSTI) for the Maryland Technology Transfer Fund (MTTF) program in October 2008. For more information on TEDCO and its programs and resources, visit [www.MarylandTEDCO.org](http://www.MarylandTEDCO.org).

**About MSCRC**, Established as an independent unit within the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO), the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission has set up criteria, standards and requirements to administer the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund in accordance with the Maryland Stem Cell Research Act of 2006. The Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund has been established to promote state-funded stem research. With a current \$12.4 million budget for FY 2010, the Commission will support grants to public and private entities in the State. The Commission is a proud partner of The 2009 World Stem Cell Summit that is taking place in Baltimore September 21 through September 23. For more information about the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund and a list of Commission members, please visit [www.msccrf.org](http://www.msccrf.org).

**About CIRM**, CIRM was established in 2005 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. To date, the CIRM governing board has approved 328 research and facility grants totaling more than \$1.02 billion, making CIRM the largest source of funding for human embryonic stem cell research in the world. For more information, please visit [www.cirm.ca.gov](http://www.cirm.ca.gov).

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