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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission Recommends 62 Projects for Funding

COLUMBIA, Md. (May 8, 2008) – The Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission (Commission) has completed its evaluation of the 122 applications in response to its three official Requests for Applications (RFAs). The board of directors of the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO) reviewed the Commission's recommendations today and approved 62 projects for funding through the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund (MSCRF) under the Maryland Stem Cell Research Act of 2006. This year's projects recommended for funding include:

- 11 applications for RFA-MD-07-1 (Investigator-Initiated Research Grants) – These grants are designed for investigators with preliminary data supporting the grant application.
- 34 applications for RFA-MD-07-2 (Exploratory Research Grants) – These grants are designed for investigators who are new to the stem cell field (new 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, without any preliminary data supporting the application.
- 17 applications for RFA-MD-07-03 (Post-Doctoral Fellowship Research Grants) – These new grants are for post-doctoral fellows who wish to conduct basic and/or translational research on all types of human stem cells in Maryland.

For a complete list of the names of the Principal Investigators, the title of each project and the institution at which the Principal Investor works, please visit <http://www.msccrf.org/content/awardees/2008.cfm>.

“The Commission members worked very hard to achieve a well balanced set of grant awards to cover multiple different diseases, with a variety of research approaches and the participation of many institutions throughout the state. All of the proposals considered by the Commission had already been judged to have high scientific merit, through the scientific peer review process,” said Linda Powers, chairperson of the Commission. “We are excited about the potential future applications of these funded projects in diseases such as Parkinson's, ALS, brain cancer and arthritis, as well as in new enabling technologies such as non-invasive imaging, and in some fundamental biology for the prevention of teratomas or tumors.”

Grants awarded from the MSCRF are contingent upon the Principal Investigator having obtained all applicable approvals from an Institutional Review Board (IRB), an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), and having signed an agreement with TEDCO setting forth the scope of each project and the requirements relating to diligent execution of the project, sharing of any new cells lines, publication of results, and the like. The amounts of the awards will be disclosed once final terms are negotiated and the agreements are signed with the Principal Investigators. Research activity can then begin immediately.

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The goals of the MSCRF are to broaden and advance basic knowledge of human stem cell biology that will be relevant for eventual development of clinical applications, and to enable, support and accelerate such clinical applications for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of human diseases and conditions. The Commission sought the widest range of research topics that may achieve these goals.

The work funded must be conducted in Maryland. The scientists and clinicians conducting the work must be employed or retained by an eligible Maryland-based organization while doing so. Such employment or retainer may be permanent or temporary, full-time or part-time. All Principal Investigators funded will be required to present their interim and final research results at the Maryland Stem Cell Symposium and in annual reports to the Commission.

About the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission

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 \$23 million budget for FY 2008, the Commission will support grants to public and private entities in the State. 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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