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MARYLAND STEM CELL RESEARCH COMMISSION HOSTS SYMPOSIUM WITH NIH AND NIST

Third Annual Maryland Stem Cell Research Symposium focused on facilitating state and national collaboration

GAITHERSBURG, Md., (Sept. 22, 2010) – More than 350 individuals today attended the **Third Annual Maryland Stem Cell Research Symposium**, jointly hosted by the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission (Commission), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Attendees were from academic institutions, biotechnology companies, non-profit organizations and state and federal agencies, and included bioethicists and patient advocates as well as scientists.

The symposium, “*Facilitating State and National Collaboration to Advance Groundbreaking Life Science Research*,” took place at the NIST main campus in Gaithersburg, Md., and featured research supported by the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund (MSCRF) and federal agencies in the State of Maryland. The agenda included presentations and poster sessions by researchers who have been awarded MSCRF grants over the last four years. The symposium was one of the first events in the U.S. in which both state and federal entities came together to address critical issues in stem cell research.

“The Maryland Technology Development Corporation, the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission, NIH and NIST truly understand the value of research and innovation in today’s complex and interconnected 21st century economy,” said Governor Martin O’Malley. “This year’s participants are advancing stem cell research and regenerative medicine by making vital discoveries that are helping the State of Maryland move toward a better, stronger future.”

Four panels addressed the topics of hematopoietic and mesenchymal stem cells, induced pluripotent stem cells, stem cells and neurodegenerative diseases and clinical trials with stem cells. The agenda included opening remarks by Story Landis, Ph.D., Director of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) and head of the Stem Cell Task Force at the NIH and Willie May, Ph.D., Director of the Chemical Science and Technology Laboratory at NIST.

A highlight of the symposium was the memorial lecture honoring the late John L. Kellermann III – a member of the Commission since its inception and a passionate patient advocate for stem cell and Parkinson’s disease research. The Kellermann Memorial Lecture, entitled “Looking Forward to Tomorrow’s Therapies for Parkinson’s Disease,” was presented by Ted M. Dawson,

M.D., Ph.D., the Leonard and Madlyn Abramson Professor in Neurodegenerative Diseases, Scientific Director of the Institute for Cell Engineering and Professor in the Departments of Neurology and Neuroscience at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Kellermann's wife Marye, who was appointed to fill her husband's seat on the Commission, and his children presented a plaque to Dawson. For a full list of presentations, speakers and a detailed agenda, visit www.mscref.org.

“Today's Third Annual Maryland Stem Cell Research Symposium is an extraordinary event for our State and its scientific community, and we thank NIH and NIST for their partnership in this endeavor,” said Margaret Conn Himelfarb, MPH, chair of the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission. “The Commission is proud to present Maryland’s top ranked stem cell research in a public forum. This unique opportunity to share knowledge across for-profit and not-for-profit domains will inspire new collaborations, accelerate groundbreaking research, and help Maryland retain its national position at the forefront of this critical field.”

NOTE FOR EDITORS:

- Photographs of the day’s events and VIP speakers can be obtained by contacting Kathleen Shaffer at (410) 902-5053 or kshaffer@mghus.com

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 budget of \$10.4 million for FY 2011, 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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