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Connecticut to Host International Stem Cell Symposium

Scientific presentations and televised public forum to highlight March 27-28 event

Hartford, Conn., June 14, 2006 -- An international symposium, StemCONN 07, will bring the worldwide stem cell research community to Connecticut March 27-28, 2007. Included in the two-day event are scientific presentations by leading authorities, a public forum broadcast live on Connecticut Public Television, sessions on commercialization, economic development and bioethics and a briefing for legislators and the media.

Connecticut joined the international stem cell research community on June 15, 2005, when Governor M. Jodi Rell signed legislation authorizing \$100 million in support of stem cell research over the next ten years. "As a national leader in stem cell research and public policy, Connecticut is a fitting location to hold this important event," said Governor Rell. "We look forward to hosting the world's stem cell community and to having a spirited discussion of this promising science."

Organizing StemCONN 07 as Founding Partners are the Connecticut Department of Public Health, the Connecticut Stem Cell Coalition, and CURE (Connecticut United for Research Excellence), the state bioscience organization, in collaboration with the University of Connecticut, Wesleyan University and Yale University, and other organizations such as the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering.

"Connecticut's landmark legislation, combined with the vibrant research environment at our universities and medical schools, have positioned our state as an International Center of Excellence for Stem Cell Research," said J. Robert Galvin, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Public Health and Chairman of the Connecticut Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee.

"Stem cell research may one day lead to cures for a number of debilitating diseases," said Milton Wallack, D.D.S., co-Chair of the Connecticut Stem Cell Coalition. "The symposium will give top scientists a chance to exchange ideas and keep the general public informed of the latest advances."

"The symposium is one more example of the deepening interest in Connecticut as a center of bioscience investment," said Paul R. Pescatello, J.D., Ph.D., President and CEO of CURE.

StemCONN 07 will include five sessions organized by audience:

- A scientific session for members of the international stem cell research community will feature presentations by world authorities such as Douglas Melton, Ph.D., of Harvard University, Ian Wilmut, Ph.D., of the University of Edinburgh, Rudolph Jaenisch, M.D., of MIT, Arthur Caplan, Ph.D., of the University of Pennsylvania and Catherine Verfaillie, M.D., of the University of Minnesota and the Belgium Stem Cell Institute.
- The general public will be invited to participate in a public forum broadcast live on Connecticut Public Television and featuring an interactive discussion among international experts in the science and ethics of stem cell research.
- A session on bioethics will be organized by Julius Landwirth, M.D., J.D., of Yale University's Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics, for bioethicists and members of institutional review boards and ESCRO committees.
- A session on economic development and commercialization opportunities will be held for those interested in the economic impact of Connecticut's stem cell initiative.
- A session for elected officials and the media will feature presentations by leading stem cell researchers from Connecticut and the region, highlighting current activities and collaborations.

For more information and to pre-register, visit www.stemconn.org. ###

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