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Researchers and Representatives Gain Insight into Stem Cell Research Funding Opportunities in Maryland

More than 100 individuals learn about funding opportunities and receive an overview of the application process for stem cell research grants

COLUMBIA, Md. (July 15, 2008) – To provide researchers and companies with insight into stem cell research funding opportunities and an overview of the application process for stem cell research in Maryland, the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission (Commission) recently hosted two informational sessions at the Montgomery County campus of Johns Hopkins University (JHU) and the Greenspring campus of the Kennedy Krieger Institute. Approximately 100 people attended the two sessions collectively, which featured speakers, a question and answer session and networking to provide insight on ways for applicants to increase their chances of receiving funding.

“Educating researchers, the business community and the public on available funding opportunities for stem cell research in Maryland is critical,” said Governor Martin O’Malley. “The continued success of Maryland’s stem cell research program relies not only on the quality of work being done in terms of stem cell advancements, but general awareness as well. The Bio 2020 initiative will ensure that today’s milestones in stem cell research will lead to tomorrow’s stem cell advancements in Maryland.”

Speakers at the information sessions included Dan Gincel, director of the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund, who provided an overview of stem cell research funding in Maryland; Donna L. Vogel, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Professional Development Office at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, who highlighted effective grant writing; Mark L. Weiss, Ph.D., professor of Neuroscience at Kansas State University, who facilitated a discussion of review criteria used by the independent Scientific Peer Review Committee; and Debra JH Mathews, Ph.D., assistant director for Science Programs at the Berman Institute of Bioethics at JHU, who discussed ethical implications in stem cell research.

“The impressive attendance at both information sessions is a testament to the great interest in stem cell research among not only the scientific and medical communities in Maryland, but the business community as well,” said Gincel. “By providing an outlet for interested individuals to learn more about stem cell research opportunities, the Commission is taking proactive measures to make sure that Maryland’s stem cell research program is accessible to the very best researchers and innovators in the state.”

Presentations made at the information sessions are available on the Commission’s website and can be viewed by going to www.mscref.org.

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 cell research. With a current budget of \$19 million for FY 2009, 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.