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**Massachusetts Life Sciences Center Board Approves Continued
Funding for International Stem Cell Registry
Investment will help the University of Massachusetts Medical School move forward
with international stem cell database**

Waltham, Massachusetts – The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (the “Center”) Board of Directors today approved \$695,000 in continued funding for the International Stem Cell Registry at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. The investment continues the relationship between the Center and UMass Medical School in Worcester to bolster Massachusetts’ leadership position in stem cell research. In September of 2008, the Center and UMass Medical School announced the launch of the Registry, supported by an initial Center investment of \$570,000. This project, combined with the affiliated Massachusetts Stem Cell Bank, has put Massachusetts at the forefront of stem cell research, and positioned the state to compete effectively for newly available federal funding under the Obama Administration’s recent change in federal policy regarding embryonic stem cell research.

The Registry provides an online resource of information on human embryonic and induced pluripotent stem cells to the academic and private sector biomedical research community and to the public. Envisioned as a comprehensive and searchable source of stem cell information, the Registry details the properties and potential applications of specific stem cell lines and includes information for researchers to obtain cells and a catalog of references related to each stem cell line. While researchers can use the information to inform their scientific studies, patients can use the website to gain

information about stem cell advances that may benefit them, and doctors can stay current on information relevant to their patients. The website provides information at varying levels of complexity, ensuring that each constituency can access the information in a practical and user friendly format. The database will ultimately provide a searchable and comprehensive catalog of published and validated unpublished information on every known human embryonic stem cell line derived to date.

The Registry is housed at the Medical School's Shrewsbury campus alongside the Massachusetts Stem Cell Bank, also funded by the Center. The Stem Cell Bank, a 15,000 square foot facility with research and training space, maintains human and reprogrammed stem cell lines for use in related research. The Bank was funded through a \$7.7 million grant from the Center.

"Stem cell research holds enormous promise for finding cures and therapies for diseases such as Alzheimers, ALS, heart disease and cancer," said Governor Deval Patrick. "This ongoing investment in the International Stem Cell Registry will solidify our state's position as a global leader in stem cell research and the life sciences industry."

"The International Stem Cell Registry and the Massachusetts Stem Cell Bank are putting Massachusetts ahead of the curve as a leader in stem cell research," said Dr. Susan Windham-Bannister, President & CEO of the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center. "Now that the Obama Administration is allowing federal funding for stem cell research, Massachusetts is in an ideal position to compete for these dollars and make some real progress in this critical research area."

"As applications of human stem cells for regenerative medicine emerge, resources like the Registry, which provides 'one-stop shopping' for properties of pluripotent cells, are becoming increasingly important," said Gary S. Stein, PhD, the Gerald L. Haidak, M.D. and Zelda S. Haidak Distinguished Professor and Chair of Cell Biology at UMMS and the Interim Director of the Registry. "The Registry will effectively position Massachusetts scientists to maximize the 'window of opportunity' for stem cell research provided by President Obama's revision of restrictions on stem cell investigation."

About the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center is a quasi-public agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts tasked with implementing the Massachusetts Life Sciences Act, a ten-year, \$1 billion initiative that was signed into law in June of 2008. The Center's mission is to create jobs in the life sciences and support vital scientific research that will improve the human condition. This work includes making financial investments in public and private institutions that are advancing life sciences research, development and commercialization as well as building ties between sectors of the Massachusetts life sciences community. For more information, visit www.masslifesciences.com.

About the University of Massachusetts Medical School

The University of Massachusetts Medical School, one of the fastest growing academic health centers in the country, has built a reputation as a world-class research institution, consistently producing noteworthy advances in clinical and basic research. The Medical School attracts more than \$200 million in research funding annually, 80 percent of which comes from federal funding sources. The work of UMMS researcher Craig Mello, PhD, an investigator of the prestigious Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI), and his colleague Andrew Fire, PhD, then of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, toward the discovery of RNA interference was awarded the 2006 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine and has spawned a new and promising field of research, the global impact of which may prove astounding. The mission of the University of Massachusetts Medical School is to advance the health and well-being of the people of the Commonwealth and the world through pioneering education, research, public service and health care delivery with our clinical partner, UMass Memorial Health Care.

For more information, visit www.umassmed.edu.

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