

Kim Irwin ([kirwin@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:kirwin@mednet.ucla.edu))  
(310) 206-2805  
Enrique Rivero ([erivero@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:erivero@mednet.ucla.edu))  
(310) 794-2273

**For Immediate Use**  
Jan. 30, 2009

**TRAINING GRANT FOR UCLA'S STEM CELL RESEARCH CENTER RENEWED,  
TRAINING PROGRAM LAUDED BY REVIEWERS AS "OUTSTANDING"**

**UCLA to Receive \$3.93 Million from the California Institute for Regenerative  
Medicine to Train the Next Generation of Stem Cell Researchers**

UCLA's stem cell research center today received \$3.93 million from the California Institute of Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) to renew a grant to train young scientists to conduct stem cell research.

The three-year grant will fund the training of 16 graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and physicians conducting stem cell research per year. Each will be offered various training options, including working with faculty who are leaders in cell and molecular biology, gene medicine, cell-based therapies, engineering and organ transplantation. The program also includes mandatory training in the social, legal, ethical and policy aspects of stem cell research, said Owen Witte, director of the Broad Stem Cell Research Center at UCLA.

"We provide our trainees with a critical background in stem cell biology, an understanding of human disease and the knowledge they need to translate basic research findings from the laboratory to the clinic," Witte said. "We achieve this through a coordinated approach that integrates formal classroom training, seminars and symposia and laboratory research."

UCLA's grant proposal, approved today by the state's Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee, received a score of 95 out of 100 and reviewers lauded the stem cell center's training program as "outstanding."

"Reviewers uniformly recognized that the institution provides an outstanding environment for training both scientists and clinicians in the stem cell field," the review states. "Reviewers uniformly lauded faculty mentors as superb, with exciting research training opportunities for scholars that encompass many different areas of stem cell biology,"

CIRM fellow Ann Zovein calls her experience in the program invaluable.

"I feel very fortunate to be a participant in the CIRM training grant. It has allowed me to gain extraordinary training in stem cell and developmental biology research, in a renowned laboratory with a fantastic mentor, Luisa Iruela-Arispe," Zovein said. "As a CIRM fellow, I have had the privilege of attending CIRM meetings and events, and sharing my science with peers and senior scientists in stem cell research. The collegial and supportive atmosphere

creates a unique and unparalleled environment from which to start an early career in stem cell research.”

UCLA’s Broad Stem Cell Research Center received its initial training grant of \$3.75 million in 2005 – the largest training grant awarded. UCLA’s renewal today is tied for the largest grant awarded in this round. CIRM training grant funding to UCLA now totals \$7.68 million, the largest amount awarded to a stem cell center. To date, 33 researchers have cycled through the training program.

In all, the Broad Stem Cell Research Center and its scientists have received 24 grants from CIRM, totaling \$57 million.

The stem cell center was launched in 2005 with a UCLA commitment of \$20 million over five years. A \$20 million gift from the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation in 2007 resulted in the renaming of the center. With more than 150 members, the Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research is committed to a multi-disciplinary, integrated collaboration of scientific, academic and medical disciplines for the purpose of understanding adult and human embryonic stem cells. The institute supports innovation, excellence and the highest ethical standards focused on stem cell research with the intent of facilitating basic scientific inquiry directed towards future clinical applications to treat disease. The center is a collaboration of the David Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA’s Jonsson Cancer Center, the Henry Samueli School of Engineering and Applied Science and the UCLA College of Letters and Science. To learn more about the center, visit our web site at <http://www.stemcell.ucla.edu>.