

PRESS RELEASE

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**UCLA STEM CELL INSTITUTE RECEIVES \$2.86 MILLION GRANT
FROM THE STATE TO CREATE NEW LABORATORY SPACE**

**UCLA Wins One of 17 Grants to Create Shared Facilities
for the Culture of Human Embryonic Stem Cells Lines**

The Institute for Stem Cell Biology and Medicine at UCLA was awarded a \$2,862,497 million grant today from the state to construct lab space dedicated to the creation of new human embryonic stem cell lines and continued research on existing stem cell lines.

The UCLA grant was one of 17 awarded by the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) totaling more than \$50 million in funding. The Independent Citizens Oversight Committee, the governing board for CIRM charged with managing the state's \$3 billion stem cell program, approved the facilities grants at its meeting today, held at UCLA.

The grants were the fourth set awarded for human embryonic stem cell research approved under Proposition 71. UCLA's grant application received the second highest overall score awarded and was the top scorer among the nine University of California applicants. Among grants that didn't include a training course, UCLA received the largest grant awarded for construction and operation of shared research laboratory space.

"This group has the potential and expertise to truly translate their research into the clinic and this represents a strength of the application," the grant review states. "The overall quality and impact of the science is excellent."

The grant will fund construction of an approximately 4,700-square-foot, multi-user laboratory space with four tissue culture areas that can be reserved by UCLA and non-UCLA stem cell researchers on a time-share basis. The state-of-art facility will allow human embryonic stem cell research that is either not allowed now due to current federal funding restrictions or not technically feasible in individual research laboratories.

"This new lab space will allow investigators who would otherwise not be able to conduct human embryonic stem cell research to become active in this area," said Dr. Owen Witte, director of the UCLA stem cell institute and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator. "The increase in the number of human embryonic stem cell scientists will lead to new insights that will further increase the prominence of California as a leader in this field."

The grant also will allow for the purchase of vital equipment necessary for human embryonic stem cell research, Witte said.

In all, CIRM received 22 grant applications to fund shared research laboratories.

UCLA has been successful in every funding round offered by CIRM. In 2006, the stem cell institute received a \$3.75 million training grant, the largest training grant awarded by the state. In February and March, scientists from UCLA's stem cell institute received nine individual seed and comprehensive research grants totaling more than \$9 million.

To date, CIRM has awarded more than \$158 million in research grants to 23 academic and non-profit research institutions in California

The Institute for Stem Cell Biology and Medicine was launched in 2005 with a UCLA commitment of \$20 million over five years. With more than 150 members, the ISCBM 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 institute 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.

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To learn more about the Institute for Stem Cell Biology and Medicine at UCLA, visit our web site at <http://www.stemcell.ucla.edu/>.