

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE
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**INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE RECEIVES \$3.9M
IN TOBACCO SETTLEMENT FUNDS**

PHILADELPHIA—The University of Pennsylvania's newly created Institute for Regenerative Medicine, in collaboration with the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Fox Chase Cancer Center, Haverford College, Lincoln University and Thomas Jefferson will receive \$3.9 million from Pennsylvania's share of the national tobacco settlement for 2007-08.

Regenerative Medicine was determined to be one of two research priorities for 2007-08, as determined by the Health Research Advisory Committee, chaired by Health Secretary Calvin Johnson. Regenerative medicine is a rapidly growing area of medicine which includes the use of adult stem cells to develop innovative health treatments for improving or restoring the function of organs and tissues damaged by disease or injury. The need for research on regenerative medicine is underscored by the number of people living with devastating diseases, such as leukemia or sickle cell disease, for which there are no cures or few effective treatments. Adult stem cell research may also lead to more effective treatments for conditions such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes, two of the leading causes of death in Pennsylvania.

The Institute for Regenerative Medicine and their collaborators will develop regenerative therapies for restoring the function of islet cells. Islet cells are the cells that produce insulin and are lacking in persons with diabetes. The University of Pennsylvania has a program underway to perform islet transplantation. This project seeks to improve the outcome of transplantation by investigating unique mechanisms for promoting the growth of transplanted islet cells to regenerate functional tissue and provide a sustained cure.

Additionally, this project will include training and community outreach programs in regenerative medicine for Philadelphia minority students and faculty at Haverford College, Lincoln University and Thomas Jefferson. Specifically, it includes an expansion of an already existing program at Thomas Jefferson to teach biology and to excite students about science and discovery from elementary school through high school in the School District of Philadelphia, whose student body is composed almost entirely of underserved populations. The existing program will be expanded to included topics on Regeneration, encouraging local children and young adults to enter biomedical careers. Furthermore, the Institute will collaborate with Lincoln University and Haverford Colleges, both schools with a focus on serving minority students, to fund fellowships, research programs, and the creation of new courses in stem cell biology and regenerative medicine. This scientific and educational program is designed to grow the next generation of scientists and put knowledge to work in medicine, research, and industry.

These grants are awarded as part of the Commonwealth Universal Research Enhancement Program, which support clinical, health services, and biomedical research. More information on the use of tobacco settlement funds can be found at the Pennsylvania Department of Health's website for health research grants at www.health.state.pa.us/cure and a copy of the full announcement can be found at <http://www.dsf.health.state.pa.us/health/cwp/view.asp?Q=250400&A=190>.

Information on the University of Pennsylvania's Institute for Regenerative Medicine can be found at www.irm.upenn.edu.

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