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HHMI Unveils Long-Range, \$500 Million Plan for Collaborative Research Campus

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) today unveiled a 10-year, \$500 million plan for a biomedical science center that will develop advanced technology for biomedical researchers and provide a collaborative setting where scientists from around the world can create the new tools of biology. The campus will be located on a 281-acre site that HHMI recently acquired just outside Washington, D.C., in Loudoun County, Virginia.

"This unique campus will develop and share the advanced technology resources needed for the cutting-edge, interdisciplinary scientific work that will characterize the medical research of the future," said Thomas R. Cech, president of the Institute.

"Advances in science and technology are occurring at a rapid pace," Cech noted. "Breakthroughs in computer science, chemistry, physics and engineering can be critical for developing research tools used in the study of biology and medicine. Adapting these discoveries for use in biological systems or health-related sciences, however, requires state-of-the-art technologies, multi-disciplinary expertise and high-quality research facilities. In establishing the facility, HHMI intends to accelerate this adaptation process," he said.

"The new campus will be home to a large, permanent research-and-development program. At the same time, it will have the space and financial resources to shift rapidly into new areas that show unusual scientific promise," Cech added.

A new approach to promoting collaborations will be possible at the facility, he said. "For the first time, we will have well-equipped laboratories where a group of scientists can come to work together, each bringing a few members of their research group, for periods ranging from a few weeks to several years," he said.

During the initial period of design, construction, and personnel recruitment, the new program will be managed by Cech, David A. Clayton, vice president for science development, and Gerald M. Rubin, vice president for biomedical research. They will also serve on an advisory board that will include

scientists from the Institute's Medical Advisory Board, current HHMI investigators, and other leaders from outside the Institute who have scientific, administrative or management expertise.

The Institute anticipates that the facilities on the new campus will be available for occupancy in about four years. The scientific staff will eventually number more than 200.

For the collaborative activities on the new campus, HHMI will invite proposals from the scientific community at large, as well as from HHMI investigators. HHMI will seek proposals that center on cutting-edge scientific and technological goals, and will give preference to projects that bring together diverse individuals and expertise from different environments. To be successful, proposals will have to demonstrate originality, creativity, and a high degree of scientific risk-taking.

Loudoun County Site: Janelia Farm, which is the name of the property that was recently purchased by HHMI, is located four miles east of Leesburg, Virginia, and approximately eight miles from Dulles International Airport. The property contains 281 acres located between the Potomac River on the north and Virginia Route 7 on the south. The property includes a Normandy-style manor house and an adjacent carriage house that are both listed on the National Historic Register. There are also three recently completed office buildings, one of which is being leased by Comsearch.

New Construction: Campus activities will be housed in new facilities. Preliminary plans call for the construction of at least 500,000 gross square feet of space. Construction is expected to begin in 2003 and to be completed by the end of 2005.

Research Facilities: The initial construction will provide laboratories for up to 24 investigators plus their research staffs, a total of 200-to-300 persons. Possible future expansion will be built into the initial plans. In addition, laboratory and other facilities will be built for visiting researchers, core scientific support resources and for administration.

Outreach Activities: Dissemination of information and technology to the broad scientific community will be a common thread through all of the facilities and programs. Housing facilities will be constructed to facilitate such collaborations. Educational activities extending to K-12 students and teachers are under consideration for the future.

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute was established in 1953 by the aviator-industrialist for whom it is named. Its principal purpose is the conduct of basic biomedical research, which it carries out in collaboration with more than 70 universities, medical centers and other research institutions throughout the United States. Its more than 350 investigators work at these institutions in Hughes laboratories; the scientific staff of HHMI numbers more than 3,000. The Institute also has a philanthropic grants program of approximately \$100 million per year, which it devotes to science education and training, from elementary school through graduate and medical school. It

also supports the work of biomedical researchers in many countries throughout the world.

HHMI is one of the largest philanthropies in the world, with an endowment of more than \$12 billion and a budget that exceeds \$660 million in the current fiscal year. Its headquarters are located in Chevy Chase, Maryland, just outside Washington, D.C.