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Contact: Dale A. Carlson
415/396-9117

**CHIEF SCIENTIST JOINS STEM CELL INSTITUTE LEADERSHIP TRANSITION TEAM
AND ANNOUNCES FUTURE ROLE**

Will continue as consultant to CIRM through June 2008

SAN FRANCISCO, August 24, 2007 – Dr. Richard A. Murphy, Interim President of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), announced today that Arlene Y. Chiu, Ph.D., CIRM's Interim Chief Scientific Officer, will step down from her permanent position at the end of October to return to her home in Los Angeles. Dr. Chiu will continue working with the Institute as a consultant and has agreed to be part of the transition team that Murphy will establish to develop the scientific programs of the Institute and to prepare CIRM for a permanent president.

"Dr. Chiu has made an enormous contribution to stem cell research," said Murphy, "She built a strong scientific team from scratch that wrote the CIRM Scientific Strategic Plan, as well as the research and training grant initiatives that the agency has approved to date. She organized and directed the Institute's grants review and management processes, and personally recruited many of the scientific experts CIRM uses to evaluate grant applications. She exceeded all expectations and met every challenge.

"Personally, I strongly empathize with Arlene's desire to return home and consider new opportunities," continued Murphy, who recently retired as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Salk Institute for Biological Studies. "But with the Institute at a crossroads, we need her leadership in the coming months, especially for the review of new faculty and major facility grant applications and to continue the initiative she began to consider funding disease-oriented research groups. I have asked her to join me in leading the CIRM transition team; to continue working with us as a consultant for at least six months following her departure in October, and she has generously agreed to do so."

Chiu stated, "I joined the CIRM with twin goals: move stem cell research forward in an environment where funding was difficult, and work with Dr. Zach Hall to build a new granting agency. Both goals have been met. With the end of the litigation that delayed our funding, CIRM enters a new phase, as do I. It's a good time to return to my Los Angeles home and pursue new professional directions. After I leave my day-to-day responsibilities, I have committed to working with Dr. Murphy to continue building on the CIRM's scientific momentum, by recruiting new additions to our scientific team and developing a strong scientific agenda for 2008."

Robert N. Klein, chair of the CIRM governing board, echoed Dr. Murphy's praise. "Dr. Chiu's commitment to join Dr. Murphy's scientific leadership transition team over the next eight months will provide an invaluable contribution to sustaining CIRM's momentum while building even greater strength in the scientific foundation for the next permanent president. Dr. Chiu is an exceptionally talented scientific administrator who has built a strong scientific team at CIRM. The board and I are grateful for all that she has done in a short period of time and with limited resources. She built a strong foundation for our future, one that rests on a core group of well-qualified staff, a review process of unquestioned integrity, and a commitment to scientific excellence that is unparalleled in the state. As Dr. Chiu moves on to a new set of professional opportunities, we are pleased that she has agreed to join Dr. Murphy in leading the Institute through the transition to a new permanent president."

Klein said the board will formally recognize Chiu's service to the Institute at its December meeting in Irvine, when it also intends to approve up to \$85 million in New Faculty Awards.

Chiu joined the CIRM as Director of Scientific Activities in 2005 from the National Institutes of Health, where she was Associate Director of the Office of Research Administration for the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering. Previously, she was Program Director of Stem Cell Research and Spinal Cord Injury at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. She left a tenured faculty position at the Beckman Research Institute of the City of Hope to join NIH. Chiu received her Ph.D. in biological sciences from the California Institute of Technology and her B.A. from Stanford University.

Chiu sent the following letter to each member of the CIRM governing board earlier this week announcing her plans:

I write to thank you for your support, encouragement and guidance during my two and a half year tenure at the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine, and to inform you of my intention to leave CIRM by the end of October 2007. As many of you know, my twin goals in joining the CIRM were to do whatever I could to move stem cell research forward in an environment where funding was difficult, and to work with Dr. Zach Hall in building a new granting agency. I am happy to see that both goals have been met. It has been a rare privilege and my good fortune to participate in the creation of this new funding agency under the leadership of its first president. I also wish to congratulate the board for your appointment of a new interim president who brings great credentials as a leader, experienced administrator and scientist to the institute. His leadership will be extremely important as CIRM moves forward in fulfilling its mission.

Of the many goals that have been accomplished, I am particularly proud of the strong Science Office that is now in place to handle the responsibilities of supporting the full spectrum of stem cell research in the state. New stem cell scholars are being educated through CIRM Training Grants; SEED and Comprehensive Grants are poised to launch an unprecedented wave of research on human embryonic stem cells; and safe haven laboratories are being funded to house this work in California. Moreover, the CIRM Scientific Strategic Plan provides a detailed roadmap toward our objective of cures and treatments for the relief of human suffering. Through the hard work and dedication of the entire staff, we have succeeded in moving CIRM forward from a start-up to a functioning and responsible agency. The vision of Proposition 71 has become a reality.

With the end of litigation that has restricted the use of state bond funds, CIRM now enters a new phase; I too am at a new phase in my personal and professional life. I will be returning to my home in Los Angeles to pursue new professional directions. Although I am considering several exciting opportunities, I will always be a cheerleader for CIRM, and will be happy to help the new leadership and the institute in any way that I can. Best of all, I look forward to the flowering of cutting-edge science that is now taking place in California.

About CIRM

Governed by the ICOC, the CIRM was established in 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was approved by California voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. The CIRM is the largest source of funding for human embryonic stem cell research in the world. To date, grants totaling more than \$208.5 million have been approved by the ICOC. For more information, please visit www.cirm.ca.gov.

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