REGENERATIVE MEDICINE FOUNDATION

Translational Regenerative Medicine Forum Opens in Winston-Salem

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Winston-Salem, N.C. - The promise of regenerative medicine was the focus of the opening session today at the Translational Regenerative Medicine Forum in Winston-Salem. More than 400 people from across the world are attending the event, sponsored by the Regenerative Medicine Foundation.

"We are excited to bring together representatives from all facets of this emerging field to discuss the body's ability to heal itself through regenerative medicine technologies," said DaLaura Kader, vice president for strategic initiatives for the Regenerative Medicine Foundation.

Speakers covered current research and discussed best practices and business models to bring new therapies to patients. Regenerative medicine focuses on developing replacement tissues and organs in the laboratory as well as cell therapies to restore function.

"We have decided that regeneration is one of our top priorities," said Alan Lewis, Ph.D., president and CEO of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International, explaining that the organization has invested $60 million in the past few years on research to regenerate islet cells, the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin.

Andrew von Eschenbach, M.D., senior director for strategic initiatives with the Center for Health Transformation, said that the promise of regenerative medicine demands a paradigm shift from treating disease to restoring health.

John Walker, chairman of iPierian, called regenerative medicine the "medicine of the 21st century" and said it "has the promise of cures."

Col. Janet R. Harris, Ph.D., M.S.N., from the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, talked about a $85 million federally funded project to apply the science of regenerative medicine to battlefield injuries. "We've been very pleased with the progress we're seeing," she said. "Only two years into the grant, 13 clinical trials are being funded."

Robert Lanza, M.D., chief scientific officer for Advanced Cell Technology Inc., discussed recent progress in addressing hurdles that must be overcome with embryonic and induced pluripotent stem cells, as well as early potential cell applications including for retinal degenerative diseases and to generate universal donor red blood cells for human transfusion.

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Speakers also covered the challenges to fulfilling the promise of the field, including obtaining funding. Robert N. Klein, who is part of an oversight committee for the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine, talked about that state's successful referendum to fund stem cell research with state-issued bonds. He compared state investment in scientific research to investment in roads and other infrastructure.

States that invest in intellectual capital will build prosperity for the 21st century," he said. "We are used to funding physical capital. We have to realize that in the 21st century that it us appropriate to fund intellectual capital."

Panels covered commercialization strategies, regulatory and reimbursement strategies as well as international best practices.

Attendees include executives from biotechnology, pharmaceutical, medical device, and regenerative medicine companies; patient advocacy groups and medical research foundations; institutional investors from private equity and venture capital firms; academic researchers, clinical researchers and physicians; government funding and regulatory representatives, and those interested in health care innovation and personalized medicine.

On Thursday, the focus will be on funding and commercialization. A spray-on skin product and an injectable cell therapy for heart attack patients are among 18 regenerative medicine technologies that will be showcased to a group of venture capitalists and companies including DeNovo Ventures, Excel Venture Management, InterSouth Partners, Livingston Securities, Proteus Ventures, and Quaker BioVentures.

For more information about the event, go to www.regenerativemedicinefoundation.org.

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About the Regenerative Medicine Foundation

The Regenerative Medicine Foundation (www.regenerativemedicinefoundation.org) is an internationally-focused, not-for-profit organization created to enable the advancement of new treatments and therapies based on regenerative medicine, and ultimately, to realize the goals of personalized medicine.

Launched in 2005, the Foundation hosted one of the first regulatory meetings with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on the topic of regenerative medicine, and was instrumental in the formation of?STRAC, the Soldier Treatment and Regeneration Consortium, a precursor to the Armed Forces Institute of Regenerative Medicine (AFIRM), and the Washington, DC-based Alliance for Regenerative Medicine.

Through educational programs, translational conferences and public policy initiatives, the Foundation advocates for increased medical research, promotes the training and education of scientists, and facilitates the translation of therapies to patients.