



For Immediate Release

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Children's Hospital Oakland's Research Institute Awarded More than \$4.5 Million in NIH Stimulus Funds

September 16, 2009 – Oakland, Calif. – Children's Hospital Oakland Research Institute (CHORI) has received 8 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 grants, which add up to more than \$4.5 million so far from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The largest NIH ARRA grant to CHORI was awarded to Edward Lammer, MD, whose study of heart defects will now be supported by \$1.3 million of government funding over a 2-year period.

Dr. Lammer and his team of researchers will use the funds to continue their investigations of genetic and environmental causes of congenital heart defects and how they might be prevented. To identify genes that cause two severe cyanotic heart defects—tetralogy of Fallot or transposition of the great arteries— the researchers will use cutting-edge microarray scanning technology to search for chromosomal microdeletions among the DNA of about 500 California infants born with one of the defects.

Once the genes are identified, researchers will investigate the various mutations in depth. Their ultimate goal is developing ways to prevent such heart defects and more comprehensive testing for prenatal diagnosis.

Dr. Lammer praises the NIH ARRA funding and says, “Without the support of this grant, our efforts in this area of research would have been severely pared back.” Although the lab already had the hardware for microarray technology, the NIH ARRA grant enabled it to purchase a new computer server large enough to store all the data, and the microarray supplies. The grant also saved the jobs of two highly experienced PhD level research scientists.

The purpose of the ARRA is to stimulate the economy by creating and maintaining jobs, as well as to promote scientific research. The NIH grants will also help other CHORI researchers, including Julie Saba, MD, PhD, who is studying cancer; Robert Ryan, PhD, who is investigating lipids and heart disease; and Ronald Krauss, MD, who is researching cholesterol-lowering drugs.

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About Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland

Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland is Northern California's only freestanding and independent children's hospital. Children's is a leader in many pediatric specialties including neonatology, cardiology, neurosurgery and intensive care. The hospital is a designated Level 1 pediatric trauma center and has the largest pediatric critical care facility in the region. Children's Hospital has 190 licensed beds, 201 hospital-based physicians in 30 specialties, more than 2,600 employees and an annual operating budget of \$312 million. Children's research arm, Children's Hospital Oakland Research Institute (CHORI), is internationally renowned for taking state-of-the-art basic and clinical research to the bedside with interventions for treating and preventing human disease. CHORI has 300 staffers, a budget of about \$50 million, and is ranked among the nation's top 10 research centers in National Institutes of Health funding to children's hospital research programs. CHORI is a leader in translational research, developing new vaccines for infectious diseases, and discovering new treatment protocols for previously fatal or debilitating conditions including cancer, sickle cell anemia, thalassemia, diabetes, asthma, HIV/AIDS, pediatric obesity, nutritional deficiencies, birth defects, hemophilia and cystic fibrosis. For more information, go to www.childrenshospitaloakland.org