

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jamie Dunn
Communications Manager
Phone: (856) 439-1385 ext 4420
E-mail: jdunn@ahint.com

**OARSI TO HONOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AT UPCOMING
WORLD CONGRESS ON OSTEOARTHRITIS**

MOUNT LAUREL, NJ, OCTOBER 10, 2006 – The Osteoarthritis Research Society International (OARSI) will host the World Congress on Osteoarthritis, December 7 – 10, 2006 in Prague, Czech Republic. This annual event offers the latest developments the key areas of osteoarthritis, as well as a global forum for the exchange of information between basic scientists, clinical investigators, clinicians, radiologists, orthopedists, rheumatologists, industry scientists, policy makers and others interested in osteoarthritis research and treatment.

The program for the World Congress will consist of concurrent oral sessions addressing both clinical and basic science topics that appeal to a range of participants working in the field of osteoarthritis. A fantastic line-up of internationally recognized speakers will be on hand, including keynote speaker Dr. Bjorn Olsen. The scientific sessions will address basic research topics such as regulation gene expression, cytokines, metalloproteinases and biomechanics and clinical topics including joint replacement, clinical trial design, cartilage repair, pain mechanisms in osteoarthritis and intervertebral disc degeneration.

Kicking-off the Congress program, OARSI will present the Basic Science, Clinical Research, and Lifetime Achievement Awards to leaders in the field of osteoarthritis at the special Awards Presentation on Thursday, December 7. In honoring outstanding achievement, OARSI will present the Lifetime Achievement Award to **Robin Poole, PhD, DSc**. Robin Poole's research in recent years has focused on the structure, mechanisms, and regulation of cartilage remodeling and resorption in growth and arthritis as well as autoimmunity to cartilage in arthritis. He has also been very involved in the development of new molecular biomarkers to detect the onset of arthritis and predict its progression and response to treatment. These studies have generated many reviews, chapters in textbooks and peer reviewed publications. Poole continues to serve as an advisor, reviewer and board member to numerous journals, academic and commercial institutions, and governments in North America and overseas. In 1998 he co-founded the Canadian Arthritis Network, a national centre of excellence linking basic and clinical discovery in academia and industry to the application of knowledge. Later he became its scientific director and is now SD Emeritus. The Network is now composed of over 165 investigators, their research groups and many outside partners, both international as well as Canadian.

This year's recipient of the Basic Science Award is **Hiroshi Kawaguchi**. Dr. Kawaguchi's recent research concentrates on chondrocyte biology and its application to pathophysiology and treatment of osteoarthritis. He is currently investigating the possible application of the identified molecular signalings to the cartilage regenerative medicine. Dr. Kawaguchi's impressive career includes more than 130 publications of original articles covering laboratory and clinical research, as well as many honors.

OARSI will present the Clinical Research Award to **Tim Spector**. Dr. Spector is internationally recognized for his research in osteoarthritis and has made major contributions in the areas of identification of risk factors for the development and progression of OA using data from the Chingford Study and the genetic epidemiology of OA using data from the St. Thomas' Twin Registry.

Joint diseases account for the majority of all chronic conditions in individuals 65 years and older. Osteoarthritis represents the single most prevalent age-related disease and with the increasing numbers of

the elderly in both developed and developing countries, it is expected to have a profound impact on the health care and quality of life for senior citizens.

OARSI is a nonprofit, scientific organization that promotes and encourages fundamental and applied research, and disseminates the results in order to permit better knowledge of osteoarthritis and its treatment.

For more information on OARSI or the World Congress, contact OARSI at 15000 Commerce Parkway, Suite C, Mt. Laurel, NJ, 08054; phone: 856-439-1385; fax: 856-439-0525; email: oarsi@oarsi.org or visit the Web site at www.oarsi.org.

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