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**Twenty-six College Students Participate in
Regenerative Medicine Summer Research Program
Pittsburgh Tissue Engineering Initiative Marks 10th Year of Summer Internship**

PITTSBURGH, June 26, 2006 – Twenty-six undergraduate students from colleges and universities across the U.S. are taking part in the 10th annual Summer Internship Program of the Pittsburgh Tissue Engineering Initiative (PTEI). The 10-week program, focused on tissue engineering/regenerative medicine research, provides hands-on research experience in established laboratories to students who are pursuing careers in medicine, research, bioengineering, chemistry, biology, engineering, materials science, computer science, the natural sciences or related fields.

Each student is matched with an established researcher-mentor who supervises his or her work. The students perform their own research and data analysis, and will present their findings at a formal scientific poster session at the conclusion of the program in August.

The goal of the program is help the attract young people to the field of biomedical research by exposing them to the high-level research being conducted throughout the PTEI affiliate network in Pittsburgh and others parts of the U.S.

“The Summer Internship Program is one of PTEI’s oldest and most successful educational programs,” said Tiffany Cramer, PTEI Educational Program Manager. “It provides the invaluable opportunity for these young people to explore careers as basic scientists and clinicians within the field of tissue engineering and the broader field of regenerative medicine.”

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Eighteen of the participating students are working in research centers in Pittsburgh, and another eight are working at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research, Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas. At the USAISR, interns interface with civilian/military biomedical research teams and engage in work focused on the development of new biomedical technologies and therapies for combat trauma and wound healing.

In addition to their research projects, students participate in many social activities, as well as educational seminars and special programs focused on issues that impact the field of tissue engineering and the larger field of biomedicine, including ethics programs, research symposia and professional skills development workshops.

Through the program, the students gain valuable research experience, and make invaluable contacts for advanced education and future employment. As the students graduate from college, PTEI tracks their career and educational progress, focusing on whether the internship experience increased their interest in biotechnology, in general, and regenerative medicine, specifically. As well, attention is given to the impact on the Pittsburgh region's rate of retention of these young people.

Since it was initiated in 1997, 168 students, including the 2006 group, have taken part in the Summer Internship Program.

One of the program's highlights is the formal poster presentation, at the conclusion of the 10 weeks, in which each student presents his or her work to an audience of researcher-mentors, peer participants, their family and friends.

Funding for the program is provided by the National Institutes of Health (NIH/NIGMS Grant Number 1R25GM066943) and Eden Hall, Laurel and Highmark.

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PTEI is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health of individuals by establishing the region as an internationally recognized center of excellence in research, education, and commercial development for the advancement of tissue-related medical therapies. PTEI's educational programs span K-12 through postdoctoral training. For more information, visit the PTEI web site at www.ptei.org.

PTEI's affiliated organizations include the Allegheny-Singer Research Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, Duquesne University, the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, the Windber Research Institute, and the U.S. Army Institute for Surgical Research. For more information on the Summer Internship Program or other PTEI activities, visit PTEI's web site at www.ptei.org or call (412) 235-5230.