

## Interstate Alliance on Stem Cell Research

### Update from Wisconsin

May, 2009

The State of Wisconsin provides support for stem cell research in the form of infrastructure development and grants, loans and tax credits to companies. The primary beneficiary of infrastructure support is a new private/public facility called the Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery ([discovery.wisc.edu/](http://discovery.wisc.edu/)), slated for completion in early 2011. Construction of the facility is supported by the State of Wisconsin, John and Tashia Morgridge, and the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF, [www.warf.org](http://www.warf.org)). The private half of the facility, called The Morgridge Institute for Discovery ([morgridgeinstitute.org/](http://morgridgeinstitute.org/)), focuses on facilitating collaborations across the fields of regenerative and computational biology. The public half, called The Wisconsin Institute for Discovery ([discovery.wisc.edu/about/proposal-accepted.php](http://discovery.wisc.edu/about/proposal-accepted.php)), was established as a center within the UW-Madison Graduate School and promotes interdisciplinary science in the areas of nanotechnology, biotechnology and information technology. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the Institutes, however, only a portion of the funds for infrastructure development supports stem cell research.

Stem cell research in Wisconsin is advancing rapidly despite limitations in funding. Direct funding for academic research is provided by traditional sources such as the National Institutes of Health, charitable foundations and patient advocacy groups. The University of Wisconsin and the Medical College of Wisconsin provide general faculty and staff support for stem cell scientists. In addition, the UW-Madison established the Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Center ([stemcells.wisc.edu/](http://stemcells.wisc.edu/)) as an umbrella organization to promote stem cell science; the Center is partially supported by the WiCell Research Institute ([www.wicell.org](http://www.wicell.org)), an affiliate of WARF. WARF supports stem cell research directly by funding a portion of WiCell's initiatives and indirectly by providing annual grants to the UW-Madison. Another Wisconsin non-profit organization, The Blood Research Institute ([www.bcw.edu/docs/research/blood/](http://www.bcw.edu/docs/research/blood/)), is developing a stem cell research program in a new facility in Milwaukee.

WiCell is a non-profit research institute established in 1999 to advance the science of stem cells. WiCell hosts the National Stem Cell Bank (NSCB, [www.nationalstemcellbank.org](http://www.nationalstemcellbank.org)) as well as the WiCell International Stem Cell (WISC) Bank ([www.wicell.org](http://www.wicell.org)). WiCell also offers cytogenetic services to UW scientists and academic and commercial labs in the United States and Canada. In addition, WiCell provides stem cell training for scientists and offers educational outreach programs for K-12 students and the community. A number of UW-Madison faculty members use laboratory space at WiCell to facilitate collaborative research between the institute and the university. WiCell employs a staff of 40, including scientists engaged in basic stem cell research and technical staff that support the NSCB, the WISC Bank and UW research programs. WiCell is funded via contracts, research grants, license agreements, service fees and a grant from WARF.