$5 MILLION AWARD TO THE SCRIPPS RESEARCH INSTITUTE SUPPORTS UNIQUE CELL BIOLOGY RESEARCH

Markey Trust Grant is Largest Private Foundation Grant Ever Received by The Scripps Research Institute

LA JOLLA, CALIF. Aug. 2, 1991 -- The Lucille P. Markey Charitable Trust today announced a $5 million grant to The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI) for support of an interdisciplinary effort to understand the mechanisms for fundamental molecular processes in cells, by integrating chemistry and structure with cell biology.

According to TSRI administrators, this is the largest private foundation grant ever received by the institution.

Norton B. Gilula, Ph.D., chairman of TSRI’s Department of Cell Biology and principal investigator for programs supported by the grant, notes that "the Markey Trust has recognized the unique design of our research. We have focused on integrating chemical and structural determinations to study important basic problems in cell and molecular biology. Although research in these areas occurs at institutions elsewhere, we have created this interdisciplinary opportunity at TSRI by design. This may represent the first organized effort to integrate these activities in the same environment."

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The TSRI Department of Cell Biology was formed July 1 as an outgrowth of the Department of Molecular Biology, Gilula says. Focused on basic cell and biomedical research, the department’s efforts will be related to areas such as cancer, heart disease and applying biotechnology to create disease-resistant crops.

"Cell biology is the cornerstone of contemporary medicine," he notes. "The basic framework for understanding bodily function now begins at the level of single cells. In medicine today, this has become the starting point for understanding normal physiology as well as pathologies associated with human function."

The Markey Trust, based in Miami, Fla., was established by the will of the late Lucille P. Markey, owner of Calumet Farm, who died in 1982. Her will provided that the Trust’s grants are to be made "only for the purposes of supporting and encouraging basic medical research" and that the Trust must distribute all of its income and assets by mid-1997. To date, the Trust has made awards of more than $367 million for research and general organizational programs, scholarships and fellowships, as well as grants related to basic medical research.

Earlier this month, TSRI was one of four local beneficiaries of a $4 million Markey Trust grant which also included the University of California, San Diego, Salk Institute, and La Jolla Cancer Research Foundation. That gift formed a collaborative training program for graduate students in molecular biology.

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