LA JOLLA INSTITUTE ELECTS ESTEEMED OPTOMETRY INDUSTRY LEADER TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Inventor, entrepreneur, and philanthropist Herbert A. Wertheim joins Institute Board

SAN DIEGO – (July 17, 2013) — Herbert A. Wertheim, O.D., D.Sc., M.D. (hc), a noted inventor, philanthropist, and optometric and visual science industry pioneer, has been elected to La Jolla Institute for Allergy and Immunology’s Board of Directors.

Dr. Wertheim is the founder and president of Brain Power Inc., the world's largest manufacturer of ophthalmic instruments, lens tints, and diagnostic products for optometrists, ophthalmologists, opticians, and laboratories. A scientist, physician, and visual neurologist, Dr. Wertheim's inventions, including the company's UV-absorbing technology, have helped prevent millions of people from developing cataracts or blindness from macular degeneration and other degenerative eye diseases.

“The Institute is very fortunate to have an international business leader of Dr. Wertheim’s stature elected to our Board of Directors,” said Mitchell Kronenberg, Ph.D., president and chief scientific officer. “Dr. Wertheim brings not only vast executive experience but also keen scientific knowledge, an innovative mind, and a desire to find new treatments for debilitating diseases that rob people of so many critical aspects of life.”

A nonprofit, independent biomedical research institute, La Jolla Institute is a world leader in the study of the immune system, which holds amazing potential for preserving health and ultimately conquering heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and myriad other devastating disorders.

Dr. Wertheim says he finds the Institute’s focus on the immune system intriguing and intends to become involved because of its unlimited potential for preventing disease. “I am a strong advocate for wellness and preventive medicine,” he says. “The potential to avert disease, rather than treating it after significant damage has already occurred, is exciting and something I have pursued in my own research. La Jolla Institute is the world’s premier immunology research organization, and I feel a
real kinship with its mission. I am pleased to be a member of the Institute’s board and look forward to serving.”

Dr. Wertheim’s focus on preventive medicine is also evidenced in several of his philanthropic endeavors. As former board chairman at Florida International University, a major state university in Miami, Dr. Wertheim championed the University’s creation of a medical college, initiating the discussion and ultimately winning the Board of Trustees approval. Dr. Wertheim also led the University’s Medical College Initiative, which he and his wife Nicole personally supported with a $20 million contribution in 2009. Their gift, which grew to $40 million through matching state funds, financed eight endowed chairs, scholarships, research fellowships, and the first endowed chair in Optometry and Physiological Optics in any medical school.

Florida International University's Board of Trustees named the new college "Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine" in honor of Dr. Wertheim, and designated him the college’s founding chairman and Trustee Emeritus of the University. Reflecting his strong interest in preventive medicine, the medical school’s curriculum emphasizes Dr. Wertheim’s vision of prevention, wellness, and community outreach. The college, which is the only public medical school in south Florida, graduated its first class in 2013.

In addition to the medical college, through their family foundation, Dr. and Mrs. Wertheim have donated to many of the University's arts programs, including funding the creation of a concert hall. They have also contributed to hundreds of local and international educational, cultural, sporting, and health care organizations throughout the world with millions of dollars in financial aid and grants.

Over the years, Dr. Wertheim has received several honors for his charitable work and extraordinary business success. In 2011, he was inducted into the Horatio Alger Association, a prestigious national organization, in recognition of his personal and professional successes despite his humble beginnings.

As a young man, Dr. Wertheim joined the Navy where he excelled in engineering, eventually becoming a naval aviator and later a NASA engineer. After his discharge from the Navy in 1960, he attended Brevard Community College, studying engineering and pre-med. He went on to the University of Florida, where he earned a bachelor's degree in optical engineering and a Doctor of Optometry from the Southern College of Optometry in association with the University of Tennessee.
Medical School. In April 2013, he was awarded the M.D. degree, Honoris Causa (hc), from Florida International University for his 45 years of laboratory and clinical eye research and inventions that have helped millions of people. He is also a recipient of the University’s Doctor of Science (hc) degree for his distinguished scientific career.

A strong supporter of education, Dr. Wertheim has served as an Adjunct Professor of Physics in the graduate program at the University of Miami and as a distinguished lecturer in Physiological Optics and Optometry at the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. He was recognized as a "2009 Distinguished Engineering Alumnus" from the University of Florida College of Engineering, and gave the commencement address that same year.

Prior to launching Brain Power Inc., Dr. Wertheim had a clinical practice specializing in visual neurology and optometry at the University Eye and Medical Center in Coral Gables, Florida.

He is or has been a majority shareholder, chairman or board member of 18 private, NYSE or NASDAQ companies in banking, health care, aerospace, real estate, transportation and several diverse high tech industries.

About La Jolla Institute
Founded in 1988, La Jolla Institute for Allergy and Immunology is a nonprofit, independent biomedical research institute focused on improving human health through increased understanding of the immune system. Its scientists carry out research seeking new knowledge leading to the prevention of disease through vaccines and the treatment and cure of infectious diseases, cancer, inflammatory, and autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, type 1 (juvenile) diabetes, Crohn's disease and asthma. La Jolla Institute's research staff includes more than 150 Ph.D.s and M.D.s. To learn more about the Institute's work, visit www.lji.org.

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