



Testimony before the
New Jersey Assembly Appropriations Committee

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Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today to request the continued funding of a \$1.0 million grant-in-aid from the State of New Jersey to the Coriell Institute for Medical Research.

Located in Camden since 1953, Coriell is a not-for-profit, basic science medical research institute dedicated to the pursuit of new knowledge and cures for such genetic illnesses as heart disease and diabetes. The Institute continues to play a significant role in national and international research, serving as the central biorepository for the collection, storage, and distribution of living human cells for use in research. Coriell is also recognized for its collaborations with scientists engaged in the studying of the human genome and most recently for its own stem cell biology research programs.

Coriell remains an exceptionally valuable asset to New Jersey and the continued investment in Coriell is an investment in the future of this State.

Coriell is a Source of International Recognition for the State of New Jersey

The history of the Coriell Institute is rich in wonder and imagination. Founded in 1953 by a pediatrician and virologist - Lewis L. Coriell, M.D., Ph.D. - the Institute was immediately focused on finding solutions to serious illness. Early in his career Dr. Coriell made significant contributions that helped to develop the Salk vaccine against polio. Specifically, he learned how to grow human cells in culture, permitting the study of the polio virus. Dr. Coriell then went on to lead the clinical trials of the Salk vaccine in the mid Atlantic region of the United States from the labs in Camden. Dr. Coriell not only contributed significantly to the critical technology for the production of the polio vaccine, but he helped to establish the tools for the fields of cell biology and human genetics. His work led to the establishment of the priceless collections of cells at the Coriell Institute, now the world's largest bank of living human cells.



Coriell remains engaged in the worldwide effort to collect, describe, explain, and distribute human genes and in so doing provide critical genetic resources to scientists who must use exquisite, contaminate free cell cultures for their work. The Institute continues to be part of the effort to promote the understanding of the human genetic sequence, housing unique specimens from China, Japan, Italy, and Nigeria among others. Specimens within the Coriell collections include breast, prostate, and colon cancer as well as progeria, macular degeneration, stroke, Parkinson's disease, and epilepsy continue to bring Coriell international recognition. Most recently, the California Birth Defects Monitoring Program transferred 35% of its collections 3,000 miles across the country recognizing Coriell was its preferred choice to manage its precious resources.

Scientific publications in the thousands cite the use of Coriell cells in their research programs, and nearly 2,000 biomaterials are shipped each week from Camden to scientists all around the world. It is not an unreasonable assumption to think that any number of the exciting advances in genetics reported in the popular press used Coriell cells or the technology made possible by Dr. Coriell.

Coriell's research programs remain on cutting edge studying the mechanisms that control how adult stem cells develop and how cells change and behave over time. Coriell's work in stem cell biology continues to focus on pancreatic, adipose, hematopoietic, neuronal, muscle (including cardiac) and cartilage stem cells.

Coriell has been recently re-accredited as an ISO 9001:2000 organization, certifying its excellence in the development of quality biomaterials and in service to the scientists who receive these materials. To the best of our knowledge, no other biorepository has received such distinction.

Coriell remains an Economic Resource for the State of New Jersey

Coriell competes for funding in the national science arena, bringing into New Jersey millions of dollars in contracts and awards, many of these from the federal government. Coriell has demonstrated the ability to magnify a Grant-in-Aid from the State of New Jersey eight (8) to ten (10) times its value, based on its ingenuity and creativity, attracting both federal and foundation funding to support our research, pay salaries and taxes, and purchase materials and services.

Coriell continues to have significant success in obtaining funding from the National Institutes of Health. As mentioned to this Committee last year, the National Institute for General Medical Sciences awarded Coriell a five-year, \$22 million award for the oldest of its cell banks. This success has continued during the last 12 months as Coriell was selected recently by the National Human Genome Institute to submit an



application to build a new repository for the collection of population based specimens from all over the world. Funding is expected shortly as Coriell was given the unique and unusual distinction as a "sole source" bidder.

The success of Coriell Institute is due in large part to the strength of its collaborations, ranging from Italy and Nigeria to Australia and Singapore. However, no collaboration has been more important than its partnership with the State of New Jersey. From his earliest days in New Jersey, Dr. Coriell became a part of the scientific fabric of this State. He was among the earliest scientists who espoused the intellectual strength of New Jersey and worked tirelessly for its citizens. Coriell's continued success is due in part with the leadership New Jersey has taken on the national scene, espousing the need to pursue new knowledge in stem cell biology

Coriell remains deeply involved in bringing the powerful technology of stem cell biology to the citizens of New Jersey. Most notably, the financial support offered by the State of New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, has permitted Coriell to build and maintain a public umbilical cord blood bank for the treatment of diseases such as leukemia, lymphoma, and aplastic anemia. To date nineteen people in immanent danger of death have received transplants from the New Jersey Cord Blood Bank located at Coriell.

Coriell has continued its commitment to the City of Camden. It is playing an active role in the newly created Camden Innovation Board, has recently completed the renovation of its new storage facility - its certificate of occupancy issued in March 2006, and employs more than 120 individuals, all of whom pay taxes in New Jersey and most live in New Jersey.

Coriell is an Educational Resource for the State

Coriell is not a university and does not award degrees but it takes very seriously its responsibility to encourage and develop the next generation of scientists. Coriell hosts meetings on genetics for high school teachers and its scientists lecture widely on genetics, breast cancer, stem cell biology, and many other topics for the medical and the lay community.

Coriell sponsors the regional Science Fair for Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester Counties. Students speak regularly to its scientists about careers in science. On March 4th of this year, nearly 300 students competed in the Coriell Science Fair, ninety (90) of whom will go on to compete in the Delaware Valley Fair in Philadelphia. Coriell's managers, faculty and staff are invited frequently to meet with groups of businessmen, lawyers, and other professionals to discuss science and its impact on both contemporary and future health issues.



This summer, as Coriell has done for over twenty-five years, the Institute will support twelve summer interns - half high school and half college students - from Camden City and the surrounding areas to work in the Coriell labs. These young scientists will work hand in hand with members of our scientific staff completing experiments and learning the latest laboratory techniques. This internship has become a sought-after opportunity that promotes the continued pursuit of science by the next generation of bright, thoughtful, and engaging young adults.

Why Does Coriell Request a Grant-in-Aid from the State of New Jersey?

Coriell is a relatively small organization without grateful patients, loyal alumni, or an enormous endowment. Science is evolving more rapidly than ever before. New programs must be built, top scientists must be recruited and maintained, the latest equipment purchased, and outstanding new ideas developed. Coriell uses the investment from the State of New Jersey to remain competitive continuing its focus on excellence. The New Jersey State grant to Coriell is a catalyst that enables Coriell to push its scientific agenda and engage the best scientific minds in collaboration and discovery.

The creation of tissue resources for breast cancer, autism, Alzheimer disease, and other life threatening illnesses are but a few examples of how Coriell has used the State grant to build new programs and leverage the State investment. Coriell is an integral component of the innovation and high technology sectors of New Jersey, valued assets of our economy and citizens

Let me close by saying that Coriell has demonstrated the ability to magnify the grant-in-aid it receives from the State of New Jersey by almost 10 to 1. This contribution to the state's economy remains a compelling argument to continue to invest in Coriell's programs. As importantly, Coriell is a national standard whose reputation for excellence, commitment to discovery, and search for new knowledge is recognized within the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, internationally recognized Foundations. We deeply appreciate the opportunity to present this case and hope the Legislature will consider the request for continued funding of a grant in aid totaling \$1.0 million.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify before you this afternoon.