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New Hamner-UNC Center for Drug Safety Sciences
*The Hamner Institutes and The University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Announce New Research Partnership in Drug Safety Sciences*

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C. – The Hamner Institutes for Health Sciences and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill announced they are establishing a joint Center for Drug Safety Sciences that will be led by Dr. Paul Watkins, one of the world's leading experts in drug-induced liver injury. As founding director for this innovative new research center, Watkins will develop new drug-safety initiatives with academic partners, the bio/pharmaceutical industry, the National Institutes of Health and FDA. He will retain his position as the Verne S. Caviness Distinguished Professor of Medicine at UNC-Chapel Hill.

The Center for Drug Safety Sciences is a unique collaboration between The Hamner Institutes, a private nonprofit translational-research organization in Research Triangle Park, and the School of Medicine and the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy at UNC-Chapel Hill. The Hamner Institutes and the University have committed to spend at least \$10 million over the next three years to launch the center and its research and training programs. A new 14,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art research laboratory that will open in early 2009 at the Hamner Institutes is included in the funding commitments, along with several new joint faculty appointments from the schools of medicine and pharmacy at UNC-Chapel Hill.

The Center for Drug Safety Sciences is the first initiative resulting from a memorandum of understanding that The Hamner Institutes and the University signed on April 18, 2008. This agreement was established to guide innovative collaborations in translational research and to provide new opportunities for The Hamner Institutes to work with the university's Office of Technology Development and Kenan-Flagler Business School on business-development and scientific-entrepreneurship projects.

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Quotes:

"The Center for Drug Safety Sciences positions North Carolina to be a leading force in drug safety," said Dr. William Greenlee, president and CEO of The Hamner Institutes. "This partnership with one of the world's leading biomedical research universities will bring together academe, the bio/pharma industry, and government to accelerate the discovery and development of new and safer medicines."

"For many people, life depends on safe, effective drugs," said Dr. Holden Thorp, chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "With The Hamner Institutes and our other collaborators, we will use research-based information to enhance drug safety and improve human health. I can't imagine anyone more qualified to lead this vital effort than Paul Watkins."

“Understanding why good drugs are bad for some people has become a national research priority,” said Dr. Paul Watkins, Verne S. Caviness Distinguished Professor of Medicine and Director of the Center for Drug Safety Sciences (CDSS). “I am extremely excited about the opportunity to capitalize on the unique resources and expertise at UNC-Chapel Hill and The Hamner Institutes. The CDSS positions North Carolina to be a global leader in drug safety.”

About the Hamner Institutes for Health Sciences:

The Hamner Institutes for Health Sciences is strategically located on a 56-acre campus in the heart of Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. As a cross-disciplinary nonprofit organization, The Hamner Institutes acts as a catalyst to facilitate technology development among North Carolina universities, while serving as a gateway to establish research collaborations with the bio/pharmaceutical industry and countries in Europe and Asia. The Hamner Institutes also has an Accelerator to support emerging companies and a new Institute for Translational Medicine to enhance its research in oncology, diabetes, and respiratory diseases. For more information, visit www.thehamner.org or call (919) 558-1200.

About the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill:

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the nation’s first public university, is a leader in American higher education and known around the world for innovative teaching, research and public service. Now in its third century, Carolina offers 76 bachelor’s, 108 master’s, 74 doctorate and four professional degree programs. This fall, the University enrolled more than 28,000 students who are taught by a 3,200-member faculty. Every day, faculty, staff and students shape their teaching, research and public service priorities to meet North Carolina’s most pressing needs in every region and all 100 counties.

Keywords:

The Hamner Institutes, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, School of Medicine, School of Pharmacy, Center for Drug Safety Sciences, FDA, Dr. Paul Watkins, New Medicines, Safer Medicines, Drug Safety, Translational Research, Economic Development, Chancellor Holden Thorp, Dr. William Greenlee, Dr. Charles Hamner

Hamner Institutes Media Contact:

Ryal Curtis
MMI Associates, Inc.
(919) 233-6600
ryal@mmimarketing.com

UNC News Services Contact:

Mike McFarland
(919) 962-8593
mike_mcfarland@unc.edu

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