

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Collaboration Sparks Creation of New Grand Rapids Laboratory Focused on Women's Health

### ***GVSU, WMSTI, Spectrum Health and MSU College of Human Medicine announce cooperative laboratory agreement***

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., January 30, 2008 -- Regional leaders in health care and education today announced the creation of a state-of-the-art laboratory, to be housed in Grand Valley State University's Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences, that will bring new cutting-edge women's health research to downtown Grand Rapids.

The lab is a joint effort of Grand Valley State University (GVSU), Michigan State University's College of Human Medicine, the West Michigan Science & Technology Initiative (WMSTI) and Spectrum Health. Work is expected to commence by mid February.

Leading one of MSU's first Grand Rapids-based research endeavors will be Richard E. Leach, MD, MSU College of Human Medicine department chair for obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive biology. Dr. Leach is nationally recognized for research in the field of women's health and reproductive biology, and his studies include conditions and diseases that affect women and fertility, such as endometriosis and miscarriage.

Dr. Leach is leading the MSU/Spectrum Health recruitment of a team of scientists and physicians who will address a broad range of research issues in women's health in the new lab.

"This partnership between Grand Valley, WMSTI, MSU and Spectrum Health provides an extraordinary environment for recruiting accomplished researchers in women's health," Leach said.

The MSU College of Human Medicine lab will be housed on the fifth floor of the Cook-DeVos Center -- which is also home to the WMSTI. MSU researchers will have their own dedicated wet lab space, along with access to existing Grand Valley space on the fifth floor that includes 100 key pieces of laboratory equipment.

"We're pleased to be able to facilitate this exciting opportunity which underscores another example of the incredible collaborative infrastructure under way in this community," said Linda Chamberlain, executive director of WMSTI.

The announcement builds on the January 2007 agreement between the three institutions to collaborate on future research and academic projects by sharing resources and talent. The agreements were signed by Grand Valley President Thomas J. Haas, MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon and Spectrum Health President and CEO Richard C. Breon.

"This is exactly the kind of collaboration that President Simon and I envisioned in our mission to respect, enhance and complement each other's programming strengths," said Haas.

Simon echoed those sentiments, adding: "President Haas, Mr. Breon and I agree that sharing resources and leveraging our collective strengths in health science is an effective way to expand research opportunities in West Michigan for all of our institutions."

"This is an excellent example of how our partnership can improve research," said Breon. "The majority of Spectrum Health's research efforts are focused in other areas. However, this arrangement helps us expand our work in women's health by sharing resources and staff."

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Today's announcement marks another milestone for the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine expansion to Grand Rapids. In October, the college unveiled architectural renderings for the new Secchia Center, made possible by the generous support of Spectrum Health and the Grand Rapids community. Construction will begin this spring. The Secchia Center will open fall 2010 with a new class of 100 students. In the meantime, Michigan State University College of Human Medicine is completing renovation of a temporary site at 234 Division Avenue and will welcome 50 second-year students this fall, 2008.

### **ABOUT GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY**

Grand Valley State University, established in 1960, is a four-year public university. It attracts more than 23,000 students with its high quality programs and state-of-the-art facilities. Grand Valley provides a fully accredited liberal undergraduate and graduate education and has campuses in Allendale, Grand Rapids, and Holland and centers in Muskegon and Traverse City. Grand Valley is the comprehensive regional university for Michigan's second largest metropolitan area and offers 69 undergraduate and 26 graduate degree programs. The university is dedicated to individual student achievement, going beyond the traditional classroom experience, with research opportunities and business partnerships. Grand Valley employs more than 1,700 people and is committed to providing a fair and equitable environment for the continued success of all.

### **ABOUT WEST MICHIGAN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE**

The West Michigan Science & Technology Initiative is a partnership between the Right Place, Inc., Van Andel Research Institute, Grand Valley State University, the City of Grand Rapids and Grand Rapids Community College, Spectrum Health, Saint Mary's Health Care and Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital. Its mission is to grow and diversify the community economy by creating an environment that inspires innovation and supports the commercialization of science and technology. Since its inception, the Initiative has assisted more than 70+ clients in commercialization of new products, including funding through receipt of over \$7M in federal and state grant awards. The Initiative has also supported projects and the creation of businesses, such as ClinXus™ and Grand River Aseptic Pharmaceutical Packaging that build regional life sciences commercialization infrastructure.

### **ABOUT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

Michigan State University has been advancing knowledge and transforming lives through innovative teaching, research and outreach for more than 150 years. MSU is known internationally as a major public university with global reach and extraordinary impact. Its 17 degree-granting colleges attract scholars worldwide who are interested in combining education with practical problem solving.

### **ABOUT SPECTRUM HEALTH**

Spectrum Health is a not-for-profit health system in West Michigan that offers a full continuum of care through its seven hospitals, more than 140 service sites and 560,000-member health plan, Priority Health. Spectrum Health's 14,000 employees, 1,500 medical staff members and 2,000 volunteers are committed to delivering the highest quality care to those in medical need. The organization provided \$98.6 million in community benefit during its 2007 fiscal year. Spectrum Health has earned more than 50 national awards during the past 10 years.

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