



MEDIA RELEASE
For immediate distribution

**Montreal Heart Institute and Université de Montréal inaugurate
the *Centre de pharmacogénomique Beaulieu-Saucier*
de l'Université de Montréal**

Montreal, April 6, 2009 – The Montreal Heart Institute (MHI) and the Université de Montréal (UdeM) inaugurated the *Centre de pharmacogénomique Beaulieu-Saucier de l'Université de Montréal* today. The ceremony was attended by Dr. Yves Bolduc, Minister of Health and Social Services, and Mr. Raymond Bachand, Minister of Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade and Minister responsible for the Montréal region. Also present were two generous donors, Mr. Michel Saucier and his wife Ms. Gisèle Beaulieu, both Université de Montréal graduates who made a \$5 million donation towards the creation of the Pharmacogenomics *Centre* at the MHI. The MHI Foundation also contributed for the construction of the *Centre de pharmacogénomique Beaulieu-Saucier de l'Université de Montréal* whose total investment is valued at \$6.6 million. This investment, combined to the internationally renowned scientists recruited, has enabled the institution to receive over \$80 million in funding from various sources to advance pharmacogenomics and personalized medicine research.

Pharmacogenomics is the science that propels the creation of new targeted approaches based on the genetic profile of patients. Construction of the *Centre de pharmacogénomique Beaulieu-Saucier de l'Université de Montréal* began in July 2007, while research in this new biomedical field began before that date at MHI. The Centre has 45 employees and brings together a multidisciplinary team of specialized researchers in genomics, bioinformatics and clinical research studies.

“Thanks to the creation of the *Centre de pharmacogénomique Beaulieu-Saucier de l'UdeM*, Montreal will assume a major place on the international stage of pharmacogenomics research. This new platform will advance the knowledge economy of Montreal, Quebec and Canada,” said Mr. Jean Royer, Chairman of the MHI Board of Directors. “As a partner of the health care system as well as pharmaceutical and biotechnological companies, the *Centre de pharmacogénomique Beaulieu-Saucier de l'Université de Montréal* was made possible thanks to the generosity of Michel Saucier and Gisèle Beaulieu and the significant contribution of the MHI Foundation. This new Centre will allow the development of new treatments by integrating medicine, genomics, diagnostic and therapeutic approaches that are the course of future health care.”

According to Luc Vinet, UdeM Rector, “Michel Saucier and Gisèle Beaulieu are among the most generous donors in the Université de Montréal’s history. These alumni are a source of inspiration not to mention a model for the development of francophone philanthropy, which has soared in recent years. The progress of research and scientific knowledge needs community support and, thanks to the generosity of the Beaulieu-Saucier’s towards their alma mater, the Université de Montréal will position itself as a Canadian leader in the new field of pharmacogenomics.”

Michel Saucier, who also spoke on behalf of Gisèle Beaulieu, said: “We are very touched to inaugurate this magnificent research centre that will bring together Quebec’s greatest pharmacogenomic talent. To give back what we have received has always been part of our fundamental values. For my wife and I, it was self-evident that we should give to our *alma mater* and contribute to the realization of a new centre with seasoned researchers who will dedicate their careers to the medicine of the future. We are passionate about pharmacogenomics, since its discoveries will improve treatment of patients here and abroad.”

Creation of personalized medicine

The *Centre de pharmacogénomique Beaulieu-Saucier de l’UdeM* brings together researchers and students from across the fields of genomic sciences: pharmacogenomics and genetics, pharmacoproteomics, metabolomics, genetic statistics, pharmaco-epidemiology, clinical pharmacology, as well as pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics. The Centre will become a magnet to recruit the best talent from around the world. From a technological standpoint, the Centre was designed to meet the highest operating and security standards in the field (Good Laboratory Practice). In fact, it is the only such centre of its kind to be part of a Canadian academic setting and one of the few around the world. The creation of the *Centre de pharmacogénomique Beaulieu-Saucier de l’UdeM* has led to a joint platform in pharmacogenomics developed by the MHI and Genome Québec that will support the pharmacogenomics services to the Université de Montréal’s Réseau universitaire intégré de santé, other university health networks, and to its academic and industrial partners.

Dr. Jean-Claude Tardif, Director of the MHI Research Centre and professor in the faculty of medicine of the Université de Montréal, stated that the scientific and economic impacts of the *Centre de pharmacogénomique Beaulieu-Saucier de l’UdeM* will be spectacular. “Pharmacogenomics will radically change the way scientists and clinicians develop and use medications. The MHI’s researchers and partners will transfer knowledge of the human genome, as well as knowledge of genomic and proteomic approaches, directly to the doctor’s office. Understanding the genetic profiles of individuals will become the key to personalized medicine that will build on the latest scientific advances.”

About the Montreal Heart Institute

Founded in 1954 by Dr. Paul David, the Montreal Heart Institute constantly aims for the highest standards of excellence in the cardiovascular field through its leadership in prevention, ultra-specialized care, training of professionals, clinical and fundamental research, and assessment of new technologies. It is affiliated with the Université de Montréal and its clinical outcomes are among the best in the world. On the Web: www.icm-mhi.org.

About the Université de Montréal

Deeply rooted in Montreal and dedicated to its international mission, the Université de Montréal is one of the top universities in the French-speaking world. Founded in 1878, the Université de Montréal counts 13 faculties and, along with its two affiliated schools, HEC Montreal and l'école Polytechnique, is Quebec's largest institution of higher learning, second in Canada, and among the most active in North America. With a faculty of 2,500 professors and researchers, the university has a student population of more than 55,000, offers more than 650 undergraduate and graduate programs and awards some 3,000 Master's and PhD degrees each year. On the Web: www.umontreal.ca.

- 30 -

For more information:

Julie Chevette
Communications Consultant
Montreal Heart Institute
514 376-3330, ext. 2641
julie.chevette@icm-mhi.org

Julie Gazaille
Press Officer
Université de Montréal
514 343-6796
j.cordeau-gazaille@umontreal.ca