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HHMI Selects Eighth Group Leader for Janelia Farm Research Campus

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) announced today that it has selected physicist and engineer Eric Betzig as the eighth group leader at its Janelia Farm Research Campus (JFRC). Betzig's considerable creativity and hands-on experience in designing advanced microscopy tools will enhance Janelia Farm's capabilities in developing imaging technologies for research applications.

As HHMI's first freestanding campus, Janelia Farm is a place where small research groups will explore fundamental biomedical questions in a highly collaborative, interdisciplinary culture. The \$500 million campus, now under construction in Ashburn, Virginia, will open in late 2006. When the campus is fully operational, there will be 24 group leaders and a permanent research staff of about 300 scientists.

HHMI earlier announced the selection of seven group leaders and two senior fellows with diverse backgrounds in computational biology, genetics, mathematics, and physics. When the group leaders arrive at Janelia Farm in the summer of 2006, they will have two ambitious goals waiting for them: Identifying the general principles that govern how information is processed by neuronal circuits; and developing imaging technologies and computational methods for image analysis.

Betzig, who trained as a physicist at Cornell University, currently operates his own research institute from his home in Michigan. A pioneer in the development of near-field microscopy for ultra-high resolution imaging during the 1980s and '90s, Betzig spent six years at AT's Bell Laboratories and six years in the research and development department of his father's machine tool company. When he moves to Janelia Farm, he will focus on developing a new approach to rapid, high-resolution microscopy that he calls optical lattice microscopy, which relies on a vast collection of spots of light to help speed imaging.

The Institute is currently in the second phase of group leader recruitment. It has opened an international competition to identify group leaders from the fields of biology, chemistry, computer science, engineering, mathematics and physics. HHMI will accept applications for group leader positions from researchers at any career stage. The applications will be reviewed by groups of existing HHMI researchers, supplemented with physicists, engineers, and

computer scientists, as needed. The online application process can be found on the HHMI website at <http://www.hhmi.org/janelia/positions/apply.html> . The deadline for completed applications is December 1, 2005.

The research programs at Janelia Farm are a natural extension of HHMI's commitment to offering creative scientists freedom from constraints that limit their ability to do groundbreaking research. The Janelia Farm campus and its scientific program will closely complement HHMI's longstanding investigator program. That program currently consists of more than 300 researchers at 64 universities throughout the United States, who have the freedom and flexibility to push the bounds of knowledge in some of the most important areas of biomedical research. Last spring, HHMI announced the selection of 43 of the nation's most promising biomedical scientists as HHMI investigators.