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Peter J. Bruns Named Vice President for Grants and Special Programs

The Trustees of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) have named Peter J. Bruns, a professor of genetics at Cornell University, as the Institute's new vice president for grants and special programs.

Bruns, 58, will head the Institute's grants program, which awards more than \$100 million annually, primarily to support science education efforts at colleges, universities, medical schools, museums, zoos and other institutions nationwide; it is the largest privately supported science education program in U.S. history. HHMI also awards international grants to support outstanding biomedical scientists in Latin America, Canada, Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and other parts of the world.

Bruns has earned a national reputation for his efforts to improve science education for students at all levels. He established the Cornell Institute for Biology Teachers, which brings New York State high school teachers together each summer for lectures, field trips, hands-on laboratories and computer training to improve their teaching. The institute has created satellite operations in Cleveland, Boston, Hartford and New York City. He also took the lead in expanding opportunities for Cornell students interested in doing original laboratory research in biology and related disciplines.

"I've known Peter Bruns as an outstanding scientist for many years," said Thomas R. Cech, HHMI's president. "During the past decade, he also has emerged as one of the country's most creative science educators. Peter wants students of all ages to share our excitement about biology and understand how it is changing the world. He's been a leader in strengthening the ties between scientists and schools, improving the effectiveness of science classrooms and helping to train the next generation of researchers. He will be a wonderful addition to the Institute."

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute was established in 1953 by the aviator-industrialist for whom it is named. It is a philanthropy whose principal purpose is the direct conduct of biomedical research. HHMI's annual budget exceeds \$650 million and its endowment is about \$13 billion. It employs some 350 independent scientists and their research teams, who work in Institute laboratories at 72 universities, academic medical centers and other research institutions across the United States; the Institute's scientific staff numbers more than 3,000. HHMI's headquarters and conference center

are located in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Bruns will divide his time between the Institute and Cornell until the academic year ends next spring, when he will move to Maryland with his family. He has been the program director for three grants (totaling \$6.2 million) that Cornell has received through HHMI's Undergraduate Biological Sciences Education Program.

A native of Syracuse, New York, he received his bachelor's degree from Syracuse University and his doctorate from the University of Illinois before joining the Cornell faculty as an assistant professor of genetics in 1969. His research is in the genetics and molecular biology of the one-celled pond organism *Tetrahymena thermophila*, with a special interest in its chromosomal organization. He has been active in numerous professional organizations and as a reviewer for scientific journals.

He succeeds Joseph G. Perpich, who left the Institute in October after serving for 13 years as its first vice president for grants and special programs.