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Tufts Launches Laboratory Community Advisory Committee

BOSTON (July 2012) --Tufts University School of Medicine (TUSM) has formed a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) that will provide objective feedback to Tufts during development of the tuberculosis research laboratory that the university plans to construct and operate within its existing medical research building at 136 Harrison Avenue. Tufts will seek approval to operate the laboratory from the Boston Public Health Commission.

The CAC, which held its first meeting on July 11, currently includes seven members of the community: Janelle Chan, Paul Chan, Richard Chin, Gilbert Ho, Chau Ming Lee, Bill Moy, and Ruth Moy.

"We are extremely appreciative that these men and women are willing to give us their time and ideas as we work to ensure that this project is one we can all be proud of," said John Leong, M.D., Ph.D., director of TUSM's Department of Molecular Biology and Microbiology, whose faculty will lead the research. "All of us at Tufts are committed to working closely with the community, in order to keep those who live here fully informed during all phases of project development."

The CAC will function as an independent body whose members will apply their individual experience and expertise to any questions or issues raised by the laboratory project. They will objectively assess all aspects of the project, from its benefits to potential risks. The committee will meet regularly throughout the permitting process and may continue to provide an ongoing voice when the laboratory begins operation.

"Members of the community who would like to learn more about the committee or the project are welcome to get in touch with us," said Community Relations Director Barbara Rubel. "Our phone number is 617-627-3780 and we also have a project website set up at www.medicine.tufts.edu/Research/Arnold8BiosafetyLab. Information from the CAC will be posted on the website."

The planned Arnold 8 Biosafety Laboratory is a biosafety level 3 (BSL-3) laboratory that will focus on new ways to detect, prevent and treat tuberculosis, a disease which is found in Boston and around the world. The Boston Public Health Commission currently oversees 11 BSL-3 laboratories now operating at major Boston hospitals and academic institutions. At 1,700 square feet, the planned laboratory represents less than 1 percent of the total space of the existing 260,000 square foot Biomedical Research and Public

Health Building in which it will be located. Tufts hopes to start construction of the facility later this year, with operation in 2013.

Tufts University, located on three Massachusetts campuses in Boston, Medford/Somerville, and Grafton, and in Talloires, France, is recognized among the premier research universities in the United States. Tufts enjoys a global reputation for academic excellence and for the preparation of students as leaders in a wide range of professions. A growing number of innovative teaching and research initiatives span all campuses, and collaboration among the faculty and students in the undergraduate, graduate and professional programs across the university is widely encouraged.

Tufts University School of Medicine and the Sackler School of Graduate Biomedical Sciences at Tufts University are international leaders in innovative medical education and advanced research. The School of Medicine and the Sackler School are renowned for excellence in education in general medicine, biomedical sciences, special combined degree programs in business, health management, public health, bioengineering and international relations, as well as basic and clinical research at the cellular and molecular level. Ranked among the top in the nation, the School of Medicine is affiliated with six major teaching hospitals and more than 30 health care facilities. Tufts University School of Medicine and the Sackler School undertake research that is consistently rated among the highest in the nation for its effect on the advancement of medical science.