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OSTEOARTHRITIS ADVANCES THE FOCUS OF UPCOMING OARSI CONGRESS

OARSI to Honor Outstanding Achievement

MOUNT LAUREL, NJ, OCTOBER 10, 2007 – The Osteoarthritis Research Society International (OARSI) will host the World Congress on Osteoarthritis, December 6 – 9, 2007 at the Marriott Harbor Beach Resort and Spa in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, USA. This annual event, expected to attract more than 1000 medical professionals from around the globe, offers the latest developments in key areas of osteoarthritis.

Joint diseases account for the majority of all chronic conditions in individuals 65 years and older. OARSI is the leading medical society dedicated to promoting and advancing research for the prevention and treatment of osteoarthritis. The World Congress provides a global forum for exchange of information between basic scientists, clinical investigators, clinicians, radiologists, orthopedists, rheumatologists, industry scientists, policy makers and others interested in osteoarthritis research and treatment.

The program for the World Congress will consist of concurrent oral sessions addressing both clinical and basic science topics that appeal to a range of participants working in the field of osteoarthritis. A fantastic line-up of internationally recognized speakers will be on hand, including Professor Hideaki Nagase of the Kennedy Institute in London, whose presentation will focus on *Targeting MMPs and ADAMTSs in Osteoarthritis*. New this year, OARSI will present a “Year in Review” plenary session, in which six internationally renowned research leaders will summarize progress in biomechanics and mechanobiology, clinical and molecular genetics, cell biology, cartilage extracellular matrix, epidemiology and health services research, and pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic clinical trials.

Kicking-off the Congress program, OARSI will present the Basic Science, Clinical Research, and Lifetime Achievement Awards to leaders in the field of osteoarthritis at the special Awards Presentation on Thursday, December 6. In honoring outstanding achievement, OARSI will present the Lifetime Achievement Award to **Roy Altman, MD**, University of California, Los Angeles. In addition to his many contributions to the field of osteoarthritis, Dr. Altman played a critical role in the organization of OARSI, whose first meeting was held in 1992. He served as president of the society from 1994-1996, and is responsible for organizing the first meeting in the United States, in Orlando. Dr. Altman assumed responsibility as editor-in-chief and launched a new Journal – *Osteoarthritis and Cartilage*. Today, near the end of its fifteenth year of publication, the journal is held in highest regard, ranking highest in orthopedics and sixth in rheumatology.

This year’s recipient of the Basic Science Award is **Ernst Hunziker, MD**, Professor and Chairman of ITT Research Institute for Dental and Skeletal Biology at the University of Bern in Bern Switzerland. Dr. Hunziker, described as “an outstanding scientist in the area of cartilage repair” has been an active member of OARSI for many years. As past president of the International Cartilage Repair Society, he has worked diligently to establish a working relationship between the two organizations. Dr. Hunziker has published more than 100 papers on cartilage morphology and cartilage repair, and was nominated for his many contributions throughout the years.

OARSI will present the Clinical Research Award to **Joanne M. Jordan MD, MPH**, Associate Professor in the Departments of Medicine and Orthopaedics, and Adjunct Associate Professor in Epidemiology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Currently, Dr. Jordan serves as Chief of the Division of Rheumatology, Allergy, and Immunology and Director of the Thurston Arthritis Research Center at UNC. Dr. Jordan has played an important role in OARSI, through her service on various committees and as an abstract reviewer, as well as the field of osteoarthritis, as the principal investigator of the Johnston County Osteoarthritis Project, a community-based longitudinal study of OA and of the Genetics of Osteoarthritis Study, a new genetic association study. She has also served the OA community by freely sharing data with fellow OA professionals for the advancement of research.

OARSI is a nonprofit, scientific organization that promotes and encourages fundamental and applied research, and disseminates the results in order to permit better knowledge of osteoarthritis and its treatment.

Osteoarthritis represents the single most prevalent age-related disease and with the increasing numbers of the elderly in both developed and developing countries, it is expected to have a profound impact on the health care and quality of life for senior citizens.

For more information on OARSI or the World Congress, contact OARSI at 15000 Commerce Parkway, Suite C, Mt. Laurel, NJ, 08054; phone: 856-439-1385; fax: 856-439-0525; email: oarsi@oarsi.org or visit the Web site at www.oarsi.org.

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Media are invited and welcome to attend the 2007 OARSI World Congress.

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