

MEDIA RELEASE

Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research Unveils Redesigned Water Tower and Announces Educational Collaborations

Neighborhood Open House Celebrates New Research Headquarters

Cambridge, MA (USA), November 9, 2004— A new landmark on the Cambridge skyline was unveiled today as the Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research (NIBR) revealed the new look for the water tower atop its world research headquarters. Today's community open house celebrated the transformation of the site—the former home of the New England Confectionery Company (NECCO)—from a candy factory into a state-of-the-art drug discovery research laboratory. The new water tower design, maintains the colorful spirit of the old tower by incorporating the colors from the old NECCO tower in the bonded pairs of the new design, a DNA double helix that wraps around the tower. Today's event also included the announcement of two exciting educational collaborations sponsored by NIBR, the research division of Novartis, and featured remarks from Cambridge Mayor Michael Sullivan, Art Solomon, President of the DSF Group, and Mark Fishman, President of NIBR.

The work of a local artist

In 1996, to celebrate its 150 year anniversary, NECCO painted the water tower on the roof of its factory to resemble its popular multi-colored wafer candy roll.

As the building's new occupant, Novartis committed to maintaining the tower as a colorful landmark, but wanted to ensure that the tower's design reflected the new life of the building beneath it. To do this, in February 2004, the company sponsored a "competition of ideas," soliciting design ideas from the arts, design and school communities in Cambridge. After receiving more than 500 designs from artists of all ages, in April of 2004, a jury of experts awarded cash prizes to multiple entrants in six categories. In addition, each Cambridge Public School that submitted at least one design was awarded a \$500 grant for art supplies and each student that submitted a design was given two passes to Boston's Museum of Science.

The design of the newly unveiled tower was inspired by the work of Somerville resident Joseph Depasquale, a student at the Katherine Martin Widmer School of Painting. Depasquale entered the design contest at the urging of Widmer, who had heard about the contest from a newspaper story. "I researched Novartis after I read the contest rules," said Depasquale, "and I decided that the DNA helix was a natural fit."

A commitment to education

At today's community event, NIBR also announced two important new educational collaborations with area schools. The first program, the Novartis Science Teachers Exchange will be funded by NIBR and coordinated by Boston's Museum of Science. The focus of this program is on improving biotechnology-related curriculum in Europe and the U.S. by facilitating an exchange of ideas and best practices between high school biology teachers in Cambridge/Boston and Basel, Switzerland – where Novartis' corporate headquarters is located.

Four teachers and a coordinator from each of the two cities will form a collaborative team to explore efforts and develop new ideas for introducing biotechnology into the high school curriculum. "Educators in the U.S. and Europe have developed and implemented innovative lessons that engage students' interest while teaching the fundamentals of biology, but there has been very little international exchange of ideas. We are excited that this program will be a key step in dissemination of biotechnology curriculum on both sides of the Atlantic," said Cary Sneider, Vice President for Educator Programs at the Museum of Science.

The second collaboration is called the "Netpals" program, and pairs up NIBR scientists with 7th grade students from Cambridgeport Elementary School. During the school year, the scientists will serve as mentors on a variety of research and writing assignments and share information about their education and career paths. The students will benefit from the one-on-one exchange with adults who love science. "Netpals" programs are coordinated by Cambridge School Volunteers, Inc., in collaboration with individual schools.

"In our neighboring schools today are the scientists of tomorrow," said Fishman. "If we can, in any way, encourage them in this pursuit we are helping meet our commitment to the health care of the future."

Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research

Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research is Novartis' global research organization and is committed to discovering innovative medicines that cure disease and improve human health. By conducting more relevant and predictable drug discovery that can yield new and better medicines for patients, Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research is redefining drug discovery in the post-genomic era. Over the past four years, Novartis Pharmaceuticals has had the greatest number of new molecular entities approved by the U.S. FDA. With its broad focus on diseases for which there is need for better medical therapies and with 3,000 talented, dedicated research scientists worldwide, Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research is well-positioned to ensure Novartis maintains its strong pipeline and highly successful track record in new drug discovery. Novartis Institutes includes sites in Cambridge, Massachusetts (headquarters); Basel, Switzerland; Horsham & London, UK; East Hanover, NJ; Vienna, Austria; and Tsukuba, Japan.

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