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**ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION BESTOWS
PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL RESEARCH AWARD**

Gary S. Firestein, M.D., Receives Lee C. Howley, Sr. Prize for Arthritis Research

ATLANTA (November 27, 2006) – Gary S. Firestein, M.D., was awarded the Lee C. Howley Sr. Prize for Arthritis Research by the Arthritis Foundation at its National Meeting on November 17, 2006, in Colorado Springs, Colo. Dr. Firestein, Chief of Rheumatology, Allergy and Immunology at the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine, was recognized for his outstanding research on the origination and development of rheumatoid arthritis (RA).

A highly coveted award for arthritis research, the prestigious Howley prize is given annually by the Arthritis Foundation to a researcher whose contributions in the previous five years represent significant advances in the understanding, treatment or prevention of arthritis and related diseases.

“Dr. Firestein has made enormous contributions to the field of rheumatology as a clinician, researcher, educator and thought leader,” said John H. Klippel, M.D., president and CEO, Arthritis Foundation. “Dr. Firestein’s innovative work has resulted in major advances in our understanding of RA which have led to improvements in the care of patients affected by the disease. We are thankful for researchers like him who work tirelessly to better the lives of the millions of children, teens and adults with arthritis.”

Dr. Firestein has advanced the field of rheumatology by identifying key patterns of gene expression in the joint to provide a basis for new therapies, including cytokine blockers. During

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his career, his scientific contributions have moved the study of RA from primitive analysis of peripheral blood cells to a sophisticated assay of patterns of gene expression that provide a much more powerful and informed perspective. His work provided the foundation for new therapies and is leading to the development of promising new approaches in the understanding and treatment of RA. Dr. Firestein's recent research, funded in part by the Arthritis Foundation, has progressed from studying cytokines to understanding the mechanisms inside cells that control gene expression in order to design new oral drugs to control arthritis.

Dr. Firestein served as chair of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Arthritis Advisory Committee and as deputy editor of *Arthritis & Rheumatism*. He is also currently editor of *Kelley's Textbook of Rheumatology*. He graduated from Harvard College and attended medical school at the Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Firestein's postgraduate training included internal medicine residency at UCLA Medical Center and rheumatology fellowship at University of California, San Diego.

The Lee C. Howley Sr. Prize for Arthritis Research is made possible by the Howley family. The recognition of excellence in arthritis research that this program offers ensures that research will continue to find cures for the more than 100 forms of arthritis and rheumatic diseases.

The Arthritis Foundation is the largest private, non-profit contributor to arthritis research in the world. Since 1948, the foundation has invested more than \$380 million and supported the work of more than 2,100 scientists, physicians and health professionals involved in cutting-edge arthritis research.

The Arthritis Foundation is the only nationwide, nonprofit health organization helping people take greater control of arthritis by leading efforts to prevent, control and cure arthritis and related diseases -- the nation's number one cause of disability. For free arthritis information, contact the Arthritis Foundation at 800-568-4045 or on the Web at www.arthritis.org.

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