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Rhode Island Science and Technology Advisory Council Funds Research Fellowship in Honor of Governor Carcieri

October 14, 2010 (Providence, R.I.) — The Rhode Island Science and Technology Advisory Council (STAC), as part of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC), today announced that it will fund a \$6,500 Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) in honor of Governor Donald L. Carcieri and his commitment to strengthening student training and engagement in the sciences.

The announcement came as surprise to Governor Carcieri today as he attended his last STAC meeting before the conclusion of his term. Governor Carcieri created STAC in 2005 to advise his office and the General Assembly in prioritizing Rhode Island's investment in science and technology.

“It has been an honor to work along side some of the brightest and best minds in academia and business leaders as we move forward the state's science and technology agenda,” said Governor Carcieri. “When I created STAC, my hope was to coordinate and improve our research capabilities to support growth in our economy. I never imagined we would have accomplished what we have in four short years. Thank you for this honor, and my sincere thanks and appreciation to the STAC members and staff for their commitment to create and support a comprehensive state-wide strategy for science and technology development that establishes Rhode Island as a leader in research and technology and its real world commercial applications.”

Established in 2001, the federally funded SURF program provides stipends to approximately 80 students annually who participate in a 10-week science research project. The STAC fellowship funding will create an additional opportunity for a Rhode Island college student interested in pursuing a post-graduate degree or a career in the health and biomedical sciences to gain hands-on experience in a research lab.

“This fellowship is a fitting recognition of the tremendous commitment Rhode Island has made under Governor Carcieri’s leadership to science and technology investments and in workforce training and education,” said Keith Stokes, RIEDC Executive Director. “Since STAC’s inception, Governor Carcieri, the General Assembly and the state’s business and education leaders have collaborated to achieve significant advances in supporting innovation, entrepreneurship and strengthening career pathways for Rhode Island’s workforce.”

“On behalf of STAC, I thank Governor Carcieri for making science and technology a top priority for Rhode Island. The Governor has been strongly committed to science education and research, and during his tenure, strong programs have been developed in Rhode Island in health care, biomedical research, information technology, marine biosciences and higher education.” said Clyde Briant, STAC co-chair and Vice President for Research at Brown University.

SURF provides a structured training environment for undergraduates at a Rhode Island college or university who are interested in gaining biomedical research experience. The program exposes undergraduate students to laboratory research and familiarizes them with career opportunities in the biomedical sciences. Additional career-building events include workshops on general research issues and practices, seminars on faculty research, scientific ethics and strategies for applying to graduate school. At the end of the summer, the students present their research findings through scientific posters at the annual Rhode Island SURF Conference.

About the Rhode Island Science and Technology Advisory Council

The Rhode Island Science and Technology Advisory Council (STAC) was created in 2005 by Governor Donald Carcieri and sustained by legislative statute in 2006 with the mission to make innovation central to the state's leadership agenda.

STAC is charged with recommending and implementing policies and practices that 1) support the state's research and development activity; 2) promote collaboration across institutions; 3) encourage entrepreneurship and new company creation; and 4) enable all Rhode Island organizations, both public and private, to innovate.

STAC aims to assist Rhode Island's leadership in creating an innovation economy that will grow higher wage jobs and address critical needs in areas such as healthcare, education and public safety.

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