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### **Mid-Atlantic Bio Honors NIH's Francis Collins at Seventh Annual Conference**

**BETHESDA, MD (October 29, 2010)** — The [2010 Mid-Atlantic Bio Conference](#) debuted Wednesday with an opening reception during which National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Francis S. Collins, MD, PhD, was honored with the Mid-Atlantic Bio Lifetime Achievement Award for his accomplishments in biomedical research and human services and his movement to increase translational work at NIH.

Taking place this week at the North Bethesda Marriott Convention Center in Bethesda, Md., the seventh annual Mid-Atlantic Bio Conference has attracted nearly 700 national and international industry leaders, government representatives, executives, researchers, investors and entrepreneurs. The conference is the epicenter of bioscience, capital, and policy that is hosted collectively by the region's most influential bioscience and investor associations, the [Mid-Atlantic Venture Association](#) (MAVA), the [Tech Council of Maryland/MdBio](#) (MdBio) and the [Virginia Biotechnology Association](#) (VaBIO). Mid-Atlantic Bio is the only globally focused, regionally based event dedicated to promoting the biotechnology industry in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Thursday's program included several panel sessions and presentations by selected companies in the Emerging Growth and First Look/Fast Pitch tracks. The morning plenary session featured Joshua Sharfstein, MD, principal deputy commissioner at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration; and Fred Frank, vice chairman of the Peter J. Solomon Co.; while the afternoon plenary featured Martine Rothblatt, PhD, J.D., MBA, chairman and CEO of United Therapeutics Corp.; and H. Thomas Watkins, president and CEO of Human Genome Sciences.

During his plenary session, Dr. Sharfstein discussed the future direction of the FDA. He spoke to the balance of safety vs. risk and how they must consider the benefits to public health and be prepared to take some risks. He also reviewed their new FDA-TRACK performance management system that monitors over 100 FDA program offices and tracks key performance measure, which fosters a culture of accountability and performance throughout the agency. In the same panel session, Fred Frank also spoke of the balance of safety vs. risk saying that with the turn to safety, approval timelines are extended, costs of developing drugs increases and approvals may be flat and costs will continue to increase.

"We have a powerhouse program this year and today's schedule features the much anticipated joint plenary with John Castellani of PhRMA and James Greenwood of BIO with our final plenary featuring John Crowley of Amicus Therapeutics," said Virginia Biotechnology Association executive director Mark Herzog. "With our strong plenary speaker line-up featuring the leaders of BIO and PhRMA, the FDA and NIH, it allows our attendees insight and access in the industry unlike any other regional event."

**ABOUT MID-ATLANTIC BIO**

The Mid-Atlantic Bio Conference, scheduled October 27-29, 2010, in Bethesda, Md., is co-hosted by the Tech Council of Maryland/MdBio (TCM/MdBio), the Mid-Atlantic Venture Association (MAVA), and the Virginia Biotechnology Association (VaBIO). Mid-Atlantic Bio benefits from broad regional support from the investor and greater business communities, academic institutions, government agencies, and partnering regional associations. For more information, please visit [www.midatlanticbio.org](http://www.midatlanticbio.org).

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