

FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE
August 7, 2009

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Genetic Alliance Celebrates the Confirmation of New NIH Director Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D.

WASHINGTON – August 7, 2009 – Genetic Alliance, a nonprofit health advocacy organization, celebrates the confirmation by the US Senate of Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D., as the new director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

“We have been waiting for this moment,” said Sharon Terry, president and chief executive officer of Genetic Alliance. “Dr. Collins understands the research to health continuum. He enables collaboration, partnerships and innovation to create the new systems we need in the genomic era. We look forward to working with him on these new systems from the most common conditions to rare and neglected ones.”

Dr. Collins, former director of National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI), led the Institute and an international team to sequence the human genome. As NHGRI director, he put that information to work by not only elucidating the meaning of the raw data, but also creating systems and paradigms that transformed biomedical research. Throughout all of this, Collins kept individuals, families and communities central to the work, focusing on their needs as the driver for scientific discovery.

“I am thrilled that Dr. Collins is the new leader for NIH,” said Kemp Battle, Genetic Alliance Council member and treasurer. “He will bring vision, grace and tenacity to the position. He knows how to optimize resources, discovery, and the development of diagnostics and therapeutics and will promote open collaboration amongst and between federal agencies, industry, academic and nonprofits. Dr. Collins is the right man at a crossroad moment in our country’s health.”

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About Genetic Alliance

Genetic Alliance transforms health through genetics, promoting an environment of openness centered on the health of individuals, families, and communities. Genetic Alliance brings together diverse stakeholders that create novel partnerships in advocacy; integrates individual, family, and community perspectives to improve health systems; and revolutionizes access to information to enable translation of research into services and individualized decision making. For more information about Genetic Alliance, visit <http://www.geneticalliance.org>.