Pioneer in Biomedical Informatics Joins Emory University as GRA Eminent Scholar

Joel Saltz brings expertise in computing applications that support biomedical research

ATLANTA, November 12, 2008 – Joel H. Saltz, M.D., Ph.D., a national leader in biomedical informatics, recently joined Emory University's Woodruff Health Sciences Center as the Georgia Research Alliance (GRA) Eminent Scholar in Biomedical Informatics.

At the Woodruff Health Sciences Center, Dr. Saltz is director of the Emory University Center for Comprehensive Informatics and Emory Healthcare's Chief Medical Information Officer. He is helping develop and spearhead new programs to generate discoveries in health and medicine, as well as to promote more precise and scientifically informed decision-making in patient care.

As a new GRA Eminent Scholar, Saltz is leading efforts to further develop partnerships in bioinformatics among Georgia's research universities, including a new Department of Biomedical Informatics, a joint program of the Emory School of Medicine and the Georgia Tech College of Computing. His efforts in biomedical informatics will strengthen the partnerships between Emory and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Morehouse School of Medicine, the Atlanta Veterans Affairs Medical Center and the Georgia Cancer Coalition.

Bringing with him a highly funded research program, Saltz was recruited to Georgia from Ohio State University (OSU), where he previously served in multiple positions, including professor and chair of the Department of Biomedical Informatics, professor in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, the Davis Endowed Chair of Cancer and a senior fellow of the Ohio Supercomputer Center. Prior to OSU, Saltz was professor of pathology and informatics at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and professor in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Maryland.

A leader in cancer research, one of his many achievements includes his work with the cancer Bioinformatics Grid (caBIG), an initiative of the National Cancer Institute Center for Biomedical Informatics and Information Technology that is accelerating research and discovery at 50 institutions, including Emory. The initiative helps cancer researchers, clinicians and patients share relevant data and information, speeds translation of new cancer diagnostics and therapies from the laboratory to the community and helps fully realize the potential of predictive health.

Saltz has secured more than $70 million in grant funding. He also has authored more than 325 publications and 70 invited presentations. He is a Fellow of the American Medical Informatics Association.

"Dr. Saltz's extensive experience and clear research vision have put him at the crest of the work being done in his field," said GRA president and CEO C. Michael Cassidy. "Global cooperation in research and unified goals in the field of biomedical research have made bioinformatics a critical and quickly expanding field."

At a national level, Dr. Saltz will lead the Clinical and Translational Science Award's (CTSA) Bioinformatics Program. This effort will strongly leverage his work on caBIG and will engage the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Genome Atlas program as well as the I-SPY 2 and Rembrandt translational research cancer initiatives. Saltz is also a part of the Biomedical Informatics Research

Network (BIRN), an informatics grid sponsored and supported by the NIH National Center for Research Resources (NCRR).

"Dr. Saltz is known as a true pioneer in bioinformatics," said Fred Sanfilippo, executive vice president of Health Affairs for Emory University. "He brings unmatched expertise and a strong leadership to our university. He is the perfect choice for Emory as we explore new horizons in biomedical research."

Saltz also chairs the Emory's Comprehensive Informatics Leadership Committee, which oversees recruitment, research and resource allocation for informatics-related academic endeavors. He also directs strategic planning and implementation of the Emory Medical Information Enterprise.

"I am honored to join the prestigious faculty at Emory University as a GRA Eminent Scholar," said Saltz. "It is an exciting time to be joining Emory and coming back to Atlanta. I cherish the opportunity to build what should be one of the pre-eminent bioinformatics programs in the world."

Saltz trained both as a computer scientist and as a medical scientist. He received his M.D. as well as a Ph.D. in computer science from Duke University. He then completed his residency in clinical pathology at Johns Hopkins University and became a board certified clinical pathologist.

About GRA
A model public-private partnership between Georgia research universities, business and state government, the Georgia Research Alliance helps build Georgia's technology-rich economy in three major ways: through attracting Eminent Scholars to Georgia's research universities; through helping create centers of research excellence and through converting research into products, services and jobs that drive the economy. To learn more about GRA, visit www.gra.org.

About Emory University
Emory University is one of the nation's leading private research universities and a member of the Association of American Universities. Known for its demanding academics, outstanding undergraduate college of arts and sciences, highly ranked professional schools and state-of-the-art research facilities, Emory is ranked as one of the country's top 20 national universities by U.S. News & World Report. In addition to its nine schools, the university encompasses The Carter Center, Yerkes National Primate Research Center and Emory Healthcare, the state's largest and most comprehensive health care system.

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