

Dr. Maria C. Freire Named President of The Foundation for the National Institutes of Health

BETHESDA, MD (July 24, 2012) – The Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (FNIH) announces that Dr. Maria Freire has been chosen as its new President, effective November 1, 2012.

Dr. Freire comes to the Foundation from her position as President of the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation, a leading champion of medical research.

Prior to heading the Lasker Foundation, Dr. Freire served from 2001 to 2008 as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Global Alliance for TB Drug Development, an international public-private partnership focused on the development of new and better drugs and therapies for tuberculosis. She was the Director of the Office of Technology Transfer at the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), the office responsible for all patenting, marketing, licensing, and monitoring activities for inventions arising from the NIH and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration from 1995 to 2001. Prior to that, Dr. Freire established and led the Office of Technology Development at the University of Maryland, Baltimore and Baltimore County.

Dr. Freire received a Ph.D. in biophysics from the University of Virginia and completed post-graduate work in immunology and virology at the University of Virginia and the University of Tennessee, respectively. She is active on a number of national and international boards and committees, including the Advisory Committee to the Director of the NIH. Dr. Freire is the recipient of numerous awards, including the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service, the Arthur S. Flemming Award and the Bayh-Dole Award.

“Dr. Freire’s proven ability to build and lead organizations, her breadth of experience in working across government, industry, and nonprofit sectors, and her commitment to medical research make her an ideal choice for President of the Foundation,” said Dr. Charles Sanders, Chairman of the FNIH Board of Directors.

“I am absolutely delighted that Maria is taking the reins at FNIH. She has the ideal combination of scientific credentials, high-level experience in government, academia, and the non-profit sector, and exquisite leadership skills,” Dr. Francis S. Collins, NIH director, said. “We look forward to her arrival with tremendous anticipation.”

Dr. Stephanie James, who has served as acting Executive Director of FNIH since April and will remain as Director of Science in the organization said, “Dr. Freire is well known and highly respected both nationally and internationally for her scientific leadership and management expertise – we are looking forward to the future with her as our new President.”

Dr. Freire said, “I am deeply honored to have been selected as President of the FNIH. Today its mission is more critical than ever and I welcome the opportunity to bring my expertise to advance this remarkable organization as it catalyzes partnerships and meets the challenges and opportunities in medical research.”

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About the Foundation for the NIH

Established by the United States Congress to support the mission of the NIH – improving health through scientific discovery in the search for cure – the Foundation for the NIH is a leader in identifying and addressing complex scientific and health issues. The Foundation is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) charitable organization that raises private-sector funds for a broad portfolio of unique programs that complement and enhance the NIH priorities and activities. For additional information about the Foundation for the NIH, visit www.fnih.org.