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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 17, 2006

LifeLegacy Foundation First Nonprofit Research Tissue Bank to Receive AATB Accreditation

*American Association of Tissue Banks Awards First Accreditation
to a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Research Organ and Tissue Bank*

Tucson, Arizona—January 17, 2006—Potential organ and tissue donors can choose with confidence to donate through a nonprofit tissue bank. LifeLegacy Foundation announced today that it is the first federally approved 501(c)(3) nonprofit research organ and tissue bank to receive accreditation from the American Association of Tissue Banks (AATB). The accreditation is given to tissue organizations whose level of medical, technical and administrative performance is maintained at the highest level of quality. The AATB awarded accreditation to the Tucson-based foundation following a thorough application review and onsite inspection process.

“LifeLegacy Foundation is pleased to be recognized for our diligent research organ and tissue banking processes—from transportation, procurement and processing to storage, distribution and record keeping,” said Christine Brannen, General Manager of LifeLegacy. “This distinction lets potential tissue donors and their families know that there is now a 501(c)(3) nonprofit research tissue organization that meets the same high standards that transplant organizations attain.”

LifeLegacy Foundation was founded in 1997 to expand the availability of donated non-transplantable organs and tissues to help meet the overwhelming need of researchers working to develop new medications, cures to diseases, and improved medical techniques and devices. Donated non-transplantable organs and tissues are provided to a variety of recognized academic agencies and university medical centers, governmental research agencies, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, surgical device companies, as well as surgical training programs. Donated organs and tissues are used for many types of research, including: cancer, Alzheimer’s, dementia, diabetes, and Parkinson’s. Areas such as biomechanics research, surgical device development and surgical education benefit as well.

To ensure the quality of the organs and tissues provided to researchers, LifeLegacy is compliant with not only AATB standards, but also adheres to the Food and Drug Administration’s Good Tissue Practices and the Uniform Anatomical Gift Act. LifeLegacy applied for AATB accreditation for formal recognition of these high quality standards and processes.

AATB accredited tissue banks are involved in the determination of donor eligibility as well as the retrieval, processing, storage and/or distribution of human cells and tissue for transplant or research. Obtaining AATB accreditation demonstrates LifeLegacy’s commitment to the highest standards and to the highest possible level of service to the donors and research community. AATB accredited organizations are recognized as the leaders in their field and as pivotal voices in the dialogue through which consensus-based, voluntary standards are developed and implemented.

Founded in 1976, the AATB is a scientific and educational, tax-exempt organization. Its mission is to provide transplantable cells and tissues of uniform high quality in quantities sufficient to meet needs. To accomplish this, the AATB publishes standards, accredits facilities, certifies tissue bank personnel, publishes books and guidance documents, and produces educational programs to improve tissue banking.

LifeLegacy Foundation is a federally approved 501(c)(3) nonprofit foundation and a qualified “organ procurement agency” under the Arizona Anatomical Gift Act. The primary objective of LifeLegacy is the ethical recovery and placement of highly viable, non-transplantable human organs and tissues for the purpose of advancing medical research and education. LifeLegacy is committed to ensuring all donated organs and tissues are used properly and professionally, and that the donor and donor family’s wishes are met. LifeLegacy procures, packages and distributes donated human organs and tissues only to those research institutions that have been pre-approved through LifeLegacy’s stringent Application and Approval Committee process.

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