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For Immediate Release

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Society for Biological Engineering Fosters Cell Line Research For Crucial Biological Drug Development

***Research on Chinese Hamster Ovary (CHO) cells could improve processes to lower
bio-pharmaceutical costs***

NEW YORK, Feb. 13 2006 – The Society for Biological Engineering (SBE) today announced that it has formed a consortium of leading pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies to advance cell line research that could facilitate drug discovery and increase efficiencies for production for life-saving medicines.

Through SBE, the members of the consortium will provide up to \$2 million to the University of Minnesota and the Bioprocessing Technology Institute in Singapore to further the development of genomic research tools for Chinese Hamster Ovary (CHO) cell lines. This work is considered especially significant to facilitate the use of CHO cells for drug discovery and to increase production efficiencies of diagnostics and medicines for fighting certain cancers, controlling bleeding disorders, treating central nervous system diseases, and boosting blood cell production.

SBE is a technological community of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers and was founded two years ago.

“This is a great opportunity to make true advances in providing the genomic tools needed to improve the pharmaceutical production process,” said June Wispelwey, executive director of SBE. “Normally we see pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies competing against each other, but in this case, they are joining forces to support fundamental research that will benefit all members greatly.”

Dr. Wei-Shou Hu, Distinguished McKnight University Professor in Chemical Engineering and Materials Science at the University of Minnesota, is one of two principal investigators on the project. He observed that, “CHO cells are used to produce about 70

percent of all pharmaceutically important recombinant DNA proteins, so it will be very beneficial to learn more about their biology at molecular levels using the genomic tools.”

SBE, principle investigators from the University of Minnesota and the Bioprocessing Technology Institute of Singapore, and consortium members met on February 13 to discuss and refine their research plan. “Companies have made an outstanding commitment to this research, which reinforces BTI’s focus on CHO cells,” said Professor Miranda Yap, principal investigator and executive director of the Bioprocessing Technology Institute.

The Society for Biological Engineering (SBE) is a technological community for engineers and applied scientists integrating biology with engineering that was established by the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, AIChE, in 2004. Members of SBE come from a broad spectrum of industries and disciplines and share in SBE’s mission of realizing the benefits of bioprocessing, biomedical and biomolecular applications.

<http://bio.aiche.org>. Executive Director: June Wispelwey, bio@aiche.org.

Founded in the United States in 1908, AIChE is a professional association of more than 40,000 chemical engineers in 92 countries. Through its varied programs, AIChE continues to be a focal point for information exchange on the frontier of chemical engineering research in such areas as nanotechnology, sustainability, hydrogen fuels, biological and environmental engineering, and chemical plant safety and security. More information about AIChE is available at www.aiche.org.

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