



## Media Release

25 August 2006

### East Doncaster scientist shines at national awards

Up-and-coming East Doncaster scientist, Dr Rachel Chan, was recognised as one of the top six scientists at the national Society for Reproductive Biology (SRB) conference on Wednesday 23 August.

Rachel, who has recently completed her PhD at the Monash Institute of Medical Research, presented her groundbreaking research into endometrial stem cells to an audience of more than 50 international experts in reproductive biology.

“This award is great recognition for the research I’ve been doing with my supervisor, Dr Caroline Gargett,” Rachel said. “Last year, we were the first team in the world to discover adult stem cells existed in the endometrium, (the lining of the uterus).”

“Since our exciting discovery, I’ve been busy studying the impact certain hormones have on the growth of the stem cells,” she said. “Our findings will lead to a better understanding of diseases such as endometrial cancer and endometriosis, which affects up to 15 percent of all women. Our work will also benefit post-menopausal women who are on Hormone Replacement Therapy.”

Rachel’s research has been recognised by numerous national research bodies, such as the Australian Stem Cell Centre and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, who last year awarded her a \$15,000 to continue her research.

“I’m so lucky to be working in an area I’m passionate about. The recognitions by key organisations such as SRB are great motivation for me to continue my research and hopefully make a difference for the countless women who suffer from gynaecological problems,” she said.

**More information:**

To arrange an interview or photo opportunity: Julie Jacobs, PR Manager: 9594 7109 or 0408 135 256



## About the Monash Institute of Medical Research

MIMR has an international reputation for research into stem cell biology, cancer, reproduction, development, prostate disease, the role of genes and disease, women's health and inflammation.

Since its establishment as the Monash Institute of Reproduction and Development (MIRD) in 1991, the Institute's scientists and clinicians have received international recognition for their work in the vitally important areas of conception, growth, birth and development, in both the human and animal areas. Thousands of Australians have benefited from the scientists' research, including infertile young people, parents of premature babies, and men with prostate cancer.

On 1 February 2005, in recognition of MIRD's evolution beyond reproduction and development, the Monash Institute of Medical Research (MIMR) was born. MIMR's inception cemented the close medical research ties between MIRD, Monash University and Southern Health.

MIMR's Founding Director and newly-appointed Victorian Governor, Professor David de Kretser AC, established a strong legacy of excellence in research and scientific collaboration. This vision is shared by MIMR's new Director, Professor Bryan Williams, one of America's most accomplished cancer experts.

In keeping with this vision, collaboration is high on MIMR's agenda. The Institute is part of the Monash Health Research Precinct; a collaboration with Monash University, Southern Health and Prince Henry's Institute. This partnership between scientists and clinicians has become a strong union of scientific and clinical expertise, experience and resources.