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Detroit to host international stem cell summit

Granholm expected to announce 2010 event today; it will draw 1,200 from 27 nations

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The Detroit News

Michigan's evolving life sciences field will get some time in the spotlight next October when an influential group of scientists, businesspeople and policymakers gather for the third annual World Stem Cell Summit, Gov. Jennifer Granholm is expected to announce today.

The summit, expected to draw 1,200 attendees from 27 countries, won't be as large as other conventions in Detroit, but it will be an influential group that will showcase the state's place in the forefront of life sciences, said Renee Monforton, spokeswoman for the Detroit Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau.

"It just illustrates how Detroit is moving into new industries of life sciences and biomedical fields and how we are really expanding our base," Monforton said. "It's a great opportunity to put Detroit on the world stage."

The governor's office wouldn't share details about the announcement, but sources told The Detroit News the World Stem Cell Summit will be held in Detroit in October.

Granholm is expected to make the announcement with Detroit Mayor Dave Bing and representatives from the University of Michigan, Michigan State University and Wayne State University.

Bernard Siegel, founder of the World Stem Summit, would not confirm details of the event but said he is in Detroit.

The World Stem Cell Summit has been held previously in Baltimore and Wisconsin.

In September, the Baltimore gathering attracted 1,500 attendees with a \$750,000 economic impact, according to the Baltimore Area Convention and Visitors Association.

Sean Morrison, director of the Center for Stem Cell Biology at University of Michigan, was unaware if the summit was going to be held in Michigan but said if it's held here, it would have broad implications.

"It would be great for the state because the World Stem Cell Summit is a nexus for advocacy, disease, scientific, regulatory, and industry groups interested in the stem cell field," Morrison said.

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