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**Leading Medication Development Researcher Phil Skolnick joins NIDA
to lead Drug Discovery Efforts**

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), a component of the National Institutes of Health, today announced that Phil Skolnick, Ph.D., D.Sc. (hon.), a leader in the worlds of corporate and academic drug research, has been appointed Director of NIDA's Division of Pharmacotherapies and Medical Consequences of Drug Abuse (DPMCDA).

Dr. Skolnick is currently a research professor of psychiatry at New York University Langone Medical Center. He served as Chief Scientific Officer at DOV Pharmaceutical, Inc., from 2001-2009. Under his leadership, DOV discovered and developed novel reuptake inhibitor platforms, including the first triple (norepinephrine, serotonin, and dopamine) reuptake inhibitor tested in humans. These compounds can be targeted to a wide variety of neuropsychiatric disorders ranging from depression and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, to pain and obesity. At NIDA, he will lead a team that stimulates and conducts all phases of medications development from synthesis and screening of potential drug entities to preparing submissions for New Drug Applications. The DPMCDA funds research and development through peer reviewed grants and contracts, as well as interagency agreements to support the medications development process and clinical trial infrastructure.

"We are delighted to have Dr. Skolnick join our team of scientists looking for solutions to the management of drug addiction," said NIDA Director Nora Volkow. "His many remarkable years of innovation and leadership in both public and private research arenas will strengthen our complex medications development process and enhance our search for pharmacotherapeutic and immunological treatment agents."

Dr. Skolnick's appointment marks a return to the NIH community. He first joined NIH in 1972 as a staff fellow under Dr. John W. Daly in the National Institute of Arthritis, Metabolism and Digestive Diseases (NIAMDD), now the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK.) After a brief stint as a senior investigator at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, he returned to NIAMDD in

1978. In 1983, he became Chief of the Section on Neurobiology, and in 1986, Chief of the Laboratory of Neuroscience. After a celebrated career as an NIH neurobiologist and more than 500 papers published, Dr. Skolnick retired from government service in 1997 when he accepted a position as a Lilly Fellow in Neuroscience at Eli Lilly.

“I am delighted to return to the NIH community, which was a wonderful professional home for 25 years,” said Dr. Skolnick. “My new position at NIDA will enable me to take what I have learned in the private sector about medications development and apply it to the challenging field of drug abuse and addiction.”

Dr. Skolnick will take the Division helm from Acting Division Director David McCann, Ph.D. “We would like to thank Dr. McCann for his gracious and capable leadership of this important Division in recent months,” added Dr. Volkow. “He kept a strong and dynamic vision as our scientific team prepared for the transition to new leadership.” Dr. Skolnick’s first day at NIDA will be January 19, 2010.

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The National Institute on Drug Abuse is a component of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIDA supports most of the world’s research on the health aspects of drug abuse and addiction. The Institute carries out a large variety of programs to inform policy and improve practice. Fact sheets on the health effects of drugs of abuse and information on NIDA research and other activities can be found on the NIDA home page at www.drugabuse.gov. To order publications in English or Spanish, call NIDA’s new DrugPubs research dissemination center at 1-877-NIDA-NIH or 240-645-0228 (TDD) or fax or email requests to 240-645-0227 or drugpubs@nida.nih.gov. Online ordering is available at <http://drugpubs.drugabuse.gov>. NIDA’s new media guide can be found at <http://drugabuse.gov/mediaguide>.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) — *The Nation's Medical Research Agency* — includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is the primary Federal agency for conducting and supporting basic, clinical and translational medical research, and it investigates the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov.