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AMIA Announces the Formation of the Academic Forum

Academic Informatics Training Programs Join Forces to Create a Shared Professional Home

Bethesda, MD, March 29, 2007 – The American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) today announces the formation of The Academic Forum, to promote the development of biomedical and health informatics as a formal academic discipline. The Forum provides a unique platform for surveying and analyzing activities in academic units dedicated to biomedical and health informatics and for recommending best practices related to education, scholarship, faculty development, faculty retention, and essentially all issues relating to the academic enterprise. The Forum also establishes an environment for discussion of national research initiatives in informatics and a round table that facilitates collaboration among different academic units to further their objectives for education and research.

As biomedical and health informatics becomes an increasingly essential component of the educational mission of academic health sciences centers and universities, and as informatics becomes a core component of new federal initiatives, it will become increasingly important for academic units to articulate standards and policies. To this end, the Academic Forum has identified the following goals and objectives:

- The Forum will provide leadership to promote informatics as an academic discipline across the health professions;
- The Forum will provide guidance to academic institutions in their efforts to develop and sustain educational and scholarly activities;
- The Forum will identify and communicate to participating academic units information on new research initiatives, opportunities for professional development, conferences and workshops, and other relevant academic activities.

The Academic Forum will work closely with AMIA's Academic Strategic Leadership Council (ASLC) and a variety of stakeholder organizations representing industry and government to provide guidance, support, and advocacy

for academic programs across the United States. To further support the objectives of becoming the professional home for academicians in biomedical and health informatics, AMIA was recently elected to membership in the American Medical Colleges' Council of Academic Societies and the Council of Medical Specialty Societies.

Mark A. Musen, MD, PhD, Head, Stanford Medical Informatics, and Professor of Medicine, Stanford University will lead the Academic Forum as Chair of the Steering Committee. The Forum Steering Committee will also be supported by educators and scholars leading biomedical and health informatics programs nationally.

“As biomedical and health informatics transitions from being an area of scholarly emphasis to achieving full professional status as a distinct discipline, there is an acute need for the academic community to gather and air issues of critical importance and pursue relevant actions in a thoughtful manner. AMIA’s Academic Forum offers a unique opportunity for all health professionals to coalesce around transforming healthcare and research processes through the use of informatics. In short, these are heady times for us,” said Don E. Detmer, MD, MA, AMIA President and CEO.

Dr. Musen adds, "Particularly in a new discipline, it's important for academic leaders to have a place to come together to share good ideas, to discuss approaches to common problems, and to take advantage of open opportunities. It's been easy for groups in informatics to become rather isolated in carrying out their academic mission. The Forum will provide a virtual community for the leaders of informatics training programs to exchange ideas and learn from one another. The ultimate effect should be the growth of biomedical and health informatics as an academic discipline."

The Forum is open to academic units educating post-baccalaureate students in biomedical and health informatics. More than one academic unit per setting is permitted, based on local circumstances, and the head of the unit must have a demonstrated commitment to AMIA through membership at the individual or institutional level.

To participate in The Forum as a charter member, an annual dues fee is required. Dues assessment will be based on the faculty size and ranges from \$1000 per year to \$5000 per year.

The Forum will convene an inaugural membership meeting on Monday, June 25, 2007 at the Sheraton Palo Alto, Palo Alto, California. Academic leaders in informatics are expected to produce a proposed strategic plan for the most important services that the Forum will provide to member academic units in the coming years. The meeting also will provide opportunities for participants to discuss opportunities and challenges in the promotion of academic informatics at the level of departments, institutions, and professional groups.

About AMIA

The American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) is a professional organization of leaders shaping the future of biomedical and health informatics in the United States and abroad. AMIA is dedicated to the development and application of informatics in support of patient care, public health, teaching, research, administration, and related policy. Complete information about AMIA is available at:

www.amia.org.

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