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**TAI SOPHIA INSTITUTE BOARD MEMBERS AND FACULTY ARE
KEY SPEAKERS AT HISTORIC HERBAL SYMPOSIUM**
*Robert Duggan, Simon Mills and Kevin Spelman
Offered Insights on Regulation of Herbal Remedies*

LAUREL, Md. (May 27, 2008) – Tai Sophia Institute, working in partnership with the University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute (UMBI), played a key role in an historic one-day symposium, hosted by the Appalachian Center for Ethnobotanical Studies (ACES), on the pros and cons of placing regulations on medicines derived from plant materials. ACES is a collaborative of UMBI, Frostburg State University and West Virginia University. “To Regulate or Not to Regulate: The Approach for Herbal Medicines” brought together, for the first time, herbal practitioners, scientists and members of the federal government in an effort to shed light on the advantages and disadvantages in regulation of herbal medicines.

Robert Duggan, president and co-founder of Tai Sophia Institute, delivered the keynote address, “Perspectives on Herbal Medicine: Where Do We Go From Here?” In addition, luncheon speaker Simon Mills, Tai Sophia board member and founder of the Institute’s Master of Science in Herbal Medicine degree program, offered insights on the ever-growing international herbal supplement market and how other countries are addressing the issue of regulatory guidelines.

Speaking to the issue of whether clinical trials provide definitive outcomes in light of variations in herbs, soil and even participants, Duggan asked symposium attendees, “Can we accept as significant that a particular plant has been used in many different cultures, in various parts of the world for thousands of years as useful in relieving human suffering, can we accept that very fact provides a special kind of validity and significant importance without need for further scientific research?”

In addition to the main speakers, the symposium featured three separate panels, each providing professional perspectives from a different industry sector: herbalists and practitioners, scientists and physicians, and federal agencies. Tai Sophia faculty member Kevin Spelman, a research scientist at University of North Carolina, Greensboro, participated as a panelist. The

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panels covered topics such as whether or not regulatory guidelines are needed, current clinical trials of herbal remedies for human use, and federal perspectives as viewed by members from the FDA, NIH, USDA and NIST—organizations that all have input on developing regulatory guidelines and standards.

Herbal medicines, derived from plant materials, are a major component of traditional medicines, also known as complementary or alternative medicine. The World Health Organization estimates that the growing global market for herbal medicines currently exceeds \$60 billion. In the U.S., herbal preparations can only be marketed as food supplements, and are consequently not subjected to the standardization and quality controls that are often found in Europe.

For more information on the ACES Symposium, contact Liz Medcalf at 301-687-4161 or Gene Levinson at 443-250-9654.

For more information about Tai Sophia Institute, visit www.tai.edu.

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ABOUT TAI SOPHIA INSTITUTE

Tai Sophia Institute is the preeminent institution for wellness-based education, client care, and public policy discourse. Founded in 1975 as a small healing arts clinic, the Institute has evolved into a diverse resource providing graduate academic programs, continuing education, community wellness programs, and clinical services in acupuncture and herbal medicine. Its 12-acre main campus also houses a bookstore, library, herb and meditation gardens. Tai Sophia is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and offers three graduate degrees in Acupuncture, Herbal Medicine, and Applied Healing Arts. The Master of Acupuncture program was the first in the United States to be accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. The Institute's faculty, staff and students donate more than 15,000 community services hours to a variety of projects, and its practitioners provide more than 35,500 treatments and consultations yearly. The Institute empowers wellness leaders, business executives and communities to learn the art of caring for and serving one another.

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