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**SAINT THOMAS RESEARCH INSTITUTE EXPERIENCES UNPRECEDENTED
GROWTH IN 2007**

Unique Structure and Offerings Allow for Further Expansion

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – As one of the region’s premier research organizations, Saint Thomas Research Institute recently experienced its greatest season of growth since its inception in 2000. Founded on a rich history in cardiology, oncology and various surgical specialties, the Research Institute reported a 300 percent growth in 2007, measured by study volume, operating budget, and number of personnel.

In the past three months alone, multiple Research Institute studies were published in renowned medical journals, including the *New England Journal of Medicine* and the *Lancet*. Most notably, the Research Institute was the largest enroller for the Awakening and Breathing Controlled trial, which was published in the *Lancet*.

The Research Institute’s unique model allows the organization to utilize Saint Thomas Health Services’ four regional hospitals with an estimated 2,000 physicians and 1,600 patient beds. As a partner and system-wide resource, the organization allows studies to launch and enroll patients more quickly and physicians to concentrate on their patients more closely. Focused on ethical conduct of research, the Research Institute works effectively with sponsors, physicians and patients to achieve unmatched results.

“Since 2000, the Research Institute has advanced Saint Thomas Health Services’ mission to provide care that sustains and improves the health of the communities we serve,” said Kathy Taylor, Managing Director of Saint Thomas Research Institute. “Medical research has become increasingly competitive, and we’re proud of the Research Institute’s market-leading medical advancements as we move forward in our development plans.”

Most recently, the Research Institute capitalized on its innovative Cardiology series by offering ownership interests to its group of physicians associated with Saint Thomas Heart, which is recognized regionally and nationally for its cardiac care. In order to qualify for the joint venture, investors must be Board certified in cardiology. With plans to eventually expand the offering to other service lines, the joint venture is organized around a flexible series LLC structure that allows the physicians to invest specifically in their particular area of specialty.

“Part of the region’s leading cardiac care network, Saint Thomas Research Institute is the only organization in Middle Tennessee able to contribute so meaningfully to this important research,” said Dr. George Crossley, President of Midstate Cardiology, a division of Saint Thomas Heart.

“The Cardiology joint venture will allow the Research Institute to continue to be a national leader in Clinical Cardiac research and to attract the best cardiac physicians to this prominent organization.”

Cardiology has historically represented the majority of active studies at the Research Institute, comprising nearly 60 percent of the organization’s trials. Moving forward, the Research Institute plans to expand their efforts to additional service lines, including women’s health and orthopaedics, among others.

About Saint Thomas Research Institute

The Research Institute utilizes Saint Thomas Health Services’ four regional hospitals with an estimated 2,000 physicians and 1,600 patient beds. Focused on the discovery and application of new knowledge through the ethical conduct of research, the Institute works effectively with sponsors, physicians and patients to improve the health of the community. Acting as a partner and system-wide resource, the Research Institute launches studies and enrolls patients more quickly, allowing physicians to spend more time with their patients. For more information, contact Wesley Lauterbach, Director of Business Development, at 615-222-3077 or wlauterbach@stthomas.org.

About Saint Thomas Health Services

Saint Thomas Health Services is a faith-based ministry with more than 8,000 associates serving Middle Tennessee. Saint Thomas Health Services’ regional health system consists of four hospitals – Baptist and Saint Thomas in Nashville, Middle Tennessee Medical Center in Murfreesboro and Hickman Community Hospital in Centerville – and a comprehensive network of affiliated joint ventures in diagnostics, cardiac services and ambulatory surgery as well as medical practices, the Center for Spinal Surgery, clinics and rehabilitation facilities. STHS is a member of Ascension Health, a Catholic organization that is the largest not-for-profit health system in the United States. For more information, visit www.sths.com.

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