

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONNECT ANNOUNCES 2011 OTTERSON AWARD RECIPIENT**

*Gen-Probe's PROCLEIX® Blood Screening Assay Wins  
CONNECT's Otterson Award for Making a Major Worldwide Impact on Health*

SAN DIEGO – November 8, 2011 - CONNECT, one of the most successful regional programs linking inventors and entrepreneurs with the resources they need for the commercialization of innovative products, today announced that Gen-Probe's PROCLEIX® blood screening assay will be the recipient of this year's William W. Otterson Award. In memory of CONNECT's founder and first executive director, Bill Otterson, this award is one of the highest honors given to technologies and products developed in San Diego that have demonstrated a significant impact on society worldwide.

Approved in 2002, the PROCLEIX® HIV-1/HCV Assay was the first FDA-approved nucleic acid test for screening donated human blood. Since its release, Gen-Probe has added to the capabilities of PROCLEIX® to include not only HIV and Hepatitis C, but also Hepatitis B. Gen-Probe also has developed a separate test for West Nile Virus. These assays have significantly increased the safety of the world's supply of donated blood, reducing the risk of contracting these deadly viruses from a blood transfusion in the US to approximately one in two million. Due in large part to this revolutionary molecular assay, in 2004 Gen-Probe was awarded the National Medal of Technology, America's highest honor for technological innovation. The PROCLEIX® products are marketed worldwide by Gen-Probe's partner, Novartis.

In addition to the company's significant impact on donated blood screening, Gen-Probe is also a leader in molecular diagnostics assays and systems used for detecting infectious diseases and helping ensure transplant compatibility. The company was founded in San Diego in 1983 and employs more than 1,400 people worldwide.

"Gen-Probe's PROCLEIX® products have not only saved countless lives, but also transformed the public's perception of the safety of blood transfusions," said Duane Roth, CEO of CONNECT. "Gen-Probe is one of San Diego's top success stories. The achievements and benefits of PROCLEIX products have created hundreds of jobs locally, but the effect on blood screening banks is felt worldwide."

The Otterson Award will be presented on December 9 at the 24th annual CONNECT Most Innovative New Product (MIP) Awards Luncheon. Held at the Hilton La Jolla Torrey Pines in front of an audience of more than 800 of San Diego's top business leaders, the CONNECT MIP Awards continue the tradition of showcasing innovations developed in the San Diego region - one of the top innovation clusters in the world. In addition to the Otterson Award, CONNECT will recognize innovative new products developed in the last year in eight technology categories: Action and Sports, Aerospace and Security, Clean Technology, Communications and IT, Hardware and General Technology, Life Science - Diagnostics and Research Tools, Life Science - Medical Products and Software.

For more information on Gen-Probe's PROCLEIX® Assay, please visit <http://www.gen-probe.com/>

To learn more about CONNECT's MIP Awards, please visit <http://www.connect.org/programs/most-innovative-products-award/>

## CONNECT ANNOUNCES FINALISTS FOR 2011 MIP AWARDS

To learn more about CONNECT visit [www.connect.org](http://www.connect.org)

### **About CONNECT**

CONNECT has assisted in the formation and development of more than 3,000 companies in the San Diego region and is widely regarded as one of the world's most successful organizations linking inventors and entrepreneurs with the resources they need for commercialization of innovative products in high tech and life sciences. The program has been modeled in more than 50 regions around the world. Key to our success has been the unique "culture of collaboration" between research organizations, capital sources, professional service providers and the established industries. CONNECT has been recognized by *Time, Inc.* and *Entrepreneur* magazines and last year received the 2010 Innovation in Economic Development Award from the U.S. Department of Commerce for creation of Regional Innovation Clusters. CONNECT manages the San Diego Innovation Hub (iHub) designated by the state of California Governor's Office of Economic Development in 2010.

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