



**Tai Sophia
Institute**

For Immediate Release

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**TAI SOPHIA INSTITUTE NAMED
“HEALTH CARE HEROES” FINALIST
FOR ITS COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM**

In preparation for its annual “Health Care Heroes” awards, *The Daily Record* has nominated the Tai Sophia Institute as a finalist for the 2007 award in the Community Outreach category, based on the achievements of the Penn North Neighborhood Center, a part of the Institute’s not-for-profit Maryland Community Health Initiative.

In Baltimore City, there are an estimated 60,000 people who suffer from alcohol or substance abuse, with only approximately 8,000 slots for treatment. Tai Sophia’s Penn North Neighborhood Center formed a partnership with two other nonprofits in 2006 to create an integrated community wellness program. The innovative program makes acupuncture, outpatient counseling, and a variety of healing modalities available to assist individuals seeking to recover their lives by better understanding their relationships with addictive substances. Increased funding in 2006 allowed the Penn North Neighborhood Center to increase its operations from serving 1,200 people a year to more than 500 people per day – as many as 6,500 per month.

Services at the Center, including a Wellness Program and an Outpatient Treatment Program, are provided at no cost to program participants, and the Institute’s survey of participants indicates encouraging results in their abstinence from drugs (46% are drug free for over a year), interaction in the programs (59% attend daily), and noninvolvement in crime (68% have not been arrested or involved in any criminal activity for the past year). In July 2006, The Penn North Neighborhood Center began to receive Baltimore City funds, a result of the Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems’ increasing recognition of the role of recovery support as an important part of the addiction treatment system.

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Tai Sophia Institute's Community Health Initiative was developed in 1993 by faculty, students, and alumni to demonstrate the possibilities of a community-based program committed to redefining health and wellness. The Community Health Initiative is committed to redefining health through services that incorporate the values of on-demand access, community/friendship as healing, acupuncture, movement, and nutrition as effective tools and substitutes for substance abuse.

Tai Sophia Institute, based in Laurel, Maryland, was named 2006 Business of the Year by the Howard County Chamber of Commerce. Founded in 1975 as a small healing arts clinic, the Institute has grown to become a preeminent academic institution for wellness-based education with current enrollment topping 375 students. Its nearly 1,000 alumni actively practice acupuncture, herbal medicine and other healing arts around the country. It was the first school in the country to have an accredited acupuncture program and the first school in the country to offer a Master's degree in herbal medicine.

The Institute's faculty and staff donate more than 10,000 community service hours to a variety of projects and its health and wellness clinics provide 10,000 treatments a year. Faculty and staff also regularly speak to professional groups and area students on wellness-related topics.

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