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FORMER DUPONT CHEMIST SENTENCED TO 14 MONTHS IMPRISONMENT FOR STEALING DUPONT TRADE SECRETS

WILMINGTON, DE – David C. Weiss, United States Attorney for the District of Delaware, and Richard McFeely, Special Agent in Charge of the Baltimore Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Field Office, announced today that HONG MENG, age 44, was sentenced on Wednesday, October 20, 2010, to a term of imprisonment of 14 months for stealing trade secrets from E.I. duPont de Nemours Corporation (“DuPont”).

MENG was formerly employed by DuPont as a Senior Research Chemist. During his tenure at DuPont, MENG was involved in research in the field of Organic Light Emitting Diodes (“OLED”), and specifically the organic synthesis of molecules used in OLED technology. OLED technology represents the next generation of display and lighting applications, and over the past few years DuPont has spent several million dollars in research and development of OLED technology.

In Spring 2009, while still employed by DuPont and without informing the company, MENG accepted a position as a faculty member at Peking University, College of Engineering, Department of Nanotechnology (“PKU”), in Beijing, China. After MENG accepted employment with PKU, he hired an assistant and graduate student; received office space, lab space, and an email address; and was listed as a faculty member on the PKU website. MENG also gave a

presentation to a regional Chinese government soliciting funding to commercialize his OLED research at PKU, in which he set forth a five-year plan to develop an OLED factory employing 300 to 1,000 employees and to manufacture OLED television displays and lighting systems. In addition, MENG gave a presentation to students at Princeton University in an effort to recruit them to join him at PKU.

In July 2009, MENG obtained a recently-developed DuPont OLED chemical process that increased the performance and longevity of OLED devices. The particular chemical process he requested was the OLED process best suited for large-scale commercialization of OLED displays. On July 29, 2009, MENG informed DuPont that he was going to remain with the company and transfer to a position with DuPont China in Shanghai. Yet, one day later, MENG emailed a Microsoft Word document to his PKU email account which contained, embedded on the second page of an unrelated document, the protected chemical process. In addition, in August 2009, MENG downloaded the same Word document from his DuPont work computer to a thumb drive, which he subsequently uploaded to his personal computer. As part of his plea agreement, MENG admitted that he knew to a practical certainty that his conduct in misappropriating the chemical process would injure DuPont.

Furthermore, in August 2009, MENG mailed a package containing 109 "samples" of intermediate chemical compounds used in organic electronics to a colleague at Northwestern University and instructed his colleague to forward the materials to MENG's office at PKU. Eight of the 109 samples were trade secret chemical compounds whose structures had not been publicly disclosed by DuPont.

MENG also agreed to meet with the government on three occasions for interviews. During the course of the interviews, MENG misled the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) that

he had sent the sample compounds to his colleague at Northwestern with instructions for the compounds to be shipped to China, when he knew that such statement was false.

United States Attorney David C. Weiss said of the case: "The United States Attorney's Office is committed to taking all necessary steps to enforce intellectual property laws and to protect valuable American technology from being stolen for use overseas. Dr. Hong Meng used his relationship with DuPont to target a valuable trade secret, which he transferred to China in hopes of using it for his own benefit. He then lied about his conduct to DuPont and the FBI, repeatedly. The 14-month sentence imposed by the Court sends a powerful message that theft of intellectual property is a serious offense. We commend the Federal Bureau of Investigation for their efforts in working with the victim company, DuPont, to uncover Dr. Meng's criminal conduct."

"This conviction underscores the vigilance that U.S. companies must place on protecting their trade secrets," said Richard McFeely, Special Agent in Charge. "It is an absolute necessity in today's times that our nations' businesses adopt a proactive posture of maintaining active firewalls and other computer security measures, robust employee awareness briefings as to where the company is vulnerable and promptly report suspected unauthorized exfiltration of company information to the FBI. The FBI works quickly to counter any such threat but the more time that passes puts us at a disadvantage."

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Wilmington Resident Office. Assistant United States Attorney Robert F. Kravetz prosecuted the case for the United States Attorney's Office.

For further information, contact United States Attorney David C. Weiss or Assistant United States Attorney Robert F. Kravetz.

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