GIVING

Tom and Anne Smith of Columbia, Missouri, established the MU medical school’s MD-PhD program with a transformational gift. Additional support for MU’s MD-PhD program will help the university play a more significant role in the exciting evolution of medical research, training and patient care. MU envisions building a much stronger and larger MD-PhD program by providing scholarships that will pay for the medical education component of the program. While the PhD portion of education is generally covered by funding that supports research, the MD component costs most students approximately $25,000 a year in tuition alone.

Scholarships for MD-PhD students provide immediate benefits to medicine. Medical students are allowed to explore the potential of science during their years of highest creativity and interdisciplinary training. As MD-PhD graduates advance in their careers, scholarships they received as students allow them to have more years of productive research without the enormous burden of tuition debt from medical education. And when MD-PhD graduates complete training in their chosen clinical specialties, they typically return to academic medical centers like MU’s to lead translational research teams and train the next generation of physician-scientists.

To give to the Tom and Anne Smith MD-PhD Program, please contact the MU School of Medicine development office at 573-882-6100 or toll free at 1-866-260-4517.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

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BREAKING THE BOTTLENECK

Advances in medical research are transforming our understanding of human biology and the genetic and molecular basis of disease. Research is progressing so rapidly that medicine is experiencing what experts call a “scientific bottleneck.” Discoveries made by laboratory scientists are providing a wealth of new information, but most physicians have not been adequately trained in both science and medicine to apply the latest advances to benefit patients.

Academic medical centers at the University of Missouri and elsewhere are training a new generation of physician-scientists. These innovators will conduct, lead and train others in translational – or bench-to-bedside – research. They also will expertly treat patients by applying the latest scientific knowledge to the practice of medicine. Physician-scientists and their translational research are expected to put medicine on a new path for the foreseeable future.

APPLYING

Students pursuing this degree program must be admitted to and concurrently registered in the MU School of Medicine and the Graduate School. Applicants are encouraged to take part in undergraduate research in preparation for applying to the MD-PhD program.

ADMISSIONS CHECKLIST

- Complete required coursework. See medicine.missouri.edu/requirements
- Complete the MCAT at least by September of the application year. MU accepts scores up to three years old. The MCAT is required for AMCAS application. Students who have been admitted through an early admissions program are required to take the MCAT.
- Complete the AMCAS application: www.aamc.org/students/applying/amcas
- The application and all supporting documents must be filed with AMCAS by Nov. 1 of the application year. Check the MD-PhD box.
- If accepted, complete the School of Medicine scholarship application and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid by March 1. MU’s federal school code is 002516.
- For detailed medical school information, see: medicine.missouri.edu/admissions
- For detailed MD-PhD program application information, see: mdphd.missouri.edu/apply

PROGRAM DETAILS

The Tom and Anne Smith MD-PhD Program provides training in clinical specialties and subspecialties, as well as education in such areas as biochemistry, microbiology, immunology, pathobiology, pharmacology and physiology. MD-PhD students pursue a seven- to eight-year course of study that combines the traditional four years of medical school with the four years typically required to earn a PhD. While there is a recommended track for MD-PhD students, scheduling is flexible and based on students’ needs.

EXAMPLES OF PHYSICIAN-SCIENTIST LEADERS AT MU

Gregory Della Rocca, MD, PhD

Dr. Della Rocca is a clinician, educator and researcher at MU’s Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, which provides care for all types of musculoskeletal disorders. An MD-PhD graduate of Duke University, he collaborates with other physician-scientists and basic scientists on studies involving cartilage and bone metabolism and response to injury. Dr. Della Rocca helps lead the MD-PhD program and orthopaedic trauma division at the MU School of Medicine. He was one of five recipients from the United States and Canada to be awarded the American Orthopaedic Association’s North American Traveling Fellowship in 2009.

Jamal Ibdah, MD, PhD

A leader in translational research and teaching at MU, Dr. Ibdah is helping the university develop a campuswide research institute that aligns with the research and training priorities at the National Institutes of Health, as well as other public and private sources. He serves as director of the MU Institute for Clinical and Translational Research, as well as senior associate dean for research, director of gastroenterology and hepatology, and the Raymond E. and Vaona H. Peck Chair in Cancer Research. Dr. Ibdah has led seminal studies on the association between liver disease in pregnant women and pediatric fatty acid oxidation disorders.