The Sometimes “Unseen” Benefits of Research

Our overall reason for existence as a medical school is to maximize human health. Nowhere is this more apparent than in our research activities. We do research to improve the human condition for Kentuckians and beyond, and we are justifiably proud of these efforts. But there is a very clear and immediate economic benefit from the funding we attract to support our research.

Salary and benefits of more than 2,300 faculty, staff and learners are supported, whether in part or in full, by research dollars generated by College of Medicine faculty. From these research efforts, more than $56 million is paid to these individuals for the work they do. I am sure you will agree: This, too, is very real.

The correlation between research and economic development is irrefutable. The economy – local, state and national – directly benefits from the money we spend on supplies, equipment, construction and renovation. Furthermore, faculty, staff and learners spend their earned wages in the communities where we have a presence.

Trips to the grocery, repairs at the local auto shop, dinner at a neighborhood restaurant – all of these actions stimulate our economy. This supports the businesses that are already here and attracts new industry as well.

If you’ve heard it once, you’ve heard it a million times. Our mission is inextricably tied to three pillars – education, clinical service and research. Each pillar reinforces the other two, fashioning a combined triple threat. However, our impact is not limited to these areas. Other “by-products” – which include the impact we have on the economy – demonstrate our role and our responsibilities to Kentucky.

—Dean Jay Perman

In fiscal year 2007, every $1 million that the National Institutes of Health invested generated $2.21 million in new state business activity, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges.

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College of Medicine Faculty Receive 2009 Provost Outstanding Teaching Awards

Jennifer Brueckner, Ph.D., associate professor of Anatomy and Neurobiology and assistant dean for Student Affairs, was awarded the Provost’s Outstanding Teaching Award, and Michael Andrykowski, Ph.D., professor of Behavioral Science, and John H. Eichhorn, M.D., professor of Anesthesiology, received Provost’s Distinguished Service Professor Awards. Among four other recipients of these awards, Brueckner, Andrykowski and Eichhorn were recognized during a ceremony and reception hosted by Provost Kumble R. Subbaswamy on April 24. Each year these awards honor one tenured faculty member employed for at least 10 years at UK; one tenured faculty member employed at the university for fewer than 10 years; two non-tenured faculty members; and up to three teaching assistants. The award recognizes faculty and graduate teaching assistants who demonstrate special dedication and success in their teaching and to encourage awareness of the importance of excellence in teaching. For this honor award recipients receive cash prizes of $5,000 for tenured faculty, $3,500 for non-tenured faculty and $1,000 for teaching assistants.

Daugherty Receives National Honor

Alan Daugherty, Ph.D., D.Sc., professor of Internal Medicine and senior associate dean for Research, was recently named “Science Advocate of the Year” by the American Heart Association (AHA). Daugherty was presented this prestigious award during the association’s annual Congressional Lobby Day on April 21 in Washington, D.C.

The Science Advocate of the Year award is given to a medical professional who has served as a role model for other science advocates, recruited advocates and encouraged others to get involved.

The current Gill Foundation chair of preventive cardiology and director of the UK Cardiovascular Research Center, Daugherty is a strong advocate for increased funding for heart and stroke research and prevention programs. He was instrumental in establishing the annual Gill Heart Institute Cardiovascular Research Day a decade ago, which highlights cardiovascular research, including projects supported by the association. He also recently represented the AHA in a Campaign for Medical Research coalition meeting at the U.S. Senate.

The AHA is a national voluntary health agency with the mission of: “Building healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke.”

LeVine Receives Prestigious CART Award

Harry LeVine III, Ph.D., associate professor of Molecular and Cellular Biochemistry and the Sanders-Brown Center on Aging, and long-time collaborator Lary C. Walker, Ph.D., at Emory University, were recently awarded the prestigious Coins for Alzheimer’s Research Trust (CART) grant from the Rotary Clubs of Georgia, North and South Carolina in addition to a number of individual clubs throughout the United States.

The CART fund is intended to encourage exploratory and development of animal models of Alzheimer’s disease. This work aims to understand why Alzheimer’s disease is a uniquely human disease in order to guide therapeutically relevant improvements in animal models so that they will recapitulate the later stages of the disease that are so devastating for the patient and family.
Milbrandt Earns Pair of POSNA Honors

Todd A. Milbrandt, M.D., assistant professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, recently presented a paper at the Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America (POSNA) meeting in Boston. The paper titled, “Chondrogenic Growth Factor Releasing Scaffolds for Regeneration of Growth Plates,” was one of four papers nominated for best basic science presentation.

Milbrandt’s investigation uses novel polymers and growth factors to recreate a growth plate in bones. The work has been a collaborative effort between Milbrandt, David A. Puleo, Ph.D., from biomedical engineering, and J. Zach Hilt, Ph.D., in the department of chemical and materials engineering.

“The paper is an example of the power of collaboration between clinicians and scientists,” Milbrandt said. “This collaboration addresses a significant clinical problem with the tools found in the laboratory. I am very excited about the future implications of this project in the care of our patients.”

Milbrandt was also named to the national board of POSNA as he was selected to serve as the junior board member at-large. He has been heavily involved in this society, most recently as the director of its Web site.

“I am honored to serve on the national board for POSNA,” Milbrandt said. “The board serves to decide, both in the short term and and long term, the future of the society. I am thrilled to be asked to serve to help guide those decisions.”

College Grants and Contracts for April

Significant new grants during the month of April 2009 include:

— Gregory I. Frolenkov, Ph.D., assistant professor of Physiology, $280,181 from the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders for “Regulation of outer hair cell electromotility and noise-induced hearing loss.”

— Glenn Telling, Ph.D., professor of Microbiology, Immunology and Molecular Genetics, $49,594, from PrioNet Canada for “Endpoint Titration of CWD-Affected Elk Brain Samples in Tg (CerPrP) 1536 and Tg (CerPrP-E226) 5037 Mice.”

Faculty Committee Recruitment Ends in June

College of Medicine committees play an important role in developing policies and procedures and assuring the quality of the educational programs in the College. These committees are an excellent way for faculty members to participate in shaping the future of the College.

Each year, several College committees must be populated. Please review the following list of committees. If you are interested in participating on one of these committees, let your department chair or center director know by June 5.

- Admissions Committee
- Curriculum Committee
- Committee on Faculty Appointment, Appeals, Promotions and Tenure
- Financial Aid Committee
- Student Progress and Promotions Committee
- International Committee
- Postdoctoral Committee
Look Who’s Wearing Blue

Claire Sanger, D.O.
Assistant Professor
Surgery
Start Date: 11/1/08

Laura P. Stadler, M.D.
Assistant Professor
Pediatrics
Start Date: 11/1/08

Patrizio Capasso, M.D.
Professor
Radiology
Start Date: 12/1/08

Jai Luo, Ph.D.
Professor
Internal Medicine
Start Date: 12/1/08

Anthony J. Siegel, M.D.
Associate Professor
Psychiatry
Start Date: 12/1/08

Ramakrishna Venkatesh, MBBS
Associate Professor
Surgery
Start Date: 12/15/08

Samuel R. Franklin, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Anatomy and Neurobiology
Start Date: 1/1/09

Deborah J. Kozik, D.O.
Assistant Professor
Surgery
Start Date: 1/1/09

John A. Yozwiak, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Pediatrics
Start Date: 1/1/09

Gordon J. Crozier, D.O.
Assistant Professor
Obstetrics and Gynecology
Start Date: 1/5/09

Elizabeth Head, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Molecular and Biomedical Pharmacology
Start Date: 2/1/09

Philip A. Kern, M.D.
Professor
Internal Medicine
Start Date: 2/1/09

Yasuhiro Suzuki, Ph.D.
Professor
Microbiology, Immunology and Molecular Genetics
Start Date: 2/1/09

Resat Unal, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Internal Medicine
Start Date: 2/1/09

Suzanne T. Doolen, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Physiology
Start Date: 3/1/09

Kassi M. Marshall, M.D.
Assistant Professor
Family and Community Medicine
Start Date: 3/1/09

Kevin J. Pearson, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Graduate Center for Nutritional Sciences
Start Date: 3/1/09

Lesley Wong, M.D.
Associate Professor
Surgery
Start Date: 3/2/09

If you are a new faculty member and have not had your photograph taken, contact Holifield Photography at (859) 276-2040 to schedule a photo session.

For more information, contact Sara Freibert with UK Healthcare Marketing at (859) 257-5760 or smfre2@uky.edu.
Lattermann Selected for ISAKOS Fellowship

Christian Lattermann, M.D., assistant professor of Orthopaedic Surgery and Sports Medicine, was recently selected as a recipient of the Patellofemoral travelling fellowship of the International Society of Arthroscopy Knee Surgery and Orthopaedic Sports Medicine (ISAKOS).

This traveling fellowship was developed to promote better understanding and communication regarding patellofemoral pain and is awarded annually to an orthopaedic surgeon under the age of 50, interested in the study and advancement of understanding of the patellofemoral joint.

For this honor Lattermann will receive an award certificate, waiver of 2011 ISAKOS Congress Registration Fee and $5,000 in funding his fellowship travels.

Andrykowski Named 2009 Sturgill Award Recipient

Michael Andrykowski, Ph.D., professor of Behavioral Science, was recently named recipient of the 2009 William B. Sturgill Award. This award is presented annually to a graduate faculty member for outstanding contributions to graduate education at UK.

For this honor, Andrykowski was presented an award certificate, $2,000 and his name was added to a commemorative plaque that will be displayed in the central office of the University’s Graduate School.

New Grants

Greg A. Gerhardt, Ph.D., professor of Anatomy and Neurobiology, was recently awarded a five-year, $1,186,815, T32 grant from National Institute on Aging (NIA) for his research titled, “Cellular and Molecular Basis of the Aging Brain.”

The NIA is one of the 27 Institutes and Centers of the National Institutes of Health that lead a broad scientific effort to understand the nature of aging and to extend the healthy, active years of life.

Joe E. Springer, Ph.D., professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and vice chair for Research, was recently awarded a two-year, $245,000, grant from the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation for his research titled, “Targeting Mitochondrial Function in Traumatic Spinal Cord Injury.”

The Craig H. Neilsen Foundation is a private foundation that provides grants for basic and pre-clinical research aimed at developing a cure for spinal cord injury, and postdoctoral fellowships to support the next generation of scientists.

Reid Selected as ALDP Fellow

Michael Reid, Ph.D., professor and chair of Physiology, was recently selected as a Southeastern Conference Academic Consortium 2009-2010 Academic Leadership Development Program (ALDP) Fellow. As a fellow, Reid will participate in a year-long leadership program at UK.

The purpose of the ALDP is to prepare interested faculty for the challenges of an administrative position. The program is designed to develop the most promising individuals at Southeastern institutions to become future leaders in higher education.

Recent Publications

Jane E. Joseph, Ph.D., associate professor of Anatomy and Neurobiology, Tom H. Kelly, Ph.D., professor of Behavioral Science, and Yang Jiang, Ph.D., assistant professor of Behavioral Science, among others recently co-authored the article titled, “Thrill-Seekers’ Brains May Be Wired Differently: Region that affects addictive behavior is linked to risk-taking, too, study finds” that was published February 19, 2009 online at U.S. News & World Report.

Tandy Sutton Repass, M.D., class of 2009, recently authored the article titled, “Up on the Hill.” This article was published in the April 2009 edition of Family Medicine. To view the complete article, click here.

Repass also co-authored the article titled, “A Progressive Rash and Fatigue.” This article was published in the May 2009 edition of the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology.
Have a Question For the Dean?

Is there a question that you have always wanted to ask Dean Perman, but never had the opportunity? Periodically, the Dean’s Newsletter will begin featuring Q&A sessions with Dean Perman. While we may not be able to answer every inquiry, we would like to answer as many of your questions as possible. Don’t worry, names will not be included. Your questions will remain confidential.

Please send your questions to Julane.Hamon@uky.edu. Selected questions will be answered in upcoming issues of the Dean’s Newsletter.