Over the past year we have welcomed the awards of 90 new PhDs in the Biomedical Sciences in the Medical School. One piece of exciting news is that 15 of these newly minted PhDs are students who contribute to diversity.

The recruiting activities are now in their final stages. Given the financial pressures, we have reduced the incoming class size somewhat. The IGP will have 61 students; the CPB, 11 students; VISP, 9 students; and the MSTP, 9 students, though the admissions process is still in progress as decisions are made later in the medical student arena. The small reductions in class size have allowed us to be even more selective than usual.

As always, we are impressed by the number of our students and postdoctoral fellows who receive their own external funding awards. In FY 2011, our students and postdocs have been awarded several grants and fellowships totaling $4,349,264 in external funding (see page 2 for more details).

**Message from Roger Chalkley**

The HHMI/VUMC Certificate Program in Molecular Medicine (CPMM) is now accepting postdoctoral fellows in the program. The CPMM is a non-degree training program that until now has been available only to Ph.D. students in the Biomedical Sciences at Vanderbilt. In light of the demand we have seen from postdocs and with some help from the Vanderbilt Clinical and Translational Scientist Development Program we are now able to add 2 positions per year to postdoctoral fellows.

The CPMM allows for integration of basic science research work with important clinical, disease-based areas. A supervised experience, including didactic and experiential courses, seminars and individual experiences, under the guidance of a clinical mentor and basic science mentor, culminates in the conferral of the Certificate in Molecular Medicine. Detailed information about the CPMM is available at [https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/cpmm/about](https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/cpmm/about). Eligible postdocs must be a postdoctoral fellow or trainee in a VUMC department and must have completed no less than 6 months and no more than 24 months of postdoctoral training at Vanderbilt at the time of application to the CPMM. Applications will open on June 1, 2012 and the application submission deadline is July 15, 2012.
In the 2011 fiscal year (October 1, 2010—Sept. 31, 2011), exactly 100 individual awards were granted to Vanderbilt PhD students and postdoctoral fellows from external funding sources. All new and continuing awards to both students and postdocs totaled $4,349,264. A comprehensive list of all individual awards granted to students and postdocs in fiscal year 2011 can be found at [https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/bret/vumc-awards](https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/bret/vumc-awards).

Vanderbilt PhD students were granted 53 new and continuing awards (Figure 1), with the largest number of awards coming from NIH (F31, F30) and the American Heart Association (AHA). Additional awards were from the Department of Defense (DoD), the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America Foundation (PhRMA) and the Epilepsy Foundation. All new and continuing awards to PhD students totaled $1,429,829 in fiscal year 2011.

![Figure 1: A total of 53 individual awards were granted to Predoctoral students in FY 2011. The number of awards from each funding agency is noted in the pie chart.](image1)

In the 2011 fiscal year, Vanderbilt postdoctoral fellows were awarded 47 new and continuing individual grants and fellowships from external funding sources (Figure 2). The largest number of awards were granted from NIH (F32, K99, K25, R00), the American Heart Association (AHA), the American Cancer Society and the Department of Defense (DoD). The remaining grants and fellowships were awarded by the Epilepsy Foundation, The Heart Rhythm Society, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF), the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), and the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression (NARSAD). All new and continuing awards to postdocs totaled $2,919,435 in fiscal year 2011.

![Figure 2: A total of 47 individual awards were granted to Postdoctoral Fellows in FY 2011. The number of awards from each funding agency is noted in the pie chart.](image2)
While the average age of new NIH investigators was largely unchanged over the past ten years, the profile of the overall pool of investigators is changing. The NIH started asking PIs their ages in 1980, and the number of R01 PIs is shown below for 1980 (faded blue bars) and 2010 (dark blue bars). The number of AAMC medical school faculty is also shown in the thin red line (1980) and the thick red line (2010). Just under 65% of all awards are made to faculty at medical schools, providing a reasonably sized representative data set.

Combined, what the two data sets show is that over time there are fewer R01 investigators under the age of 40 and there are also more investigators over the age of 65. In 1994, mandatory retirement by age 70 was eliminated by Congress. Longer lifespans and a lack of a mandatory retirement age have likely contributed to the broadening of the curve shown in the Figure below.

Figure: Number of AAMC medical school faculty and number of NIH R01 grants in 1980 (faded blue bars and thin red line) or 2010 (dark blue bars and thick red line).

Save the Date: Annual BRET Office of Career Development Career Symposium

The Annual BRET Office of Career Development Career Symposium will be Monday, August 13 from 1:00-5:00 with follow-up Q&A from 9:00-10:30 on Tuesday, August 14. Drs. Randy Ribaudo and Larry Petcovic of Human Workflows will present their SciPhD workshop for Vanderbilt PhD students and postdoctoral fellows. SciPhD introduces workshop participants to 24 business competencies valued in industry and helps participants relate their PhD and postdoctoral training to industry competencies. The end goal is to help academic scientists navigate the transition from academia to industry. Even if you’re not specifically interested in an industry career, this workshop will offer valuable insights into the process of evaluating employer motivations and matching your experiences to their needs. More details to follow in the coming weeks but hold the time on your calendar now!

Upcoming Events for Spring –Summer 2012

- **May 9 & 10**: Interviews for Masters in Laboratory Investigation Program
- **May 11**: Vanderbilt Commencement
- **May 11**: Commencement reception for biomedical students (3rd floor Light Hall lounge)
- **May 14 (8am-5pm)**: Annual BRET Introduction to Responsible Conduct in Research
- **May 30**: Start of Summer Science Academy
- **August 13 & 14**: SAVE THE DATE Annual BRET career symposium
- **August 15**: IGP & CPBA Orientation
- **August 31**: White Lab Coat Ceremony, “So Simple a Beginning”