

May 18, 2017

Laura L. Dugan, MD
Abram C. Shmerling Chair in Geriatric Medicine
Division of Geriatric Medicine
Department of Medicine
529 Light Hall
Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Nashville, TN 37232

Dear Dr. Dugan:

On behalf of the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, I write to endorse this exciting initiative and pledge our institutional support for your new proposal, the **Vanderbilt Interdisciplinary Geroscience Research (VIGOR) Training Program**. This program is critical because it serves as a focal point for our continuing efforts to build a cohesive research community spanning departments across the entire campus and represents a singular opportunity to establish a training program in geriatric medicine, an area not currently represented among Vanderbilt's extensive T32 portfolio. Given the central importance of the VIGOR Training Program in our training mission, we can confirm on behalf of the institution the continuation of strong financial and programmatic support, as provided through the Office of Biomedical Research Education and Training (BRET).

Vanderbilt has made extraordinary progress with the recruitment of excellent faculty and students creating an excellent training environment for interdisciplinary research in geriatric medicine. The BRET office, headed by Roger Chalkley, is designed to facilitate and enhance the recruitment of high caliber trainees, as well as training in Responsible Conduct of Research and Career Development. As for all of our research fellows, your program trainees will continue to have full access to the administrative resources available through BRET and to all our other facilities, including libraries and core facilities. We have made significant and numerous strategic investments ~\$100M in core facilities over the past ten years and these facilities will be open to all Human Genetics trainees in support of their research efforts. Specific support for VIGOR ranges from the many aspects of student recruitment, to assistance with course development, scheduling and monitoring, to co-sponsoring external speakers, to providing administrative support for all training program activities.

Vanderbilt University pledges its support for VIGOR in two areas. The first consists of salary and fringe benefits for the Directors and Educational Coordinators who provide oversight and administrative support for postgraduate studies in participating departments, which include Biochemistry, Biomedical Informatics, Cancer Biology, Cell and Developmental Biology, Medicine, Molecular Physiology and Biophysics, and Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences.

The second consists of a resource to bridge and re-align federal research grant efforts. This resource is Vanderbilt's unbridled commitment to its faculty, staff, and trainees and an effective and responsible response to declining federal research grants and contracts over the last several years. This resource will continue to be available to all VIGOR faculty preceptors should they be faced with a lapse in research support between renewals of their R01 grants. Significantly, this resource will ensure that every VIGOR trainee will have the necessary resources to complete their graduate or postgraduate training.

In closing, I reiterate Vanderbilt's support for this new endeavor, the Vanderbilt Interdisciplinary Geroscience Research Training Program. I look forward to working with you to assure an outstanding environment that is conducive to developing a successful program. On behalf of Vanderbilt University and the School of Medicine, I thank you for your leadership and wish you the best for a successful application.

Sincerely,

Lawrence J. Marnett, PhD
Dean of Basic Sciences in the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine
Mary Geddes Stahlman Professor of Cancer Research
Professor of Biochemistry, Chemistry and Pharmacology