Building on a strong tradition
Building on a strong tradition

Today, new technologies and advancements in health care are leading to improved patient treatments and outcomes. At the same time, the business side of medicine is adapting to new reforms and the impact of rising health costs. And yet somewhere in this flux, doctors find ways to keep medicine personal, building patient relationships through trust, compassion and respect.

Over the past year, the UMKC School of Medicine has embraced change, while keeping connected to its past. We continue to update technologies and support research efforts that will improve the training our doctors receive and the patient care they will provide. Within our Biomedical and Health Informatics department, students and faculty are focused on the development and use of next-generation bioinformatics tools and software. At the same time, our docent system of teaching – which takes the best of apprenticeship learning and combines it with mentoring and peer coaching – continues to set us apart from other medical schools, while serving as a model of success that a number of schools are emulating. And we remain one of the few schools in the nation offering an accelerated, dual-degree program, producing highly prepared physicians ready to serve communities two years ahead of traditional medical schools.

At the UMKC School of Medicine, change is good, along with traditions that stand the test of time.

I invite you to join our efforts to advance the changing field of medicine and to prepare our next generation of physicians and health care professionals. And I especially want to recognize the many alumni, friends, foundations and organizations that provided generous support over this past year. You play a key role in our success and I thank you.

Steven L. Kanter, M.D.
Dean, UMKC School of Medicine
The enduring legacy of Marjorie Sirridge, M.D.

Founding docent, professor and namesake of the Sirridge Office of Medical Humanities and Bioethics

Marjorie Sirridge, M.D., founding docent and former dean at the School of Medicine, had a favorite Willa Cather quote that speaks directly to her legacy:

“What was any art but a mold to imprison for a moment the shining elusive element which is life itself?”

With the passing of “Dr. Marjorie” on July 30, 2014, the School of Medicine lost not only a founding docent, former dean, teaching physician, and beloved mentor, colleague and friend; it lost a champion of integrating humanities and medical curriculum.

Sirridge believed deeply in the importance of physicians having an understanding of and appreciation for literature, art and culture. With this background, they would become more compassionate, more thoughtful and more connected to patients. They would become better doctors.

When her personal life became altered by her husband’s illness, she saw first-hand how sickness affects bodily comfort, emotions and relationships. This experience further convinced Sirridge of the great need for humanism in all of life’s interactions. Together with her husband, William, also a physician and founding docent at the School of Medicine, they endowed the Sirridge Office of Medical Humanities and Bioethics in 1992. Today, the program continues to give students an opportunity to take classes that tie together the medical arts, bioethics and the humanities.

In addition to her dedication toward integrating the arts and the practice of medicine, Sirridge also loved her role as professor and docent. She said the time spent with colleagues and students on the “red unit” produced some of her best memories as a teacher.

No doubt Sirridge left an indelible mark on the School of Medicine, and she will be missed by many. But the legacy she leaves behind, along with the humanities program bearing her name, continues to inspire and shape many doctors in training.

What a remarkable gift in the art of medicine.
Class scholarships

Tradition and heritage of SOM graduates

It’s a long-standing tradition at the UMKC School of Medicine: Each graduating class establishes a scholarship fund to help current students manage medical education costs. This is an opportunity for UMKC graduates to honor their ties to the school. But some of these efforts have fallen short. Now, the SOM is providing a chance to fix the situation.

Class scholarships have provided support to Year-1 and Year-2 students. Today, there are 37 class scholarships – but only 11 are fully funded. For the remaining 26, investments of more than $400,000 are needed to provide proper “vesting” and the ability to give annual awards.

The dean’s office has made this a priority. Wanting to keep with tradition, while also recognizing the funds needed to adequately finance these scholarships, Dean Kanter approved the following recommendations from the National Board of Alumni and Partners:


• Each remaining class will have a 10-year funding window (from graduation date) to grow its scholarship to the fully vested level.

• In a nod to the upcoming 45th anniversary, the SOM will contribute up to $4,500 to all non-vested class funds that reach the $20,500 level by April 16, 2016. This will position these class scholarships at a fully vested $25,000.

• Funds representing classes 1977-2005 need to reach the $20,500 level by April 16, 2016; after that date, class funds remaining below this level will transfer to the school’s general scholarship fund.

• Class funds exceeding the $25,000 level will not be eligible for 45th anniversary contributions.

These changes will provide two key benefits: increase the SOM general scholarship fund and grow scholarships awarded each year.

The SOM greatly respects and appreciates financial contributions given by current and future alumni donors – as scholarship dollars truly make a difference for our students. This year, more than 48 students representing all year levels are receiving SOM donor-funded scholarships to help defray their education costs. Your support is vital in these efforts.

To learn more or to inquire about a specific class scholarship fund, contact Jay Wilson at wilsonjay@umkc.edu or 816-235-5565.
The calling to be a physician often starts at a young age. Danielle Cunningham, MS 4, recalls it starting around her third birthday. By age 10, she was already exploring her career options.

Growing up just outside of Kansas City in Grain Valley, Missouri, Cunningham learned about UMKC’s B.A./M.D. program early on – and knew it was the place for her.

“It was attractive in many ways – cutting two years off medical school, auto-acceptance out of high school, close to home, in-state tuition,” she said. “And it really allows you to connect with urban, rural and suburban patients. Here, you take care of all types of people representing so many socio-economic conditions. It’s been a great experience.”

And a challenging one. “Med school is always busy, and everyone told me it would be hard,” said Cunningham. “But I work as hard as I can. I think the rigor of the program surprises a lot of people, and it’s definitely faster-paced than high school. But I’m becoming a physician, so I knew it wouldn’t be easy!”

Cunningham is quick to note the help she’s received along the way, including guidance from her faculty and mentors, her tight-knit docent team and the resources available through student affairs. “UMKC offers so many support services. It’s important to go to class, read the textbooks, and bounce ideas off of classmates, but it’s very possible to do well here.”

She also appreciates the support from another important resource: student scholarships. She is the recipient of the Louis and Elizabeth Nave Flarsheim Scholarship, which recognizes students in good academic standing and exemplifying the highest standards of academic excellence.

“To me, this scholarship means someone believes in me outside of my small family,” said Cunningham with a grin. “Truly, this gift means a lot. It keeps me going when things are hard at school, and it takes some stress off my family and me, in that we don’t have to worry so much about money.”

According to Cunningham, the best part of being at the UMKC School of Medicine is that every day is better than the last. “And I’m becoming a doctor,” she said. “For as long as I can remember, that’s been my calling. Doctors can do a lot of good, and it’s important to me to make a lasting impact on my community.”
Honor Roll of Donors

The UMKC School of Medicine recognizes our Honor Roll of Donors, acknowledging gifts received between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015. These gifts are essential in advancing the quality of medical education and research conducted at the School.

$100,000+
- Children's Mercy Hospital Foundation
- Mr. James and Mrs. Annabel Nutter
- Mr. James B. Nutter & Company

$50,000 - $99,999
- Ralph R. Coffey Education Fund

$25,000 - $49,999
- Dr. Robert and Mrs. Carole Freilich
- Estate of Marjorie Sirridge
- Dr. Marjorie S. Sirridge

$10,000 - $24,999
- Dr. John Fredric Bealer
- Brisley Phillips Scholarship Loan Fund
- DePuy Synthes Mitek Sports Medicine
- John & Ruth Musselman Trust
- Dr. Ranga Rayudu
- Dr. and Mrs. Sarvotham and Sunita Reddy
- Dr. Gary and Mrs. Michelle Saltman
- Clara L. Shumway Charitable Trust

* = Includes matching amount  |  ** = Deceased
Mr. Darcey and Ms. Denise Schwindt
Dr. Hillary Hofmann Seematter
Dr. Kathleen G. Semmler
Drs. Stanley and Kathleen Shaffer
Dr. Eric and Mrs. Debbie Sieck
Dr. Bruce and Ms. Sham Silverberg
Ms. Elise R. Simon
Dr. Jami Skrade
Dr. David and Ms. Suzanne Smith
Dr. Michael G. Smock
Rose Sputnik Scholarship Fund

Dr. Teressa’s Academy
Dr. Mark and Mrs. Ginni Steele
Ms. Glennia Lee Stites
Ms. Dianne Swann
Dr. William and Mrs. Janice Taylor
Mr. James B. Tchobanoff
Dr. Lekeisha R. Terrell
Dr. Frank V. Thomas
Dr. Donald and Mrs. Miriam Thompson
Dr. Michele M. Thompson
Dr. Clifford and Mrs. Leslie Van Blarcom
Mr. Bryan and Mrs. Jennifer Wampler
Mr. R. Lawrence and Mrs. C. Joan Ward
Dr. Steven and Ms. Rochele Weilert
Dr. Steven B. Wilkinson
Mr. William V. Wolbach
Ms. Anna Wong
Dr. Karen Yates

Less than $100
Dr. Manal F. Abdelmalek
Dr. Nagla F. Abdelmalek
Dr. Eric S. Aghayan
Dr. Ellen and Mr. Michael Allegri
Ms. Martha E. Allen
Ms. Barbara J. Allmand
Dr. Charles Hubeny
Ms. Marlene L. Howe
Dr. Charles Hubeny
Mr. McKinley and Ms. Leslie Hudson
Ms. Kathy A. Hughes

Mr. Frank and Ms. George Ann Burriss
Ms. Carmen Campaneris
Mrs. Nancy Ann Cavannaugh
Dr. Tiffany Yin Chang
Ms. Georgia Clark
Dr. Mark W. Coburn
Dr. Steven Cohen
Ms. Amy L. Cole
Ms. Eileen Connell
Dr. Carol Ann Aylward Coolidge
Mr. Sebahar A. Daniel
Dr. Pamela Anne Darby-Mullins
Mr. Gerald and Ms. LaQuisha Davis
The Honorable Paula V. Davis and
Dr. John M. Davis
Dr. Christine M. Deeths
Ms. Sharon F. Derks
Ms. Anne Dobson
Ms. Mary Doherty
Mr. Mark Fowlkes and Ms. Vera Finney
Floyd Brown, Jr., and Company
Mrs. Jean K. Franciace
Dr. Thomas and Dr. Michelle Franey
Mr. William Frederick
Ms. Patricia Fry
Ms. Elizabeth Garcia
Mrs. Judith A. Garrett
Ms. Violetta B. Garrison
Mr. Jose and Ms. Mary George
Dr. Kenneth Goertz and Ms. Sallie Page-Goertz
Dr. Jennifer Golikamp
Ms. Rosalita Gonzalez
Dr. Michael and Mrs. Kristine Grue nebaum
Mr. Gopal and Ms. Smita Gupta
Dr. Fariz and Mrs. Arwa Habib
Ms. Fadu Habtemichael
Mr. Jay and Ms. E. M. Haden
Ms. Patricia J. Hamilton
Mr. Raymond and Mrs. Euna Marie Handy
Mr. Bruce and Ms. Lashun Harden
Mr. Richard and Dr. Betty LaRue Herndon**
Ms. Bonnie K. Hitchcock
Dr. Gilbert Jiy Ho
Ms. Marlene L. Howe
Dr. Charles Hubeny
Mr. McKinley and Ms. Leslie Hudson
Ms. Kathy A. Hughes
Ms. Prisca Humphrey
Ms. Judy A. Huntsucker
Mr. Herbert and Mrs. Angela Iles
Dr. Robert S. Ivy
Mr. Leon Jackson

Ms. Wanna Janwatanagool
Mr. Gerby Jean-Noel
Mr. Robert and Mrs. Betty Jenkins
Ms. Patricia Jorwall
Mr. Mark and Ms. Pamela Joewiakowski
Dr. James and Ms. Kelly Kaplan
Ms. Yejda Karimu
Dr. Samuel Kassar
Jean and Dennis Kasselman
Dr. Michael and Dr. Ayse Kilfoy
Ms. Julie A. Kipp
M. F. Kohn
Mr. Carl and Ms. Dorothy Kontak
Mr. Charles Kormaniak, Sr.
Dr. Amy M. Kramer-Zippay
Dr. Mary Frances Kulla
Ms. Joyce M. Lattimer
Mr. Drew Lecuru
Ms. Lucy A. Lee
Mr. Eric Thompson and Dr. Susan Lee
Mr. R. Perry Lewis
Mr. Vincent Lewis
Mr. Eugene Lipscomb
Ms. Lisa Lord
Ms. Jacquelyn Lunn
Ms. Keala D. Mahone
Dr. Angela D. Martin
Ms. Margaret E. Maslilions
Ms. Angelique Matthews
Ms. Mary K. McCamy
Dr. Molly McCormick-Urube
Dr. Patricia A. McGuire
Dr. Thomas and Mrs. Albertine McGurk
MQC Consulting LLC
Mr. William Michael Mealy
Mrs. Mary Ann Meeks
Mrs. H. Maxine Mefford
Mr. Ronald and Ms. Macy Miller
Ms. Blessing Modu
Dr. David and Mrs. M. Janell Moore
Ms. Marcia A. Nagel
Dr. Jessica Neuhart
New Life Baptist Church
Ms. Hien-Linda Nguyen
Nutrition Spectrum, LLC
Ms. Naokika Obiesie
Mr. Wilbert Odhss
Mr. Bernard and Mrs. Marion O’Neill
Mr. Anthony Ononye
Ms. Nneka D. Osade
Mr. Natvarbhai and Mrs. Yjotsananen Patel
Ms. Kirtida Patel

Dr. Neil N. Patel
Mr. Ernesto Perez
Ms. Luz Maria Perez
Ms. Ayesha Perry
Mr. Larry T. Pettus
Dr. Deepika Polineni
Dr. Roger A. Ray
The Record Publications, LLC
Ms. Linda L. Rockeman
Mr. Tim J. Ross
Ms. Beverly Scribner
Dr. Pamela Seator
Ms. Pam K. Shaw
Ms. Tori Sinclair
Dr. Stephen T. and Mrs. Linda R. Sirridge
Ms. Rita L. Skinner
Mr. Patrick and Ms. Cheryl Smock
Ms. Jill Sojourner
Mr. Jose Somoza
Ms. Cheryl Sorbel-Schneider
Ms. Lori M. Spight
Dr. Sherri M. Sphebe
Ms. Carissa L. Stanton
Ms. Barbara Kay Stripling
Ms. Margaret H. Sullivan
Drs. Kirit and Reetha Sutaria
Mr. Sam and Mrs. Cheryl Swartz*
Dr. Leyat Tal
Mr. Godlove and Mrs. Edna Tebe
Dr. Daniel T. Tillman, Jr.
Ms. Nhuha Tran
Ms. Tsehay Tesgy
Ms. Rania L. Turner
Dr. Warren and Ms. Shirley Turtle
Dr. Neena K. Kumar Uppal
Dr. Ranji and Ms. Nirmala Vaidyanathan
Ms. Jane M. Votruba
Mr. Robert and Mrs. Sandra Wahoff
Mr. Arthur F. Watson
Ms. Toni Watson
Dr. Timothy and Ms. Judy Weber
Mr. Donald B. Williams
Dr. Gerald and Mrs. Lela Williams
Drs. Frederick and Jennifer Wilson
Woodlawn Dental
Dr. Peter and Ms. Marlene Yeldell
Mr. Samuel F. Zickefoose
Dr. Peter and Ms. Marlene Yeldell
Ms. Julie A. Kipp
Mr. Samuel F. Zickefoose

Dr. Jessica Zweig

Mr. Samuel F. Zickefoose
Mr. Donald B. Williams
Dr. Gerald and Mrs. Lela Williams
Drs. Frederick and Jennifer Wilson
Woodlawn Dental
Dr. Peter and Ms. Marlene Yeldell
Mr. Samuel F. Zickefoose

Dr. Jessica Zweig

Mr. Samuel F. Zickefoose
Mr. Donald B. Williams
Dr. Gerald and Mrs. Lela Williams
Drs. Frederick and Jennifer Wilson
Woodlawn Dental
Dr. Peter and Ms. Marlene Yeldell
Mr. Samuel F. Zickefoose

Dr. Jessica Zweig