Atlanta Center for Translational Research on Endometriosis (ACTRE) Application Guidelines ~ Research Scholar Program-2013

MOREHOUSE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

EMORY UNIVERSITY

■ ■ ■ PROGRAM DESCRIPTION ■ ■ ■

Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) and Emory University (EU) have been awarded a unique partnership grant to promote workforce diversity and education in the reproductive sciences and women's health. We invite eligible sophomore students interested in doctoral careers in reproductive sciences to apply for a 2- year research development program with the Atlanta Center for Translational Research in Endometriosis (ACTRE pronounced "actor"). The goal of the ACTRE scholar program is to introduce under-represented minority students to translational human reproductive research that demonstrate how cellular and molecular biology bridge the way to clinical therapeutic treatments in reproductive medicine. During this 2-year program, scholars will receive training in translational research principles and reproductive science topics, laboratory techniques, create a professional development plan, and shadow clinical specialists in Gynecologic Surgery and Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility. Undergraduate scholars will conduct supervised translational research with a focus on a serious and common women's health issue, endometriosis. At the end of the second year, participants will take part in a formal research symposium. Approved posters and abstracts will be published through our program web site and scholars will have an opportunity to submit research findings for presentation at national meetings in reproductive sciences. ACTRE is sponsored by a grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

■ ■ ■ AWARDS ■ ■ ■

ACTRE Scholars will receive up to a $3,500 stipend in return for 1**0 weeks of summer participation**. During the summer sessions, a campus housing allowance may be provided as part of the award. On-campus housing allowances are not transferable to students to choose to live off-campus. An additional stipend of $1,200 per semester will be awarded to applicants committing **10 hours per week** of effort to ongoing laboratory and didactic instruction. Scholars selected for the ACTRE program are required to commit to 2 summers and 4 academic semesters to the program. In addition, participants are eligible for travel assistance should they be selected to present their research findings at professional meetings. **All applicants will be notified of their final status by March 29, 2013.**

■ STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES ■

- dedicate approximately 40 hours/week for 10 weeks each summer to their research project
- dedicate approximately 10 hours/week during the academic year to their research project
- participate in regular program seminars, workshops, discussion groups and activities as scheduled
- submit a research plan by the end of the first summer
- routinely consult the updated online program schedule
- present findings during the ACTRE research symposium
- create an individualized professional development plan
- complete program evaluations
- participate in laboratory meetings, journal clubs, safety training, and other such academic activities as requested by the mentor (s)
- update program organizers of future academic accomplishments for program assessment purposes

■ MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES ■

- communicate expectations to the student (work hours, how performance will be evaluated, share laboratory protocols)
- help define the student's project goals and deadlines
- meet with the student at least every week to provide feedback and guidance on the progress of the student's project
- designate additional contacts within the laboratory or department to assist the student if the mentor is temporarily unavailable
- offer guidance and constructive criticism while the student prepares his/her poster or talk for the end-of-program symposium
- attend the poster session

■ APPLICATION & DEADLINE ■

❒ completed application form
❒ course transcript (may be unofficial)
❒ Essay 1: in 500 words or less, explain why you are interested in the study of reproductive sciences with a particular focus on endometriosis and clinical/translational research
❒ Essay 2: in 500 words or less, explain your intended career path (MD or PhD). Why are you interested in doctoral preparation and how do you plan to prepare for these programs.
❒ 2 letters of support from faculty (one must be from a science mentor who can comment on your interest and qualifications for research)

All materials must be received by 5 pm, February 28, 2013. Late document submissions will NOT be accepted. Please send to:

Ms. Felicia Underwood
funderw@emory.edu
Department of Gyn/Ob
Emory University School of Medicine
1639 Pierce Drive, Suite 4217 WMB
Atlanta, GA 30322

http://www.msm.edu/ACTREhomepage.aspx

❒ **PRINTED APPLICATION FORM:** This form will be reviewed by the selection committee. Please provide all requested information and ensure the text is legible.
• We will **contact you** at whichever addresses you indicate. We will use the e-mail account for early notification purposes. Acceptance letters will be mailed when selections are made. To update your contact information, email (mailto:funderw@emory.edu). Please note that by "campus mailing address" we mean the address at which you receive US mail during the spring semester, and not your university's official street address.

Note that you cannot be paid twice for the same period of work, i.e., be paid by your own institution AND by the ACTRE program. However, your home institution may support your work in part or in full, so that your award is complete ($3,500 stipend + campus housing). If your home institution can partially or fully support your participation, note this in your application essay.

❒ **ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION:** ACTRE is funded by a grant from the National Institutes of Health, through the Cooperative Research Partnerships to Promote Workforce Diversity in the Reproductive Sciences (CPDR-U01) mechanism. Total funding available determines how many students we can place each year.

Undergraduate students eligible for CPDR Research Experiences must meet the three criteria listed below.

Criteria I. Undergraduate students selected to participate in reproductive science research training within the CPDR must include individuals from one of the groups outlined in **Section III** of the funding announcement (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-HD-09-008.html.
Briefly those groups include:

A. Individuals from racial and ethnic groups that have been shown by the National Science Foundation to be underrepresented in health-related sciences on a national basis including, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders;
B. Individuals with disabilities, who are defined as those with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
C. Individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who are defined as:
1. Individuals who come from a family with an annual income below established low-income thresholds.
2. Individuals who come from a social, cultural, or educational environment such as that found in certain rural or inner-city environments that have demonstrably and recently directly inhibited the individual from obtaining the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to develop and participate in a research career.

Criteria II. Undergraduate research training under the CPDR is limited to citizens or non-citizen nationals of the United States (US) or to individuals who have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States (i.e., in possession of an Alien Registration Receipt Card or other legal evidence of admission for permanent residence).
Criteria III. Undergraduate participants selected for research training must be enrolled as full-time students at accredited US academic institutions.

OTHER INFORMATION:
• ACTRE scholars are expected to attend all program activities, assigned weekly ethics group discussions, and laboratory meetings or journal clubs as determined by their research mentor. If you accept an ACTRE fellowship, you agree to work full-time during two summers (with research-related program and laboratory activities counting towards that "full time" status). Because of this full-time commitment, enrollment in summer classes is not permitted.

• At the present time, it is not possible for us to award research credit hours for ACTRE participation.

• **Successful applicants are offered campus housing (shared double-occupancy room) during the summer sessions when devoting full-time efforts to the ACTRE scholar program**. If you reside in the Atlanta area, you are still eligible for on-campus summer housing. ACTRE participants may choose to live off-campus in the summer, however, we cannot offer financial support for such housing arrangements. If you have alternative off-campus housing arrangements for the summer sessions, please indicate you will not require campus housing. If you are chosen to participate and accept to attend our program, you agree to abide the same student conduct guidelines that are applicable during the academic year. Violation of these guidelines will result in termination, and referral to other College units for follow-up as needed.

Please do not use "creative" spelling when completing the form (all caps, no caps, no punctuation, etc.), as this makes you look less professional.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS:

❒ **ESSAY 1: IN 500 WORDS OR LESS,** explain why you are interested in the study of reproductive sciences with a particular focus on endometriosis and clinical/translational research. How does a mentored research experience relate to your future career plans? What do you hope to accomplish, and what will you contribute to your host laboratory and to our program? These are some of the questions we would like to see addressed in your essays.

❒ **ESSAY 2: IN 500 WORDS OR LESS,** explain your intended career path (MD or PhD). Why are you interested in doctoral preparation? How do you plan to prepare for these programs? Try to demonstrate your knowledge of doctoral programs in this response.

Please allow 1 to 1.5 spaces between lines, 0.75" minimum margins all around, and a font size of 10 or larger. Your name should appear on each essay page. The essays should not exceed 500 words each.

❒ **COURSE TRANSCRIPT:** We use your course transcript to confirm that you have the necessary background to succeed in our program. The transcript need not be official. However, the transcript must include your name as part of the original printout, and must be generated by your institution (i.e., a typed course and grade listing that you create using a word processor will not be acceptable). You may submit a list of courses currently in progress if your transcript does not include such information.

❒ **LETTERS OF SUPPORT:** You should request 2 letters of support from faculty at your institution. One must be a science mentor, who can talk about your potential as a future scientist. We ask for TWO letters of recommendation only. The reviewers will only see two letters; additional letters will be discarded during the filing process. If you have multiple potential letter writers, please respect their time by only requesting letters from your most solid recommenders. Give your letter writers a copy of our program's description, and at least 2 weeks of advance notice. **Confirm with your letter writer that the letter has been mailed (electronic or US) around 5 working days** before the due date (if the letter has not been sent yet, this will serve as a reminder).

If you have any questions about your ACTRE application, please contact (Ms. Felicia Underwood) at (funderw@emory.edu). Additional program information is available at http://www.msm.edu/ACTREhomepage.aspx