2015-2016 FOCUS Medical Student Fellowship (MSF) Opportunities

Funded, Full-time, Faculty-Mentored, Medical Student Research Related to Women’s Health

Bertha Dagan Berman – FOCUS Medical Student Fellowship Award in Women’s Health (general women’s health)
Patricia Kind – FOCUS Medical Student Fellowship Award in Women’s Health (general women’s health)

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
Deadline: May 18, 2015

Who Can Apply: Any University of Pennsylvania medical students (male or female) who have completed their clinical clerkships are eligible and encouraged to apply! Applicants, however, must not have any additional funding simultaneous with the 6 months that they plan to dedicate to this Fellowship.

FOCUS on Health & Leadership for Women (FOCUS), a Perelman School of Medicine program based in Penn’s Center for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, invites applications from Penn medical students for the following:

Funded six-month* Penn faculty-mentored research experiences:
• Bertha Dagan Berman sponsored FOCUS Fellowship, an opportunity to do full time research in an area of general women’s health
• Patricia Kind sponsored FOCUS Fellowship, an opportunity to do full time research in an area of general women’s health

*The six months dedicated toward this research need not be continuous; however students must map out a clear plan in advance indicating the time blocks that will be devoted to the project and which must total a full six months. Note that students may do this six-month Fellowship as part of a full Year-Out.

The purpose of the FOCUS Fellowship is to enable medical students to learn “hands-on” research and collaborative skills, to gain knowledge of some aspect of women’s health, and to work on a publication or article generated from the research. We currently have support for four Fellowship awards and therefore encourage any interested students to apply now. Students may apply for consideration of either opportunity using the application requirements below. For your reference, a list of all prior fellowship recipients and their projects is accessible on the FOCUS website: www.med.upenn.edu/FOCUS/FellowshipRecipients.shtml.

The Bertha Dagan Berman-FOCUS Medical Student Fellowship Award in Women’s Health was established in 1997 through the generosity of Linda Lee Alter. This endowment makes it possible for at least 2 medical students each year to spend six months in a focused, mentored experience studying some aspect of general women’s health. Women’s health is defined very broadly. Prior Berman Award recipients have chosen to study such topics as: women’s psychosocial outcomes following pregnancies complicated by preeclampsia; family planning decision making in refugee women; the role of gender and voice-related quality of life in aging adults; ectopic pregnancy; teledermatology for women in urban primary care centers; determinants of bone mineral density; excisional biopsy versus core biopsy among breast cancer patients; risk of bone fractures in HIV/HCV coinfected women receiving combination antiretroviral therapy; racial disparities in breast cancer reconstruction; pregnancy and family-building in patients with multiple sclerosis; analysis of gender differences in substance abuse, improving access to preventive care, finding new ways of providing information about health to women in underserved communities; analysis of breast tissue markers in breast cancer research; and, dermatologic aspects of systemic lupus erythematosus, a disease which is more prevalent in women.

The Patricia Kind-FOCUS Medical Student Fellowship in Women’s Health has been offered through the generosity of Patricia Kind and provides another opportunity for mentored research in diverse areas of women’s health. Prior Patricia Kind-supported students have chosen to research areas such as: how mobile health technology can improve care and outcomes; the role of gender in re-presentation to the emergency department; the effects of cancer treatment on fertility; side effects of adjuvant hormonal therapy in breast cancer survivors; evaluation and diagnostic testing of bladder pain syndrome; risk factors and treatment programs for homeless young women; mental health services for low income pregnant and postpartum women; the controversy around the HPV vaccine; and views regarding emergency contraception among adolescent girls.
Specifics to Apply for the Fellowship

Eligibility: Any University of Pennsylvania medical students (male and female) who have completed their clinical clerkships are eligible and encouraged to apply. Applicants, however, must not have any additional funding simultaneous with the 6 months that they plan to dedicate to this Fellowship.

Funding: A monthly stipend of $1,250 will be provided to student recipients, totaling $7500 for the six-month fellowship term. These FOCUS funds may be applied to a 6 month period of a longer research experience whose remaining time is supported from other sources.

Mentorship: Identification of potential faculty mentors by interested students is required prior to application for this FOCUS fellowship opportunity. Mentors must be full time Penn faculty with solidly established and active research programs (please contact us with any questions about this). You may scroll through the list of prior fellows to get a sense of other project and mentor possibilities (www.med.upenn.edu/focus/FellowshipRecipients.shtml). Student applicants interested in projects or faculty mentors other than those listed on the website are welcome and encouraged to propose these alternatives. Strong preference will be given to those applicants who have a clear plan and enthusiasm for a project and mentor when they apply.

Credit & Requirements: This Fellowship opportunity has been designed to be a scholarly pursuit rather than a work-study experience. Medical students who complete the Fellowship will fulfill the Scholarly Pursuit requirement (3 credits). This experience will be graded on a pass/fail basis and will be recorded on the student transcript. Any student who is awarded as a FOCUS Fellow will work with their Penn faculty mentor to prepare a formal initial project proposal which must be reviewed and approved by the FOCUS Director of Research Programs. A progress report will be required midway in the fellowship period, and a final report will be due at the completion of the six-month experience. Students will be expected to convene at three Fellowship luncheon research meetings to discuss their projects with the FOCUS Directors and mentors and deliver a formal presentation of their respective research at the final meeting.

Time Line: Deadline for Applications is May 18, 2015. We will contact finalists starting May 19th to schedule interviews for the week of June 1st through June 5th. Winners will be announced by July 1st. The fellowship may begin as early as August 2015.

Application Requirements (Deadline: May 18, 2015)

Please send your application packet both by mail (no faxes, please) and also electronically (excluding transcript) and include all of the following information:

1. Your contact information (name, address, cell phone number, pager, email address, and preferred method of contact)
2. Your CV
3. An official copy of your transcript (must come directly from either Academic Programs or the Registrar)
4. A description (no longer than 700 words) that includes any past research or community experience related to women’s health and your reasons for applying for an intensive opportunity in women’s health at this point in your medical education
5. Your specific clinical/research interests (please indicate the faculty mentor whom you are considering)
6. Names (including contact information- email and phone) of two references

Please deliver a hard copy of your application by May 18, 2015 to the address below and follow it with an electronic version sent to pscott3@mail.med.upenn.edu:

Patricia Scott, Director of Operations
FOCUS on Health & Leadership for Women
Center for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Room 908, Blockley Hall, 19104-6021

Questions may be directed to Patricia Scott: pscott3@mail.med.upenn.edu or 215-898-3562.
Additional FOCUS Fellowship details at: www.med.upenn.edu/focus/StudentFellowships.shtml