BWANJI! Greetings

Background

The University of Missouri (MU) is home to over 32,400 students with 7,500 in graduate and professional programs and 1,900 faculty. Our students work side by side with some of the world’s best faculty to advance the arts and humanities, the sciences and the professions. MU’s School of Medicine is located in Columbia, Missouri. Columbia, midway between St. Louis and Kansas City, is a growing community with a population of more than 116,000. As an institution, the School of Medicine is committed to improving patient health and medical education in Missouri and beyond.

Zambia is a country located in Southern Africa, with four medical schools for a population of approximately 14 million. Two of the medical schools opened within the past five years: Lusaka Apex Medical University (LAMU) and Copperbelt University School of Medicine (CBU SOM). There is therefore a need for capacity-building and development of sustainable programs that promote medical education and research in these new medical schools. With this in mind, the University of Missouri has partnered with LAMU and CBU SOM to fulfill the unmet need of trained medical professionals in Zambia, with a research elective initiative for students from the two Zambian medical schools at MU.

Request

With the forgoing, we respectfully request a gift towards our goal of $25,000 to establish this International Research Elective.

Program

MU is committed to robust public service and works hard to fulfill its obligation to produce and disseminate knowledge that will improve the quality of life in the state, the nation and the world. The International Research Elective for the MU-Zambia Program will contribute to this mission.

In collaboration with the African Interdisciplinary Studies Hub and the Office of the Research Dean at the School of Medicine, we have established a summer research program for Zambian medical students. The program will recruit two outstanding students from CBU-SOM and LAMU. The accepted students will be chosen based upon academic achievement and leadership potential to promote scientific research and positively impact patient-care upon return to Zambia. The program will run for nine weeks during the summer months. While at MU, students will work on their own research projects, under the guidance of a MU School of Medicine faculty mentor and present their results at a poster forum at the end of the summer. Students selected for this program will live on-campus and will have meals provided. Lastly, students are also provided with funds to cover one hour of academic/research credit, travel to and from Columbia, as well as a stipend for personal expenses.
Your Gift’s Impact

While on campus, students will have many enriching opportunities. They will start with a mandatory orientation session that includes team-building activities. Each week, they will engage in discussions about articles relevant to their topics of research interest and engage in discussion with peers and faculty members. A presentation on writing abstracts and designing posters will be held in preparation for the poster forum. In addition to their research work, students will participate in a full series of workshops designed to provide them with information about research, career preparation and options, as well as scientific ethics. Additionally, students will attend presentations with various speakers. Speakers will be selected from MU faculty, members of the National Academy of Science, clinical oncology researchers, science teachers, directors of graduate programs, and other scientists. Lastly, students will have social activities to get to know each other and other members of the MU science community.

After students leave the internship, they will have the opportunity to maintain that collaboration with their research mentors. In addition, this partnership is an excellent opportunity for exchange of students in other programs and faculty between all three institutions to improve medical education, research, patient-care and institution diversity. Thus, this program will be the start of a long-term partnership with CBU-SOM, LAMU and MU.

Thank you – Zikomo!
We appreciate your consideration of this proposal. Your gift will positively contribute towards improving medical education for the Zambian students. Over the years, all the students who return to Zambia will have a resounding academic effect on their peers and the health of their fellow Zambians.

On behalf of students, faculty and friends of the University of Missouri, thank you!