Special Programs

KU Medical Alumni Academic Societies
As part of an effort to enhance student advising and mentoring and to develop professionalism in the students of the School of Medicine, the original seven academic societies were founded in the 1999-2000 academic year and named after past leaders of the School of Medicine. With campus expansion and the opening of the Salina campus in 2011, an eighth society, Lukert, was founded. Each society is headed by a faculty director, who also serves as an assistant dean for student affairs. Society members include School of Medicine faculty, KU Hospital physicians, and the School of Medicine students. The goals of the societies are to:

- enhance student-faculty interaction;
- enhance student interaction, particularly across classes;
- provide a structure for student advising;
- promote a sense of community for students and faculty; and
- encourage the development of professional attitudes and behaviors among students.

The KU Medical Alumni Academic Societies are a core component of the School of Medicine's Professionalism Initiative. The Societies allow for more individualized and small-group contact between students and faculty through encouraged, open discussions about professionalism in all academic settings. This atmosphere expands the formal curriculum for the teaching of Professionalism.

Societies sponsor periodic gatherings for students and faculty. These gatherings are both academic (e.g., invited speakers) and social (e.g., dinners). Faculty members serve as academic advisers for one to two students in each class. To the extent possible, students are matched with faculty based on interests. Faculty also may provide career advice for students and serve as resources for their advisees during their entire four years at the School of Medicine.

KUMC Women in Medicine and Science
The KUMC Women in Medicine and Science (WIMS) program in the Schools of Medicine, Nursing and Health Professions fosters equality in the academic community by promoting excellence through leadership, mentoring, and community involvement. The mission of the organization is to help faculty, trainees and students:

1. to be proactive and constructive in establishing and advancing the careers of women in medicine and science;
2. to educate women on relevant KU Policies and Procedures for career development and advancement;
3. to enhance and foster the professional development of all women faculty in the KUMC Schools of Medicine, Nursing and Health Professions through encouragement and mentoring, and to encourage growth, networking and quality within our KUMC community (local and national); and
4. to promote the process of developing long-term, mutually beneficial relationships and cultivating new opportunities for collaboration through a supportive exchange of ideas and resources.

For information on programming and how to get involved, please contact one of their key individuals listed on http://www.kumc.edu/wims/contact-us.html

For more information, visit the WIMS website at http://www.kumc.edu/wims.html.

Medical Education Network Sites
The Medical Education Network Sites are an integral part of the School of Medicine's mission to implement rural health initiatives throughout the state. Each of the five sites represents a region of Kansas. Each region has a Medical Education Director (MED), a practicing physician who also works for the school's Office of Rural Medical Education to promote rural workforce development. MEDs help coordinate rural learning opportunities throughout Kansas. Many agencies in the state have this mission in common: the Health Policy Institute, State Data Board, Department of Health and Environment, and KUMC Offices of Admissions, Rural Health Education and Services, and Area Health Education Centers. The MEDs may work with these institutions and occasionally work with other health profession schools at KU and other Regents institutions to promote rural learning opportunities. Specific MEDs activities include:

- Support of local medical center educational programs
- Coordination of local premedical student recruitment activities
- Summer Rural Research and Practice Elective Program
- Scholars in Rural Health
- Identification and development of new health profession education sites.

Rural Track/Options
The need for rural primary care physicians continues to be critical in the majority of Kansas counties. KU-School of Medicine recently had a rural track where students spent a significant part of the clinical education in a rural setting. The rural track was in Salina which has now become a branch campus. New ways to provide rural training opportunities for students are in development.

In lieu of spending an extended period of time in one rural site, students currently have the option of receiving some of their training in Family Medicine, Surgery, Pediatrics, and Obstetrics and Gynecology in a rural site. Students can exercise this option for one of the clerkships or all of them as space permits. Students can spend from 2-6 weeks on site depending on the clerkship. Some students have spent as much as 14 weeks in rural learning sites during their 3rd year.

Nicodemus Project
Despite remarkable advances in science and health care, health disparities persist in the United States. Health disparities exist in Kansas, too, and the disparate morbidity and mortality and leading causes of death and disease for ethnic minorities in Kansas reflect those of the nation. In Kansas, African-American adults, for example, are at higher risk of death and disease due to heart disease, cancer, cerebrovascular accidents, and other chronic conditions. African-American Kansans have issues related to less access to high-quality health care and information about health promotion and disease prevention compared to nonminority Kansans.

The Nicodemus Project is a multidisciplinary, health screening, promotion of wellness, disease prevention, service learning, and community outreach project in a culturally sensitive setting. The Nicodemus Project takes place in the rural and historic African-American town of the Nicodemus Project.

**Scholars in Rural Health**

The Scholars in Rural Health program identifies and encourages undergraduate students from rural Kansas to practice medicine in Kansas counties that are medically underserved. Using a rigorous admissions process, as many as 16 students are annually selected to participate in a two-year premedical curriculum featuring community-based primary care experiences and other activities. Selection criteria include completion of two years of undergraduate premedical education and evidence of high probability for return to a medically underserved area of Kansas. Students who successfully complete the program during their junior and senior years are assured admission to the School of Medicine. Additional information is available at [http://www.kumc.edu/school-of-medicine/education/premedical-programs/scholars-in-rural-health.html](http://www.kumc.edu/school-of-medicine/education/premedical-programs/scholars-in-rural-health.html)