

# University of Missouri-Kansas City Professor Named UNH's Hubbard Chair

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DURHAM, N.H. -- Kelley Thomas, associate professor of molecular biology and biochemistry at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, has been named Hubbard Chair in the Biological Sciences at the University of New Hampshire.

Thomas, who joins the university in January, will co-direct the new Hubbard Center for Genome Studies along with Thomas Kocher, UNH's Hortense Cavis Shepherd Professor of Zoology and Genetics.

Oliver J. Hubbard '21 from Walpole, along with brothers Austin I. Hubbard '25 and Leslie S. Hubbard '27, established the Hubbard Brothers Endowed Chair in the Biological Sciences in 1987. Its purpose is to provide faculty and research support for the professor chosen as chair and to advance education and research in the biological sciences focusing on the fields of biotechnology and biochemistry.

"Kelley Thomas is a great addition to UNH," says Andrew Rosenberg, dean of UNH's College of Life Sciences and Agriculture. "He has done fundamental work on the functional genomics of nematodes, an important model organism for studying gene function and evolution. With his teaching and research strengths, Kelley has the ability to work with many of the college's faculty and bring new tools, skills and insights to some of the great research already underway at UNH. He also will bring to our students cutting-edge theoretical, methodological and experimental perspectives."

Thomas' research interests are in the areas of genome

evolution, comparative genomics and environmental genomics. He will bring his laboratory and his NIH-grant funded research projects to UNH.

"I am honored to be named the Hubbard Chair and see this as a wonderful opportunity to expand my research in understanding how genomes work and change," says Thomas. "There's so little we know about the underlying process of how mutations -- the basis of evolutionary change, as well as disease -- happen. What makes organisms different? How do they develop? How do they respond to changes in the environment? These will be some of the exciting questions we will be investigating."

In addition to research and acting as co-director of the Hubbard Center for Genome Studies, Thomas will teach and help expand undergraduate research opportunities. He also says the center can play an important role in informing the public about the societal and bioethical issues of genome research.

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