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### UNH Receives NIH Grant to Advance Its Biomedical Research to the Bedside

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# NEWSROOM (//WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS)



## UNH Receives NIH Grant to Advance Its Biomedical Research to the Bedside

Monday, September 25, 2017

(HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/2017/09/25/UNH-RECEIVES-NIH-GRANT-TO-ADVANCE-ITS-BIOMEDICAL-RESEARCH-TO-THE-BEDSIDE)

DURHAM, N.H. – The University of New Hampshire has been awarded a five-year, \$10 million National Institutes of Health (NIH) Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) grant to accelerate the translation of its basic biomedical and bioengineering research into clinical and commercialization opportunities leading to improved diagnosis and treatment of diseases.

“We recognize that addressing the pressing health issues facing our nation will require us to ensure research is not taking place in silos,” said Jan Nisbet, senior vice provost for research. “Historically, a lot of the biomedical research at UNH was done by individuals with individual grants. This grant, a first for UNH, will allow us to establish this new cross-college Center of Integrated Biomedical and Bioengineering Research that brings our faculty and students together to advance clinical research, commercial opportunities and translational medicine.”

The grant will also allow UNH to purchase state-of-the-art instrumentation to enhance core biomedical research facilities and better support its early-career faculty through mentoring and career development. Initially it will fund five junior faculty members with the expectation that new junior faculty will join the center when these researchers receive independent NIH funding and “graduate.” In addition, the Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) funding is available for renewal over two additional five-year periods.

“This is the culmination of decades of work and a reflection of UNH’s commitment to interdisciplinary research and teaching,” said Rick Cote, chair of the department of molecular, cellular and biomedical sciences and principal investigator for the award. “The university has made strategic investments in its biomedical and bioengineering faculty as well as its infrastructure and this grant allows us to increase the capacity of researchers to develop clinically relevant tools and treatments.”

W. Kelley Thomas, Hubbard Professor of Genomics and a member of the COBRE leadership team, noted that the faculty mentoring plan will help basic biomedical researchers discover the clinical relevance of their work. “It is important for all of us to see the research move outside the isolation of a lab and right to the bedside.”

For example, Jeffrey Halpern, assistant professor of chemical engineering, will continue his research into diagnostic sensors that could be used in a doctor’s office to immediately adjust medications. Kyung Jae Jeong, assistant professor chemical engineering, will conduct tissue engineering research that could one day lead to bone regeneration; and Xuanmao Chen, assistant professor of neurobiology, will explore how defects at the cellular level could contribute to depression, obesity and brain aging.

UNH joins Dartmouth in having NIH-sponsored COBREs. The UNH COBRE will unify biomedical and bioengineering faculty from many departments in the College of Liberal Arts, the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture, the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences and the College of Health and Human Services.

The University of New Hampshire is a flagship research university that inspires innovation and transforms lives in our state, nation and world. More than 16,000 students from all 50 states and 71 countries engage with an award-winning faculty in top ranked programs in business, engineering, law, health and human services, liberal arts and the sciences across more than 200 programs of study. UNH’s research portfolio includes partnerships with NASA, NOAA, NSF and NIH, receiving more than \$100 million in competitive external funding every year to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea and space.

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