



Fellowships and Awards

Open Doors for Graduate Students

The Department of Biochemistry guarantees each of our graduate students a stipend and tuition during the years of their Ph.D. We also strive to reward their hard work and dedication. These kinds of support would not be possible without generous gifts from alumni, faculty, and friends of the department used for fellowships and awards. Each year, these fellowships and awards help fill in the gaps left by faculty members' precious grants, which are becoming increasingly more competitive. Fellowships fund a student's tuition and stipend for an academic year and awards are one-time dollar amounts. Both have the potential to make a lasting impact. Read on to learn about some of our current fellowships and awards.

Dr. James Chieh-Hsia Mao Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellowship

This fellowship was established with a generous gift from Dr. James Chieh-Hsia Mao, who obtained a Ph.D. in Biochemistry from the department in 1964. He worked for Abbott Laboratories studying antibiotics for more than a decade. This fellowship is used to support deserving graduate students. Mao gives because he believes science has the ability to improve people's lives. "I think I'm very lucky," he has said. "As far as I have enough money, why don't I give some to help people?"

"I am investigating two membrane proteins that are essential for cell division in *E. coli*. Detailed studies of these proteins will provide a better understanding of cell division. Also, I was excited because it meant we could afford to purchase some equipment that I had been wanting for the lab."



Samuel Craven
2017 Winner

Denton Award for Graduate Student Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring



Kristin Dittenhafer-Reed
2014 Winner

The Denton Award recognized my efforts in teaching and mentoring at UW-Madison, and that made me extremely proud. My interest in combining both classroom teaching and undergraduate research mentoring first started while at UW-Madison. The recognition of this award was also very valuable in securing my current academic position at Hope College.

This award is supported by Arnold E. and Catherine M. Denton. Arnold received a Ph.D. in Biochemistry from the department in 1953. Four decades of his career were spent in science and research at Campbell Soup Co. He passed away in 2016. This award honors biochemistry graduate students who consistently provide quality guidance and scientific training in mentoring undergraduate students in their research efforts and show evidence of quality, commitment, and innovation in teaching.



Sigrid Leirmo Memorial Award in Biochemistry

Frank Johnson established this award to honor his late wife Sigrid Leirmo. She earned a Ph.D. in biochemistry from the department in 1989. She was known among her peers as not only a promising researcher but also a kind friend and mentor. The award is designated in appreciation of a student's consistent willingness to contribute to the intellectual and technical potential of his or her fellow students and colleagues.

“Earning the award was a huge honor, both to be recognized for my hard work and for representing Sigrid’s legacy. The award is something that set me apart when applying for postdoctoral positions. Making it as a graduate student is tough. The financial aspect was also certainly helpful as the stipend for graduate students is generally just enough to live on.”



Kelly Manthei
2012 Winner

E.W. Hopkins Department of Biochemistry Graduate Fellowship



Hugo Medina
2017 Winner

“I am interested in identifying localized RNA populations, their mechanisms of localization, and how the localized RNA populations change in response to an altered cellular environment (i.e. stress). The funding provided by the award has allowed me to continue to focus on my studies, and receiving the award reassures me that my work is moving in the right direction.”

In order to support graduate students in the biochemical sciences, Ervin W. and Carrie S. Hopkins established this fund. It is awarded to deserving graduate students in the department. These awards are vital to the success of a generation of exceptional scientists and the department and students are grateful for this support.



Looking to the Future

Our ability to recruit and support the best and brightest students relies on generous gifts to the department. Whether it’s a general gift to support graduate students, a gift to an established fund, or a new named fund, fellowships allow our graduate students to receive the support they need to further their careers and the field of biochemistry. They keep us moving forward.