June 22, 2007

RE: The Howard Holderness Distinguished Medical Scholars Program

Dear Third Year Medical Student:

The Howard Holderness Distinguished Medical Scholars Program is now accepting applications for the 2008-2009 academic year. To apply, please send a copy of your transcript, a resume, and a one-half to one page discussion of the reasons why you feel that you would benefit from this program, and a listing of the possible areas of independent study that you might wish to pursue. It is not essential that you have a definite plan or project already planned. In fact, the scholar's committee would prefer that until application is made, you do not make direct contact with faculty members to serve as potential mentors. Applications should be submitted to my office no later than January 18, 2008.

If you have questions concerning the program or procedures for application, please call me at (919) 966-1456.

Very truly yours,

John S. Kizer, M.D.
Chairman, Howard Holderness Distinguished Medical Scholars Committee
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THE HOWARD H. HOLDerness DISTINGUISHED MEDICAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Purpose:
To provide an academic challenge and training in independent analytical thought to promising medical students.

Philosophy:
The goal of the program is not solely to encourage more physicians to consider research as a career, although this is a very desirable end result, but rather to produce more students who are capable of in-depth, critical, and searching independent thought, no matter whether they go into research, private practice, or other areas related to medicine. It is our belief that students trained to practice and enjoy the rigors of scholarly thinking will serve as a resource to others and raise the quality of the efforts of those around them. From this philosophy derives our view that the independent project chosen by the student may be bench research or any other plan of study approved by the committee. It is also in support of this philosophy that equal status will be given to the student seminar series. To be included in this series is a wide range of topics that are controversial, of social or economic import, or in need of ethical consideration.

The Program:
In the fall of a student’s third year of medical school, applications will be accepted for the Howard Holderness Distinguished Medical Scholars Program. Under this program students will be offered an extra year of medical school, to begin immediately after the third year. The fourth year will consist of an independent, scholarly pursuit under the close supervision of a carefully selected mentor. This scholarly endeavor may consist of laboratory, epidemiologic or other research, or a full time academic program approved by the Holderness Distinguished Scholars Committee. Participants in the program will receive a $20,000 scholarship during the first year of the program. In addition, participants will receive a $3,000 scholarship during the second year of the program.

In addition to the individual project, there will be biweekly seminars devoted to topics not usually covered in depth in the established medical curriculum. These seminars will require rigorous student preparation and participation. Topics such as clinical decision analysis, clinical pharmacology, ethics, epidemiology, public health, statistics, government, and medicine, etc. will be included. Students may also present seminar topics of their own choosing.

The fifth year curriculum of the program will remain essentially the same as the current fourth year, with the additional requirement that the Howard Holderness Distinguished Medical Scholars will attend and participate in the seminar series (students taking rotations at outside hospitals will be excused although every effort will be made to accommodate students in clinical rotations close to Chapel Hill).

During the student’s tenure as a HH-DMS, he/she will also serve as editor of the student research journal, FAX.

Qualifications:
During the summer/fall of the academic year, applications from members of the third-year class of the student body will be solicited. Based on a review of the students' records and interviews with the Holderness Distinguished Scholar Committee, five students with the highest academic potential will be chosen along with several alternates. If any decline the invitation to participate, the alternate(s) will be approached. Upon acceptance and for the duration of his/her fourth and fifth medical school years, a student will be recognized as a "Howard H. Holderness Distinguished Medical Scholar" of the University of North Carolina. Continuation in the program depends on sustained academic excellence. Students participating in the program may not enroll in any other degree granting program.