University of Manitoba

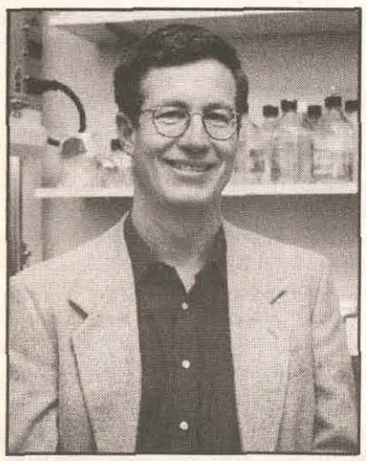
Research News

Researchers to develop national training programs

By Roberta Koscielny
Research Promotion Officer

The University of Manitoba will soon be home to three new national training programs in the area of asthma, cancer (in partnership with CancerCare Manitoba) and infectious disease research.

With the creation of these new programs, which were funded through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the University of Manitoba will become a destination of choice for people wanting to pursue a scientific career in these three fields.



Kent HayGlass: Asthma program

"As a nationally recognized training program, the university will attract the best and the brightest," said Joanne Keselman, vice-president (research) at the university. "Our researchers have worked hard to build their research programs and develop dynamic teaching elements, and to have their achievements recognized by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research further strengthens our leadership role in these three areas."

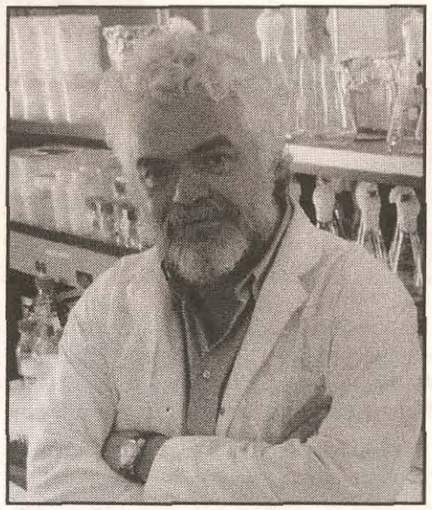
One of CIHR's core objectives is to provide leadership in building capacity within Canada's health research community through training and development of researchers, and fostering development and support of scientific careers. CIHR approved 51 of 127 full applications across the country. Each award is worth $1.8 million over the next six years.

Asthma is the most common chronic disease of childhood. It is the most frequent immunologic disorder in the population as a whole. As a result, there is a need for more broadly trained researchers to address hyper-sensitivity diseases.

Canada Research Chair holder Kent HayGlass, immunology, will head the Allergy and Asthma: From molecular regulation to population health program. This program will support a seven-member team trained in areas ranging from pediatrics to physiology. Its focus is the creation of an outstanding transdisciplinary training program in the causes and management of human allergic disease.

In spite of tremendous advances, infectious diseases remain the second leading cause of death worldwide and, because of HIV and the emergence and re-emergence of antibiotic resistant infections, mortality from infectious diseases is increasing.

Canada Research Chair holder Frank Plummer, medical microbiology and scientific director general of the Health Canada National Microbiology Laboratory, will head the International Centre for Infectious Diseases Training Program.



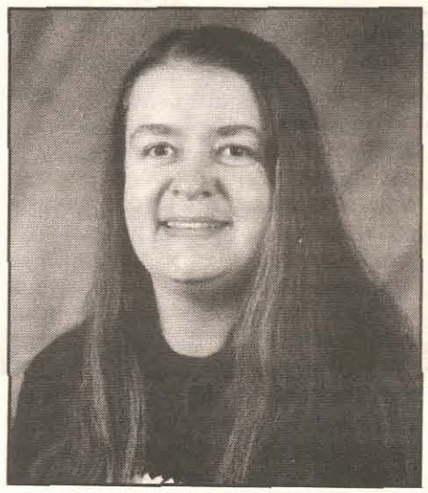
Frank Plummer: Infectious Disease program

Infectious disease researchers at the University of Manitoba have a long and distinguished history of excellence in infectious diseases research in Canada and the world, particularly in Africa and India. In addition to funding from the CIHR, the program will be supported by contributions from the Province of Manitoba, Health Canada and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. This program will establish an infectious disease research organization, unique in Canada, with a national and international mandate and reach. Trainees will encounter the entire range of research approaches to the problem of infectious diseases.

"...the university will attract the best and the brightest."

Currently there are no formal integrated training programs in advanced molecular imaging and analysis, and applied genomics in Canada. Expertise such as this is badly needed in Canada to promote innovative and competitive basic and clinical research programs.

Sabine Mai, biochemistry & medical genetics/physiology/Manitoba Institute of Cell Biology, a joint institute between the university and CancerCare Manitoba, will head the Innovative Technologies in Multidisciplinary Health Research Training. Trainees involved with this program will be able to work in many different fields including cancer, genetics, and neurodegenerative disease. The program also involves the Ontario Cancer Institute, the National Institutes of Health, and organizations in Germany, France and Sweden.



Sabine Mai: Cancer program

CIHR is Canada's premier agency for health research. Its objective is to excel, according to internationally accepted standards of scientific excellence, in the creation of new knowledge and its translation into improved health for Canadians, more effective health services and products and a strengthened health care system.