The Oxford-Sir David Weatherall Graduate Scholarship

The MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine (WIMM) and Green Templeton College (GTC) at the University of Oxford are working together to establish a permanent, international scholarship in medical sciences in honour of Professor Sir David Weatherall. Sir David (an Honorary Fellow of GTC) founded the WIMM in 1989 and was the Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford from 1992 to 2000.

Professor Sir David Weatherall

Over the past 40 years, Sir David has been a pioneer in developing the discipline of molecular medicine and his international success in this area of research has been acknowledged by numerous awards and distinctions. He is a prominent Fellow of the Royal Society (1977) and an overseas member of the National Academy of Sciences (1990). Recently, he was presented with one of the most prestigious international prizes in medicine (the Lasker-Koshland Special Achievement Award in Medical Science) for his lifetime contribution to world health and, in particular, for his unique contribution to improving the management of common inherited anaemias throughout the world.

Sir David has tirelessly and selflessly supported many of the key institutes underpinning medical research in the UK. In addition, those who have worked closely with him know that he has inspired hundreds of young physicians and scientists to apply molecular medicine to common diseases.

Sir David’s long established philosophy continues in the WIMM today where the main areas of interest focus on human genetic disorders, diseases of the blood and diseases associated with infection and immunity.
Normally, the investment needed to endow a permanent, graduate scholarship would be beyond the means of the WIMM and GTC. However, a unique, but time-limited, opportunity has arisen to apply for matched funds from the University under a recently announced scheme: the Oxford Graduate Scholarship Matched Fund. The Fund has been set up to encourage new donations to endow graduate scholarships by increasing the impact of donations with the addition of University funding.

If, together, we can raise £627,000 we will be able to apply for £418,000 in matched funds. If successful, this will allow us to honour Sir David with a permanent, named scholarship, and build a lasting legacy for generations to come. We have already raised a substantial amount and are shy of our goal by £100,000. We welcome gifts of any size and pledges over five years.

The WIMM has recently established a comprehensive, fully integrated student programme, which is open to young scientists from all corners of the world and aims to attract the very best young graduates. These students train in one of the world’s leading molecular medicine institutes (WIMM) and are hosted within Oxford’s premier college for the development of education in medicine (GTC). It seems most appropriate that a prestigious scholarship in honour of Sir David is established as the highlight of this new venture.

Talented graduate students are essential to the work of the WIMM. They help drive its world-class research and then take the unique combination of knowledge, leadership skills and intellectual confidence they gain there and apply it to the needs of their own communities and nations. However, international competition for the best graduate students is fierce. Many leading universities abroad provide full funding for all PhD students. Students at Oxford do not enjoy this security and many of those offered places decline their offer due to lack of funding. Fortunately, the WIMM has raised sufficient funds to initiate the Oxford-Sir David Weatherall Graduate Scholarship and support the first student for four years, starting in October 2013. Now it is the firm wish of the University to establish the Scholarship in perpetuity.

“Without the financial support provided by a scholarship, access to a place like Oxford would have been impossible. I believe it is through such support that young people like me can change themselves and proceed to change their world.”

Nelson Oppong, GTC

For further information

If you are interested in contributing to this initiative, please contact:

The Development Office, GTC
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If you are a UK taxpayer, Gift Aid will enable the value of your gift to be increased by 25% at no extra cost to yourself. In addition, if you are a higher rate taxpayer, you can reclaim further tax relief by making a personal claim on your self-assessment tax form. Donations from the US can be directed through Americans for Oxford Inc, a tax-exempt public charity to which tax-deductible contributions may be made.