

## INTEGRATION AMONG SCHOOLS AND ACROSS RUTGERS

### *Reorganizing and Strengthening PhD Programs in Biomedical Sciences*

The integration of RBHS and Rutgers provides an opportunity to create an integrated infrastructure that will support the education and training of biomedical/health sciences research teams of the future, break down traditional silos, and enhance opportunities for inter-disciplinary and translational research training. To accomplish this goal, RBHS and Rutgers-New Brunswick biomedical science graduate educational leaders are developing a plan to consolidate RBHS and Graduate School-New Brunswick doctoral programs in the biomedical sciences. These programs would be housed in an expanded RBHS Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS). GSBS would, in turn, be one component of a proposed new and encompassing organization, tentatively identified as the division of graduate studies, which would oversee all graduate education programs on the Rutgers-New Brunswick campus.

The coordination of biomedical science programs across RBHS and Rutgers-New Brunswick will enable GSBS to play a leading national role in the development of new curriculum and broader opportunities for the biomedical scientists of the future, preparing students for careers in academics, industry, government, and the private sector. The consolidation of programs will also encourage and facilitate research collaborations among biomedical scientists within RBHS and across Rutgers-New Brunswick. Further, the consolidation will raise the visibility of biomedical science graduate education at Rutgers and attract top students from premier colleges across the country and the world.

Discussions also are underway to develop initiatives to strengthen the PhD programs in biomedical sciences. Emphasis will be placed on the recruitment of fewer and stronger students. Efforts also will be undertaken to attract the best international students. The GSBS assistant dean of global initiatives (newly created position) will work with GSBS leadership and faculty to identify and secure partnering opportunities with leading universities, particularly in Asia and South America. Memoranda of understanding are being developed with leading institutions in India, Indonesia, and Korea to explore the development of exchange programs for biomedical science students and faculty, identify opportunities for dual degree and cotutelle programs (two mentors from two different universities mentoring a single student), and recruit top students from leading universities.

In addition, it is expected that the development of strong collaborative research teams, which will result from the strengthening and integration of biomedical science training programs, as above, will put Rutgers in a stronger position to compete for pre- and postdoctoral training grants. In anticipation of this development, GSBS is mounting a new initiative that will both incentivize and support new training grants within the biomedical sciences. GSBS plans include the development and maintenance of centralized databases of faculty mentors and their training activities, provision of salary support for training grant principal investigators, and provision of over-the-cap supplements to cover trainees' tuition and fees. New training grants will increase institutional stature, provide funding for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows at a critical time, support the research needs of our current faculty, and provide additional incentives for faculty, student, and postdoctoral recruitment. In the future, all full-time PhD students will receive 100% support for stipend and tuition.