

Baird Foundation contributes to research in women's health, cardiovascular diseases and digestive diseases

Continuing its generous history of giving, Baird Foundation is providing new support to a combination of important research programs at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Of the Foundation's \$100,000 gift, \$75,000 will benefit the Women's Health Research Program, including the cardiovascular research of a College investigator, and \$25,000 will help support the Digestive Disease Center's signature event – the Healthcare Dinner.

“This multi-faceted gift from Baird Foundation will help the Medical College confront health issues that have a significant presence in and beyond the Milwaukee community,” said John R. Raymond, Sr., MD, College President and CEO. “Women's health, heart health and digestive diseases are areas of faculty strength that are fortified by this philanthropic support.”

The Women's Health Research Program was established to address physical, behavioral and environmental health concerns of women and girls. The program seeks to improve outcomes by conducting research and incorporating findings into the clinical toolbox of women's health care providers. The program is directed by Janet S. Rader, MD, Chairman and the Jack A. and Elaine D. Klieger Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

The program's aims include improving women's health through population health research and public health intervention. For example, the College is partnering with local Federally Qualified Health Centers to find solutions to health problems affecting women

in underserved populations such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension and stroke. Through community-academic partnerships, the program also focuses on reproductive health and overall wellness.

Through the program, the College is committed to developing the region's leading maternal and fetal health program with expertise in correcting in utero birth defects and improving screening for developmental and genetic problems that affect fetal health. The program is additionally focused on addressing the major health care challenges women face as they age, such as osteoporosis, urinary incontinence and depression. In conjunction with the Medical College of Wisconsin Cancer Center, Dr. Rader is also working to create a world class gynecological cancer research program.

A portion of Baird Foundation's gift is supporting the research of Anne Z. Hoch, DO, in the College's Cardiovascular Center. Dr. Hoch, Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery and Director of the Women's Sports Medicine Program, studies the female athlete triad. This is a condition in which young female athletes exhibit disordered eating, amenorrhea (absence of a menstrual period) and osteoporosis.

Dr. Hoch's research team discovered a link between the triad and premature cardiovascular disease. Her work offers hope for these patients as one of her recent studies determined that folic acid can help lessen the long-term danger of heart disease in this scenario.

The College's Digestive Disease Center also received funding from Baird Foundation through

sponsorship of the Center's annual Healthcare Dinner. Since 1993, the popular event has raised nearly \$1.8 million to advance research and treatment of digestive diseases. The dinner attracts nationally recognized keynote speakers, raises awareness of digestive diseases and supports core programs in swallowing disorders, acid-related disorders, Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, conditions affecting the pancreas and bile ducts, conditions affecting the liver and liver transplantation, functional bowel disorders and gastrointestinal cancer surveillance and treatment. The Center is directed by Reza Shaker, MD, the Joseph E. Geenen Professor and Chief of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Director of the Clinical and Translational Science Institute of Southeast Wisconsin, and Senior Associate Dean for Clinical and Translational Research.

“Improving the health of the communities in which our employees and clients live and work is incredibly important to us, and to be able to draw on the strength of a local resource in the Medical College of Wisconsin is of incalculable value,” said Paul Purcell, Chairman, President and CEO of Robert W. Baird & Co., Inc. “Women's health, cardiovascular health and digestive health are serious problems facing our communities, and we are proud to be part of the solution.”

Robert W. Baird & Co. is a wealth management, capital markets, asset management and private equity firm based in Milwaukee. Established 45 years ago as the charitable arm of the company, Baird Foundation has been a strong supporter of the Medical College, with total donations nearing \$450,000.