

## WSU News

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# WSU Medical Laboratory Sciences program receives generous endowed scholarship

By The College of Health Professions



Junior Stephanie Thanh Pham and senior Elena Lovelace are the first two recipients of the Southcentral Pathology endowed scholarship.

The Medical Laboratory Sciences department at Wichita State University has received a \$280,000 endowed scholarship gift from Southcentral Pathology.

Dr. Joel Alderson, president of Southcentral Pathology in Wichita, KS, established this fund to provide two full-ride scholarships each year in WSU's Medical Laboratory Sciences program. Recipients are chosen based on merit and financial need, and each student receives an equal amount of funds. This is the largest scholarship donation ever made to the program.



The first two recipients of the scholarship are junior Stephanie Thanh Pham and senior Elena Lovelace. Thanh Pham and Lovelace were nominated by faculty in the Department of Medical Laboratory Sciences. The students, both from the Wichita area, will benefit from the financial support that will allow them to focus on their education.

Alderson is passionate about creating incentives and pathways for students interested in medical laboratory sciences. His goal in establishing this scholarship is to attract students to the medical laboratory sciences profession and reward students who have displayed success through academic achievement, character and personal testament.

“It’s critical that we attract and recruit students to the medical laboratory sciences program,” said Alderson. “From this side of industry, we need smart, enthusiastic graduates of the program to work in pathology and other lab sciences.”

The health care industry is experiencing a shortage of Medical Laboratory Scientists in Kansas and across the U.S. The COVID-19 pandemic has created an even higher demand for these jobs. This generous scholarship gift from Southcentral Pathology will help recruit students to the Medical Laboratory Sciences program at Wichita State, with the goal of retaining graduates to work in Kansas.

“Medical laboratory scientists are critical professionals in clinical and forensic sciences, industrial laboratories, and more recently in the molecular biotechnology field. Our graduates from the program are in great demand with a high future growth potential,” said Dr. Gregory Hand, dean of the College of Health Professions. “It is gratifying to see such generous financial support that will let us expand the opportunity for a Medical Laboratory Sciences degree to students who might otherwise not attend Wichita State University.”

Alderson attended medical school at Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences – College of Osteopathic Medicine. His post-sophomore fellowship was at the University of Missouri-Kansas City; residency at Baylor University Medical Center, AP/CP; and fellowship at the University of Minnesota, Hematopathology. He is board certified in anatomic and clinical pathology, and hematopathology. Alderson is highly experienced and respected in the field and serves as the medical director for several laboratories in the area.

Alderson is also the CLIA medical director for the Molecular Diagnostics Lab (MDL) at Wichita State. CLIA is the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988, which are the U.S. federal regulatory standards that apply to all clinical laboratory testing performed on humans in the U.S., except clinical trials and basic research. The MDL has processed over 250,000 tests and plays an important role in our community to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.