

# Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program

## Mentor Support Letter

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**To the Applicant: This form should be completed by the faculty member who has agreed to be your Mellon Mays mentor if you are selected to be a Fellow. Please ask your faculty mentor to enclose the completed letter in a sealed envelope and return it to you for inclusion in your application package. The deadline for submission of your completed application is March 7, 2008.**

**APPLICANT'S NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **TO THE FACULTY MENTOR:**

The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program is funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in order to broaden the pool of those pursuing academic careers in higher education. The program supports individuals in selected disciplines who demonstrate a strong commitment to increasing opportunities for underrepresented minorities and advancing cross-racial and ethnic understanding. The program at Duke uses mentoring and funded research opportunities to provide students interested in a scholarly career with a greater awareness of the challenges and opportunities of academic life. Each year, five sophomore students are selected as Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellows and work under the direction of a faculty mentor for two years. During the summers, Fellows pursue a research project that is intended to give them a sense of scholarly research activities. During the academic year, they may: (1) continue their independent research; or (2) work as a research assistant on a project which the faculty mentor is currently pursuing; or (3) work on curricular or teaching projects of interest to their faculty mentor.

Fellows receive a term-time stipend of \$900/semester, an annual project budget of \$150, a \$3,300 summer research stipend and a housing allowance, and a travel research budget of up to \$400. Fellows are eligible for undergraduate loan repayment if they enroll as a full-time student in a Ph.D. Program in a Mellon-identified discipline. Faculty mentors receive a \$750 yearly stipend.

**The student named above is applying for this program and has identified you as his/her proposed mentor. In your letter of support, we ask that you address the following:**

- **Your willingness to serve as a faculty mentor for the applicant in the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program during the two-year fellowship, which begins in June 2008 and ends in May 2010.**
- **The feasibility of the proposed summer research project, your involvement with its development, and the ability of the student to complete the project during the 8-week summer research period**
- **An assessment of the applicant's interest in the chosen field of study and the probability of his/her attending graduate school and pursuing an academic career in this field**

**If you have any questions about the Mellon Program or the responsibilities of a faculty mentor, please contact either Kerry Haynie (klhaynied@duke.edu) or Deborah Wahl (deborah.wahl@duke.edu). More information about the program may be found on the program website: <http://www.aas.duke.edu/trinity/mmuf/>**