



MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE

NASHVILLE 8, TENNESSEE

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MeHarry Medical College
General Support

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Raymond B Fosdick, President
Rockefeller Foundation
49 West 49th St
New York, N Y

Dear Mr Fosdick:

I am writing you on the evening of the day which closes the 72nd Session of Meharry Medical College. Two hours ago, as the sun set over the lawn behind the Nurses Home, the last of the 144 graduates received his degree, in an outdoor graduation, which was almost painfully beautiful. The medical and dental graduates, ^{who} marched in this ceremony comprise more than half of all the Negro doctors and dentists admitted to their profession this year. It was heartening to hear Dr D T Rolfe, Professor of Physiology and Alumni Secretary, announce that the Alumni had raised two hundred thousand dollars for a Student Residence and Center since January, 1945, and that the funds were available to the Administration as the Alumni half of the cost of this needed building. More significant was the pledge of the new Alumni President, that this year, fifty thousand dollars more would be raised for educational purposes, and the thundering response this brought from new graduates and alumni of long standing alike. It was hard to realize that the entire Alumni, including nurses, number but a few more than three thousand.

I wish I were writing you secure in the knowledge that there would be a seventy-third session, and another stirring Commencement next year. With Meharry on the threshold of regional service, with accomplishment behind us and a growing challenge suitable to our growing abilities before us, it is distressing to report that we are faced with financial difficulties.

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A few years ago, I should have pointed out the aspirations of our under-graduate schools and the progress they were making toward improved education of under-graduate professional people. Today, I can state that the graduates were a carefully selected body of young men and women, well prepared, and conditioned to the ideals of service. Not only this, they were flanked by the full range of auxiliary people, equally well trained in their more limited roles. All of these people are backed by an institution which is extending its influence through continuing education and medical service to the Southeastern States. Within her walls, Meharry is conducting graduate education in the fields of major need for leadership. Here we find an atmosphere of growing determination on the part of the teachers and reflected in our students, that contributions in the field of research are a vital responsibility. This, prompted by the feeling that we can no longer live upon the knowledge contributed by others, but must now take full part in swelling the main stream of professional culture. From without our walls come increasing demands with challenging possibilities as service and education within the region become increasingly our responsibility. These evidences of maturity emphasize the importance of Meharry's role in the health and economic welfare of our South.

It is with distress that I report that the institution and its fine faculty, so many of whom were trained by the Rockefeller Foundation, are threatened by factors which we do not control. It was the thought of our Board, three years ago, that the handsome gift of endowment by the Rockefeller Foundation would stabilize the essential teaching structure of Meharry Medical College. This assumption has not proven true. It was also assumed that our new responsibilities could in each instance support the consequent increase in costs to meet them through sale of those services so inevitably performed as part of professional education in the health field. This assumption has proven abundantly true, with supplemental sources thus becoming available for assistance in meeting some costs for essential teaching purposes.

The desired stability of our basic teaching structure has not been achieved for a variety of reasons. A war, with its inflationary aftermath, has pushed the cost of materials and non-professional help to unprecedented heights. A maturing faculty with larger family obligations needs larger salaries, particularly under these circumstances. Opportunity for Negro professional people is ever increasing, with consequent competition for our teachers and graduates and mounting income levels elsewhere. We can no longer

Mr Raymond B Fosdick

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expect to hold faculty who see their new graduates receive higher salaries or incomes from practice than they receive. Increasing opportunity for our graduates is not an unmixed sorrow in our view, for it is evidence of the value of our training, and demonstrates its vital importance to society. It is there, ^{fore} in part, of our own creation. It does seriously complicate our financial problem.

The sum of these several factors is a considerable financial problem. When combined with decreasing income from our endowment, it adds up to an expected deficiency of four hundred thousand dollars for next year, when the just available careful restudy of our budget for 1947-48 is examined.

Of this sum, I hope to obtain a fourth through continued support from the Kellogg Foundation, a grant for five years' assistance in building basic faculty for the purpose of providing continuing education having just expired this year. The remaining three hundred thousand dollars is made up in part in the past year of the underwriting provided by the Rockefeller Foundation three years ago as a transition fund, all of which has been expended at the close of this present budget on July 1. The balance is made up of necessary increases in salaries for faculty and other increasing costs, all of which total approximately 15% of our current budget.

In the future some assistance in the form of new funds will be obtained from Southern States, two of which are supporting us handsomely now. Other long term assistance may become available as the result of a conference in July, in which we hope all interested and responsible agencies will participate, whether government, voluntary or other. An additional source of help in long range financing is the addition of more hospital by interested agencies, and the use of Blue Cross insurance cases for the teaching of medicine which such a hospital addition will make possible. This eradication of hospital deficit as a major item in teaching medicine offers an excellent prospect of financial relief.

For the moment however, there is no source of help to whom I can turn except the Rockefeller Foundation. It is for this reason that I present the story of our travail to you, a story which I understand is not too uncommon at this time.

I would like to ask you to see Mr T Graham Hall, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Dr Hugh Morgan, a trustee, and Dr Murray C Brown, Director of Medical Education, so that they may discuss with you the possibility that the Foundation will underwrite the existing shortage in operating funds for Meharry's 1947-48 budget. In order that our stewardship of our funds might be clearly set forth, I have attached

Appointment
with RBF and
RAC - 6/4/47

Mr Raymond B Fosdick

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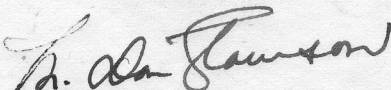
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a file of statements and graphs to this letter for your information.

I hope you will set an early date for these respresentatives to see you. I have purposely excluded myself from this meeting, due to the absolute necessity that I spend considerable time in Battle Creek this month in connection with the Kellogg Grant, and my desire to facilitate a meeting between you and our people at your earliest convenience. You will find them thoroughly conversant with our total problem.

May I in closing reiterate what I have so far inferred, my unwavering faith that Meharry is on the threshold of the sort of regional service which it is my belief a mature Healing Arts Center for Negroes in the South should be.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "M. Don Clawson".

M Don Clawson, D D S
President

MDC/ded