

Robert L. Lester Award for Most Outstanding Graduate Student

The Lester Award was established to honor the accomplishments of the late Robert L. Lester, a long-time member of the faculty of the Department of Molecular & Cellular Biochemistry. This is to be awarded annually to the most outstanding senior graduate student in the Department. The award consists of the student's name on the Lester Award, a certificate, and a monetary award of \$1000.

Eligibility

Eligible students must be in their fourth or higher year of graduate training towards a Ph.D. in the Department of Molecular & Cellular Biochemistry at the time of the call for nominations.

- Students who complete the Integrated Biomedical Sciences year will count that as the first year of that training.
- Direct admission students will normally need to have completed four or more years from the date they first enter the Department as a graduate student. Exceptions to this will be decided upon by the DGS and Chair of the Department. For example, a student who completes part of their training at another institution and transfers into the Department may be allowed to count that time towards the four or more years.

A student may win the Lester Award only once.

Nominations

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will put out a call for nominations on or around April 1 of each year. Students may self-nominate for the award or can be nominated by a faculty member of the Department. A nomination packet should consist of a cover letter (maximum two pages) detailing the accomplishments of the student, the student's C.V., and a letter of reference (maximum two pages) from the nominating faculty member or the student's mentor if a self-nomination. These should be submitted to the DGS on or before the deadline stated in the call for nominations. Late nominations will not be accepted.

Award Decision

The DGS will assemble a committee of three faculty to rank the nominations and decide upon the awardee. Nominees will be judged based largely on their research accomplishments, but also on related aspects of graduate training such as scientific communication, professionalism, Departmental citizenship, outreach etc. To aid with decisions, students should have presented their own research in the student seminar series within the twelve months prior to nomination. The Lester Award will be presented at either the Departmental retreat or a Departmental awards event each year.