

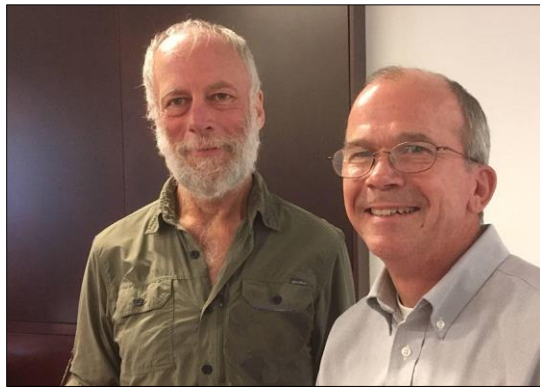
## MMCRI Grants

### MMCRI Receives \$1.3M NIH Grant to Study Obesity



Rob Koza, PhD, left, was awarded a three-year grant from the National Institutes of Health to study obesity. Dr. Koza, Faculty Scientist at MMCRI, will study how epigenetic factors, or modifications on DNA, effect obesity. This study aims to test whether the gene, mesoderm specific transcript (MEST), is regulated by a heritable gene network that controls its expression in fat tissue with dietary obesity. In addition, another aim will define how MEST functions to facilitate fat accumulation. MEST was shown to regulate fat storage in previous research and is a promising target for the treatment of obesity and type 2 diabetes (T2D).

### MMCRI Receives \$1.9M NIH Grant to Study Cell-Based Therapy in Heart Disease



Doug Sawyer, MD, PhD, Chief Academic Officer, MMC, Interim Director, MMCRI (pictured, right), and Cal Vary, PhD, Faculty Scientist, MMCRI (pictured, left), are the principal investigators on a newly awarded four-year grant from the National Institutes of Health's National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. Drs. Sawyer and Vary will study how human heart cells and growth factors interact in an effort to better understand heart disease. Their team also comprises co-investigators Ilka Pinz, PhD, and Sergey Ryzhov, MD, PhD, both MMCRI faculty scientists.

"This is exciting work," says Dr. Sawyer. "We hope these findings will improve our understanding of how cell receptors and growth factors regulate cardiovascular health, as well as recovery from injury."

### MMCRI Scientist Principal Investigator on Research Training Grant



Lucy Liaw, PhD, Faculty Scientist and Director of Research Training Programs at Maine Medical Center Research Institute, is one of the Principal Investigators on a Research Training Grant (T32) from The National Institutes of Health awarded to the University of Maine's Graduate School of Biomedical Science and Engineering. [Learn more about the grant here.](#)