

The University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita Is Economic Driver

The University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita (KUSM-W) has released the results of its 2003 Economic Impact Study (July 1 – June 30), conducted by the Center for Economic Development and Business Research in the W. Frank Barton School of Business at Wichita State University.

According to the employment figures in the study, KUSM-W generated \$35.6 million in total earnings. The biggest surprise in the study is the total number of federal and private dollars garnered as a result of state appropriations. For every state dollar invested in KUSM-W, another \$1.50 in federal/private funds is expended in Wichita. The medical school enterprise, in partnership with the Wichita Center for Graduate Medical Education (WCGME) and the faculty practice plan, created 528 jobs directly and another 300 jobs indirectly in educational services and ambulatory health care services. In addition, the presence of the 103 medical students created an additional 77 jobs within the community resulting in another \$1.2 million in employment earnings.

“This study substantiates the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita’s importance and economic commitment to this community,” says S. Edwards Dismuke, MD, MSPH, Professor and Dean of the medical school. “We have long known that medical education enhances the quality of life for our citizens and the study proves that we’re also an economic driver providing jobs to highly skilled individuals.”

“There is a rising concern that health care has not been emphasized in the economic blueprint for Wichita,” Dismuke says. “The result of our economic impact study shows that attracting resident physicians and students to Wichita is an important component to the economic diversity of our community.”

An ever-increasing number of uninsured patients demanding health care have the potential to seriously drain the area economy. The medical school plays a significant role in addressing this issue. Through its residency programs, administered by WCGME, KUSM-W is the single largest provider of services to uninsured patients who go to hospitals in Sedgwick County. The medical school works with the residency clinics, clinics designated as Sedgwick County Association for the Medically Underserved, Sedgwick County Health Department, and Project Access to provide care for the majority of our community’s underserved citizens.

Given its status as an economic driver, KUSM-W is poised to collaborate with others in addressing important health-related issues by hailing the economic contribution of educating physicians, providing health care and defining our important role in the larger Wichita economy.