



# X A V I E R Ochsner

## College of Medicine

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### **The Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine receives \$1.75 million from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

*The investment will help advance medical education for the Gulf South*

**New Orleans - The Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine (XOCOM)** announced that it has received a \$1.75 million grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to strengthen medical education and healthcare in the Gulf South and beyond. This investment is part of RWJF's \$7.5 million commitment to historically Black college and university (HBCU) medical schools, recognizing that their leadership and innovation play an essential role in improving healthcare for all communities.

This planning grant will further enable XOCOM leaders to advance the medical school's development and engage with community stakeholders as they pursue preliminary accreditation with the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME). When it opens, XOCOM will be the fifth allopathic HBCU medical school in the United States, bringing new opportunities to communities in Louisiana and the nation and offering stellar medical education for generations to come. The medical school will create economic opportunities for Louisiana when it opens in Benson Tower within the growing downtown New Orleans BioDistrict.

Through a curriculum that emphasizes interdisciplinary collaboration, clinical proficiency and compassionate patient care, XOCOM will provide students with immersive learning experiences and hands-on training opportunities. Partnering with Ochsner Health, XOCOM will equip graduates with the skills and knowledge needed to address the complex healthcare challenges of the 21st century and produce physicians who are highly skilled and grounded in their communities.

"A growing body of research shows that physicians who understand the communities in which they practice improve health outcomes by increasing patient trust. Through this medical school, we will train our physician scientists to provide compassionate care for each patient and to find new solutions and

therapies,” said Leonardo Seoane, MD, FACP, president and founding dean of Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine. “By collaborating with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, we will advance Xavier University of Louisiana’s mission to promote a more just and humane society and Ochsner’s vision of inspiring healthier lives and stronger communities.”

HBCU medical schools play a critical role in building the nation’s health workforce. Although they represent a small fraction of U.S. medical schools, HBCUs produce 70% of Black physicians, according to data from the UNCF. Data shows that a large proportion of HBCU medical graduates pursue careers in primary care, in rural areas and for communities especially in need of medical services, helping to improve access and health outcomes across the country.

“The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is proud to support the Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine and its commitment to student success and teaching excellence,” said Lauren Smith, MD, MPH, vice president of strategic portfolios for RWJF. “HBCU medical schools have long been engines of opportunity, educating the majority of America’s Black doctors and dentists. The leadership of these institutions is vital to the ongoing work of building accessible healthcare and training physicians who pursue medicine with dignity and respect.”

This investment not only affirms XOCOM’s national leadership but also accelerates a vision of a healthcare workforce that is prepared to serve every community’s unique needs.

To learn more about XOCOM, please visit: [About | Xavier University of Louisiana](#)

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#### **About the Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine**

The Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine (XOCOM) was formed in 2024 through partnership between Xavier University of Louisiana (Xavier), a leading historically Black university and college (HBCU), and Ochsner Health (Ochsner), a leading academic health system in the Gulf South. XOCOM will expand the physician workforce and provide new opportunities for more students seeking careers in medicine in New Orleans’ downtown area as part of the BioDistrict, a development district that is growing biosciences and the local economy. XOCOM will feature curriculum emphasizing interdisciplinary collaboration, clinical proficiency, and compassionate patient care, equipping graduates with the skills and knowledge to address the complex healthcare challenges of the 21st century. Established in 1925 by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Xavier is ranked among the top HBCUs in the nation, is a national leader in STEM and health sciences and has been a leading institution in sending its students to graduate from medical schools each year. Additionally, Xavier’s College of Pharmacy is among the top producers of African American pharmacists in the United States. Established in 1942, Ochsner is the leading academic nonprofit healthcare provider in the Gulf South that delivers expert care at 46 hospitals and more than 370 health and urgent care centers. In 2025, Ochsner is honored to provide 36 accredited and 12 non-ACGME-accredited programs for more than 370 residents and fellows. XOCOM will open after receiving accreditation, building upon Xavier’s mission to promote a more just and humane society by preparing its students to assume roles of leadership and service in a global society, and Ochsner’s vision to inspire healthier lives and stronger communities. For more information about XOCOM, visit Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine | Xavier University of Louisiana.

#### **About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

RWJF is a leading national philanthropy dedicated to taking bold leaps to transform health in our lifetime. To get there, we must work to dismantle structural racism and other barriers to health. Through funding, convening, advocacy, and evidence-building, we work side-by-side with communities, practitioners, and

institutions to achieve health equity fast and pave the way, together, to a future where health is no longer a privilege, but a right. For more information, visit [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org).