OVERVIEW
The Lou and Jean Malnati Brain Tumor Institute (MBTI) of the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center receives charitable funding in order to fulfill its mission, primary of which is to support brain and spine tumor-related research aimed at improving the care and well-being of adult and pediatric patients while training the next generation of physician-scientist. Funds are distributed via the Pilot Award Program (“the Program”). The MBTI has historically offered the Program to investigators and physicians and is pleased to now offer a medical student and/or resident Physician-Scientist Funding Opportunity for a one-year research project.

PILOT AWARD PROGRAM GOALS
The Goals of the MBTI Pilot Award Program are to: 1) enable outstanding translational and basic science research by supporting the development of preliminary data which can be used in support of NIH or other extramural funding applications; 2) encourage collaboration between investigators from a wide variety of specialties to investigate novel and innovative strategies for the characterization, diagnosis, or treatment of brain and/or spine tumors; 3) encourage cross pollination between clinicians and investigators; and 4) expose students and residents to research to engage their potential and interest in careers that incorporate scientific research.

STUDENT AND RESIDENT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
In addition to the goals noted above, this funding seeks to: 1) provide physicians in training exposure to scientific and investigative endeavors; 2) facilitate mentorship between investigators and trainees; and 3) provide a mechanism to facilitate the submission of papers and publications.

ELIGIBILITY
Applicants must be a current medical student or resident (MD or MD/PhD) at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. Applicants must also have at least one designated faculty mentor to work with on their project.

MENTOR COMMITMENT
Mentors must be NU/FSM faculty, willing to provide guidance to the awardee including, but not limited to, developing a proposal in which the trainee is the primary manager of the project, formulating a scientific question and devising the appropriate experimental design, overseeing the appropriate structure and conduct of the experiments, and helping the trainee prepare for other funding support. Mentors must be committed to encouraging the scientific curiosity of the student/resident and be willing to guide their development. Mentors also commit to supporting the student/resident in meeting the deliverable expectations of the award.

APPLICATION PROCESS
Application is due on Feb 1. Pilot grants are 1 year in duration are $10,000.
Applications can be basic, translational and/or clinical in nature. Basic science applications should be for increasing our understanding of fundamental molecular mechanisms that cause the occurrence and/or progression of brain and/or spinal tumors. Translational applications can either be early stage, in which the proposed research involves substantial pre-clinical investigation, or late stage in which there is an eminent and related clinical application.

APPLICATIONS
Applications should include: 1) a title page with student/resident and mentor names, email address, and title(s); 2) an abstract of no more than 200 words that summarizes the proposed research; 3) the research proposal itself which should be no longer than 4 pages inclusive of figures, specific aims and strategy; 4) a reference list that is limited to one page; 5) a simple budget page that lists (i) personnel and corresponding salary support for the percent effort to be directed to the research, (ii) estimate of supply costs; and (6) NIH biosketch(es) for participating faculty. The
research can be complementary to ongoing initiatives in the mentor’s laboratory but can’t be a reappropriated mentor grant.

Applications should be addressed to the MBTI Leadership Team and sent by email to MBTI@nm.org.

**MBTI Review Committee and Attribution of Funds**

The MBTI Leadership Team, composed of its Directors (Medical Director, Scientific Director and Surgical Director) will review and decide upon application funding within one month of the deadline for application receipt. Awarded projects that include animal research will be required to present an associated IACUC approved animal research protocol prior to initiation of project funding. Funding decisions will be based on proposal merit and feasibility, as determined by the Directors, relative need for research in specific areas that bear upon the treatment of brain tumor patients, clarity that the mentor is committed to the trainee’s efforts, and originality of the trainee’s application. The committee can request the specific aims page of grants that have been submitted or awarded by the mentor to clarify the originality of the trainee’s research.

Applicants who are funded will be required to have appropriate IRB, ACUC and/or other relevant approvals in place per Feinberg School of Medicine guidelines, prior to funds being distributed. Funded projects will be required to provide a progress report outlining project progress and any project obstacles, as well as a plan to remediate any obstacles, at 6 months. At the conclusion of the award, plans for publications(s) or derivative grant applications, and a final report are due. A completed manuscript may be provided in lieu of the final report with a brief description of derivative grant applications.

**Award Requirements**

Awardees must provide a written progress report 6 months after funds are distributed, sent to mbti@nm.org. At the conclusion of the award, the awardee must provide a 10-minute presentation on their work and next steps. They are also expected to present their publication status and future intention. Any publications derived from this award must reference the Malnati Brain Tumor Institute of the Lurie Cancer Center.

**Mission**

The mission of the Lou and Jean Malnati Brain Tumor Institute is to provide state-of-the-art clinical care to patients with brain and spine tumors, provide the resources and support necessary for patients and their families to meet the challenges of living with a brain or spine tumor, train neuro-oncology researchers and clinicians to meet the highest standards, and to endeavor to find a cure for brain and spine tumors through preclinical and clinical research.