The future is now.
The future is now.
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**University of Massachusetts Medical School**
- School of Medicine, opened in 1970
- Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, opened in 1979
- Graduate School of Nursing, opened in 1986

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The University of Massachusetts Medical School is firmly committed to its policy of equal opportunity through affirmative action and takes active measures against acts of discrimination, harassment and intolerance.
n the closing days of 1999, we embarked upon an ambitious course that will define the future of UMass Medical School. Breaking ground for the new research laboratory building was at once the pivotal event in this 30th year of the school and a harbinger of what this campus will become in the new century.

With one of the highest growth rates of funded research in the country, we are already among the top 40 medical schools in research, currently, at $93 million annually. But to meet our goal of becoming one of the premier academic research institutions, we need more space to continue growing our research enterprise.

Our immediate course is well charted, following more than a year of planning for the building. We expect to open it in the fall of 2001, providing state-of-the-art laboratory space for 100 principal investigators whose associates and staff members will number in the hundreds.

This building, together with the recently completed Irving S. and Betty Brudnick Neuropsychiatric Research Institute, will be key to sustaining our ability to recruit leading researchers, who in turn attract external funding in their quest to alleviate suffering and cure disease, the hallmark of our mission.

At the same time, it will help us retain our best and brightest scientists, who are highly sought by other institutions. Consequently, the building holds significant promise for the greater Worcester area and its economy, as well as for the Medical School. Indeed, the impact on biomedical research will be felt beyond our immediate communities. We are indebted to the volunteers who have stepped forward to lead the capital campaign for construction funds.

In accord with the theme of this report, “the future is now,” the articles on the following pages call your attention to a few of the outstanding faculty, students and scientists who, through their dedication and drive, are finding that the future, with all its promise, is within our grasp. As always, I welcome your interest in our endeavors and invite your comments.

Aaron Lazare, MD
Leading the Research Revolution

“There is a revolution going on in biomedical research across the country,” declared John L. Sullivan, MD, newly appointed director of the Office for Research, “and we have all the right things in place to make UMass Medical School a leader of that revolution.”

Charged with managing an infrastructure which supports an annual research budget of over $93 million and facilitating the work of more than 250 researchers on the Worcester and Shrewsbury campuses and at facilities in the Massachusetts Biotechnology Research Park, the Office for Research is a critical component in what many consider the most exciting time in UMMS’ recent history.

“We are in the unique and enviable position of having leaders who are free to focus their energy, creativity and innovation on research to lead us to the next level,” said Dr. Sullivan, UMMS professor of pediatrics, pathology and molecular genetics & microbiology. “There aren’t many medical schools whose chancellors have that enviable position.”

Backed by an energized and committed senior administration, Sullivan has taken the reins of leadership of the Office for Research just as UMMS prepares to expand its capabilities with a $100 million, 340,000-square-foot research laboratory building that Sullivan predicted, “will stand alone in the Northeast.” More than 100 current and newly recruited researchers will begin to conduct investigations once the facility is complete in the fall of 2001.

The Office for Research is also working with Chancellor Aaron Lazare and the Research Advisory Council to develop a plan for infrastructure improvements in UMMS’ basic and clinical science wings. “Over time, we must create an environment in the current building appropriate for the outstanding science that takes place there,” Sullivan noted. “The work our investigators do is so important, not only to UMass Medical School, but to science as a whole, and we must support them.” Sullivan himself has been with UMMS since 1978.

With new and upgraded facilities and an unparalleled research staff, the Office for Research predicts an acceleration of growth in many areas of research, including genetics and neuroscience, two particularly dynamic fields UMMS is already pursuing. The laboratories of the Irving S. and Betty Brudnick Neuropsychiatric Research Institute, under the direction of Edward Girou, MD, PhD, UMMS professor of psychiatry and world-renowned neuropsychologist and geneticist, and the newly developed Program in Gene Function and Expression, led by Michael R. Green, MD, PhD, professor of biochemistry & molecular biology and an investigator for the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, promise breakthroughs in neuroscience and genetics that will have a revolutionary impact on current studies well into the future. (See stories on pages 4 and 12.)

Translational research, which takes basic research findings and applies them to patients and the disease process, is a field Sullivan is passionate about. Under his guidance, the Office for Research is moving to create a clinical trials office to capitalize on pharmaceutical and biomedical company-sponsored trials, by seeking NIH funding. Robert W. Finberg, MD, the new professor and chair of the Department of Medicine for UMMS and UMass Memorial, is expected to recruit a number of clinical investigators. (See related story on page 8.)

Sullivan’s office will also help physician researchers navigate the protocol- and application-writing processes for the Human Subjects Committee, which resides within the Office for Research.

As UMMS moves toward becoming a leader in medical research, senior administration will rely on Sullivan and the Office for Research to support the work of hundreds of researchers across UMMS and manage tens of millions of dollars in funding, all the while keeping an eye to the future. Sullivan is energized. “The next five years,” he stated, “will be incredible.”
Mental Illness Unveiled

In the history of mental health research, there is special significance in the location of the Medical School’s Irving S. and Betty Brudnick Neuropsychiatric Research Institute on the grounds of Worcester State Hospital, one of the oldest public psychiatric facilities in the United States. In stark, but somehow fitting, contrast to the state hospital’s staid 19th century clock tower, this 21st century institute dedicates its state-of-the-art laboratories to the study of the biological bases of mental illnesses and to the development of more effective treatments and methods of prevention.

A century ago, Adolf Meyer, MD, came to Worcester to serve as the state hospital’s director of clinical and pathological studies. In his quest to gain a better understanding of the origins of mental illness, the Swiss-born Meyer promoted the integration of research with clinical services through the assembly of an accomplished staff of scientists and physicians. Now, in the last year of the 20th century, Edward Ginns, MD, PhD, has come to Worcester to serve as the executive director of the Brudnick Institute, and, with the same goals in mind, facilitate mental health research through the collaboration of UMass’ basic and clinical scientists, across departments and disciplines, for years to come.

Dr. Meyer’s research techniques included the preparation of brain slides in his pathology lab. In addition to a broad range of the disciplines of neuroscience and neurobiology, Dr. Ginns and his colleagues will utilize the tools of behavioral science, imaging, genetics, cell biology and molecular biology to unlock the mysteries of anguished minds.

“The identification of the causes of mental illness involves understanding the normal and abnormal processes of the brain, by looking at how the manifestations of behavior are caused at a molecular level,” explained Ginns. “Our focus will be on identifying genetic and environmental factors that predispose an individual to mental disorders, as well as those components that might protect individuals from developing these devastating illnesses.”

Edward Ginns, MD, PhD, Executive Director, the Brudnick Institute

Attracting to mental health research more basic and clinical researchers whose expertise in a variety of disciplines will enhance the Brudnick Institute’s goals. “This is a factor that has been particularly important for other research on campus. Now, neuro-psychiatric research will enjoy this crucial cross-fertilization through departments,” said Ginns. Institute seminars and educational programs will strengthen the efforts between basic researchers, physicians, patients and their families to understand and reduce the burden of mental illness.

“Thanks to individuals like Irving and Betty Brudnick, there will also be a strong link between the lay public, patients, scientists and clinicians.” In 1998, Irving S. and Betty Brudnick contributed $2.5 million toward the Institute’s establishment. According to Ginns, “The tremendous effort that the Brudnicks and their colleagues have put together to help make this research institute possible will have a major impact on mental health research, as well as on the other initiatives in neuroscience on campus.”
The Healing Power of the Pen

Confronted with a diagnosis of breast cancer, most women will think first and only about lifesaving medical treatment. But along with their physical illness, some 30 percent of breast cancer patients will experience significant psychological distress. A growing body of research concludes that psychological interventions to relieve emotional stress as part of a total treatment plan can positively impact the lives of many breast cancer patients.

Expressive writing (EW), the written disclosure of emotions associated with stressful or traumatic events, is one such intervention that has already been shown to be therapeutic for persons without cancer. The theory behind EW is that it takes measurable physiological work to actively inhibit negative emotions. Conversely, when individuals air their emotions in writing, the physical drain of holding back is reduced, resulting in improved health.

Susan M. Bauer, DNSc, RN, an assistant professor in UMMS’ Graduate School of Nursing and the Medical School’s Division of Preventive & Behavioral Medicine, is studying “Disclosure: Effects on Women with Metastatic Breast Cancer.” Her hypothesis is that women with metastatic breast cancer who participate in an expressive writing intervention will have better quality of life, slower disease progression and lower health care costs than those who do not.

Dr. Bauer’s study is being funded by a grant from the prestigious Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, a national organization fighting to eradicate breast cancer by advancing research, education, screening and treatment. Its National Grant Program selects innovative projects worthy of seed funding that, once launched, can attract larger federal research grants.

“The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation is very pleased to sponsor this important work,” said Elda Railey, director of the Komen Foundation’s International Grant Program. “Dr. Bauer’s research is significant because of the scientific approach to breast cancer patients’ quality of life. It is an opportunity to explore and impact this issue.”

“The premise is that internalized stress is bad for us,” said Bauer, whose current study builds on prior research that showed advanced breast cancer patients who participated in support groups survived twice as long as those who did not participate in support groups. “However, I’ve found that a lot of people don’t like [support] groups, and very sick patients may have limited access. I think individual expressive writing is an ideal alternative.”

The fact that a GSN faculty member is the first and only nurse scientist nationwide to receive a Komen grant is a great honor for UMMS, whose philosophy is epitomized in Bauer’s work. “Dr. Bauer is one of an emerging number of internationally accomplished nurse scientists who are committed to improving quality of life through rigorous scientific study,” said Lillian R. Goodman, EdD, professor and dean emerita of the GSN.

Over a four-day period, study participants will be asked to write about any and all negative feelings associated with their disease. Assessment of the EW intervention group versus a control group will compare quality of life, disease progression and health care utilization at the study’s outset, and then again three and six months later.

While not a breast cancer patient, Elana Rosenbaum, MS, MSW, LICSW, has undergone chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant to treat her non-Hodgkins lymphoma, now in remission. Even with Rosenbaum’s professional insight as an instructor for the Stress Reduction Clinic at UMass Memorial Health Care, she cites expressive writing as an extremely important tool in her coping repertoire: “When I write, negative feelings seem to move through me and not stay stuck inside. Often I begin with a negative and end up with a positive,” she explained.

The Parable

Fast-growing, it comes from nowhere
invasive strangles engulfs
obeys the beauty of the host.

But wait, what’s here?
Can it be, near the end,
That the selfsame strangler is offering
up a beauty of its own?
ripe
passionate
broken open
bursting with riotous color!

How so, leech and lover, two-in-one?
Ah, but it’s in the name . . . bittersweet.

Wendy M. Driscoll
November 11, 1999

“I’ve found that a lot of people don’t like [support] groups, and very sick patients may have limited access. I think individual expressive writing is an ideal alternative.”

Susan M. Bauer, DNSc, RN
Robert W. Finberg, MD, can succinctly describe the reason he chose to leave a senior position at the Harvard Medical School and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute to become chair of the Department of Medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. “This is a unique opportunity to build a department of medicine at a particularly auspicious time in an institution’s history,” he said. “Medical research and its clinical applications are at the cusp of a new era, and UMass Medical School, with the construction of the new research laboratory building, is also on the cusp of a new era. I wanted very much to be a part of that.”

Prior to his arrival in November, Dr. Finberg was professor of medicine and chief of the Infectious Disease Program in the Adult Oncology Department at Dana-Farber. As an active scientific researcher at an institution devoted to applying the fruits of research to clinical care, Finberg recognized the promise and the possibilities that UMass offered. “I think it’s widely acknowledged that our progress in understanding biology is really on the edge of dramatic breakthrough,” he said. “In areas such as genetics, the biology of aging, cancer and autoimmune diseases, medical research is rapidly approaching the point where we’ll be able to take advantage of this fundamental knowledge and connect it directly to patient care.”

Finberg’s own research is key to this progress; he is a principal or co-principal investigator for six research studies, four funded by the National Institutes of Health and two by pharmaceutical companies for drug discovery. In his laboratory, he focuses on three principal areas of cell biology: the mechanism by which viruses infect cells; how certain proteins on the surface of the body’s cells stimulate cell growth; and the mechanisms involved in the development of protective immunity. His clinical expertise includes work with the range of infectious diseases that can cause cancer in humans, such as papilloma, herpes and hepatitis viruses, and bacteria such as H. pylori (recently implicated in the cause of ulcers and stomach cancer). Finberg is also pursuing the use of a certain class of viruses as “delivery vehicles” for gene therapy.

This intersection of the mechanisms of infectious disease with the causes and potential cures for cancer is at the forefront of much contemporary research, but is also driven by the fact that infections commonly complicate many effective treatments for cancer. In fact, infections account for the majority of deaths among patients with certain cancers.

As chair of medicine at UMass and at the Medical School’s clinical partner, UMass Memorial, Finberg knows he arrives at a special time in institutional history. “The Medical School is a generation old, and that’s a good age to be,” he pointed out. “I turn 50 myself in this new millennium, and I think that’s a good age to be, too. And UMass Memorial is in a phase of growth and development that is very exciting to be part of.”

His priorities include medical education (“the rapid change in medical science must be reflected not only in the way we practice medicine, but in how we teach it”); building a “research infrastructure” in the department through recruitment; and evaluating clinical systems for optimization of patient care. In a letter to his new colleagues sent upon his arrival, he put it this way: “We are committed to promoting the growth of the Department of Medicine, the Medical School and the clinical system in the next century, and I anticipate that we will have unparalleled opportunities” to do so.

“I really think,” he said, “this is a very exciting time, and a very exciting place to be.”
Arriving in Lolepo’s village, and settling into a hut of mud, sticks and hay, Jaffer began his six-week course, taught by the 30-year-old medicine man. “I would follow Lolepo into the countryside. He was chosen by his father and was taught from a very young age about the plants that would serve as his medicines.” As Jaffer gazed across the grasslands, unable to distinguish one plant from the other, Lolepo selected roots, leaves and stems that would alleviate stomach pains, headaches and the woes of pregnancy—in just the right doses. “He remembered exactly where to find the plant, took just what he needed, and showed me how to prepare them as medicine, cautioning me about side effects.”

Lolepo and Jaffer, who was quickly dubbed “the tail,” also made hut calls on foot. “Lolepo cared for about 400 people. Yet he listened intently to them. ... taught me that a large part of the practice of medicine is explaining things well to patients, to look at the big picture.”

Jaffer sometimes served as teacher, responding to Lolepo’s curiosity about the practice of medicine in America. “Lolepo was fascinated with the formal education ... that some medicine is synthetically made, he felt there must be a lot of distance between people and medicine here.”

After his experience in Tanzania, Jaffer is even more determined to eliminate any distance that may exist between the medicine he will practice and the patients he will serve. “Although his medical practice doesn’t depend on machines, or the knowledge of how the medicine works at a cellular level, Lolepo did know how to interact with his patients to determine the best care for them. I am thankful to have met this medicine man, because he brought to life my thoughts, my dreams and my goals. When I do become a physician one day, I will try to merge the two types of medicine together—the African traditional and the high-tech, advanced American—to better serve the patient.”

The Medical Student
and the Medicine Man

Azul Jaffer climbed into a Land Rover this past summer and ventured into the interior of Tanzania, into the world of a Maasai medicine man and into his own future as a physician.

At the wheel was a Maasai educator named Ndyo (also known as Good Luck), who would serve as Jaffer’s guide and translator. Ndyo’s brother in the interior was Lolepo, a medicine man who tended to the Maasai villagers living at the foot of Mt. Meru. Driving away from Arusha, the city he grew up in, Jaffer recalled his childhood at the Christian school he attended there, and the Maasai guard who watched stoically over the institution. “I remember he was tall and skinny, but very strong. Some of the Maasai lived in villages around the school, and we students would see them from the soccer field, herding their cattle, sending signals, always walking. I was impressed by them, but they were a mystery to me.”

Now, Jaffer, a second-year medical student and native of Tanzania who moved with his parents to the United States in 1984 to further his education, was back in his homeland to learn more about the Maasai’s methods of medical care. Through the Pathways on Serving Multicultural and Underserved Populations, a program offered by the UMMS Office of Medical Education’s International Medical Education Program and the Department of Family Medicine & Community Health, Jaffer found a way to enhance the development of his physician soul. “I had observed my preceptor, Dr. Harvey Clermont, helping the underserved as director of a free medical clinic in Worcester. Lolepo, the medicine man, would show me that same concern for his fellow man, that sense of brotherhood.”

Arriving in Lolepo’s village, and settling into a hut of mud, sticks and hay, Jaffer began his six-week course, taught by the 30-year-old medicine man. “I would follow Lolepo into the countryside. He was chosen by his father and was taught from a very young age about the plants that would serve as his medicines.” As Jaffer gazed across the grasslands, unable to distinguish one plant from the other, Lolepo selected roots, leaves and stems that would alleviate stomach pains, headaches and the woes of pregnancy—in just the right doses. “He remembered exactly where to find the plant, took just what he needed, and showed me how to prepare them as medicine, cautioning me about side effects.”

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Jaffer sometimes served as teacher, responding to Lolepo’s curiosity about the practice of medicine in America. “Lolepo was fascinated with the formal education we receive. His was very personal and came from his father. We come to see a professor, sit in a seat and pay our fees to be educated.” The medicine man expressed disbelief that medications are dispensed from a pharmacy. “When I explained that some medicine is synthetically made, he felt there must be a lot of distance between people and medicine here.”

After his experience in Tanzania, Jaffer is even more determined to eliminate any distance that may exist between the medicine he will practice and the patients he will serve. “Although his medical practice doesn’t depend on machines, or the knowledge of how the medicine works at a cellular level, Lolepo did know how to interact with his patients to determine the best care for them. I am thankful to have met this medicine man, because he brought to life my thoughts, my dreams and my goals. When I do become a physician one day, I will try to merge the two types of medicine together—the African traditional and the high-tech, advanced American—to better serve the patient.”

Instrumental in Azul Jaffer’s return to Tanzania were Deborah Harmon Hines, PhD, and Michael A. Godkin, PhD, UMMS associate vice chancellor for school services, introduced Jaffer to nine visiting physicians from Tanzania, who encouraged the student to embark on his trip. Dr. Godkin, director of the International Medical Education Program (IMEP) at UMMS, trusted Jaffer’s instincts that the Tanzania experience would prove a pivotal one in the student’s education.

The IMEP was formalized in 1995, and Godkin reports that student interest has accelerated since the program’s inception this year. “Medical students will undertake language, clinical and research electives abroad. Through this program, students experience cultures, explore medical practice outside the U.S., especially in countries reflective of immigrant and refugee populations in this country, and then bring back their newly developed language and cross-cultural skills to their future practice,” explained Godkin.

Students aren’t the only group fueling the program’s success. Recently, the Luso-American Development Foundation funded an exchange with Portuguese-speaking countries allowing Godkin’s office to send first-year students to the Azores and mainland Portugal to learn the language. The students’ education will be put to good use here in Massachusetts, as 16 percent of the state’s population is ethnic Portuguese, according to Godkin.

“So much is happening with this young program. The Commonwealth’s Division of Medical Assistance has provided crucial funds, as it is the agency that is responsible for health care financing and policy for the state’s poor, many of whom are immigrants and refugees,” Godkin explained. “In addition, students have formed their own international interest groups and produced Web sites that describe opportunities abroad. A review of the program’s evaluation data show the positive impact these international experiences have on students vis-a-vis cultural competency.”
This explosion of information makes it the right time in science and at the University of Massachusetts Medical School for the Program in Gene Function and Expression. Genetics is one such growing field, and, in that regard, it’s my primary responsibility as director of the new program to expand this area of research at the Medical School.”

Through the Program in Gene Function and Expression, which will be housed in the new research laboratory building, Dr. Green and his colleagues will investigate the molecular and genetic bases of diseases like cancer, as well as the mechanisms that regulate how genes are expressed, Green’s own area of expertise. The UMMS professor of biochemistry & molecular biology and member of the Program in Molecular Medicine says that his current priority is identifying investigators who are experts in cutting-edge areas of genetic research. Green has already begun recruiting, but is allowing himself a five-year timetable to fully staff the program in order to gauge most effectively developments in the field. Eventually, as many as 200 staff will make up the Program in Gene Function and Expression, including 14 researchers, who will also hold faculty appointments in one of the existing basic or clinical science departments, postdoctoral and research fellows, and administrative and support staff.

The Program’s investigators will hit the ground running: the vast amount of data obtained through the Human Genome Project is a major reason the field of genetics is expanding so rapidly. According to Green, scientists have been using information culled from the complete sequencing of genes from a variety of microorganisms, such as bacteria and yeast, to compare human genomes with those of these ancestor organisms. For example, he credits the discovery of more effective antibiotics and new antifungal drugs, currently in the pipeline for human use, to the availability of information from these studies. Green admits, however, that with such gene analysis, having the “whole collection is much more valuable than the sum of its parts.” Once the human set is completely sequenced, the study of normal gene function and the molecular basis of disease will accelerate, leading to the enhancement of human health. “We could eventually identify the defective genes that may predispose a person to a particular illness,” he explained.

Green joined the Medical School’s faculty in 1990 and was named director of the MD/PhD program in 1994. He earned his medical and postdoctoral degrees from Washington University in St. Louis and completed his postgraduate training, including a fellowship, at Harvard University.

"This is an exciting opportunity that is both beneficial to the Medical School and gratifying to me as a scientist. I've always loved to build things, and this directorship provides me with the means to help construct a world-class program in an evolving area of biomedical science."

Michael R. Green, MD, PhD. Director, Program in Gene Function and Expression. Michael R. Green, MD, PhD. Director, Program in Gene Function and Expression
Heart disease treatment advancing
In his clinical study of a genetically engineered protein called fibroblast growth factor, Harold L. Dauerman, MD, assistant professor of medicine, is evaluating an alternative therapy for patients with clogged coronary arteries. The protein promotes angiogenesis, the growth of new blood vessels in the heart, which improves the supply of oxygen and blood to the heart without surgery.

Hepatitis C clinical trial
Herbert L. Bonkovsky, MD, professor of medicine, biochemistry & molecular biology and pathology, received $2.7 million from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases to conduct an eight-year clinical trial of a therapy for patients with Hepatitis C. The study will test whether long-term treatment with a long-acting interferon slows down or stops the advancement of liver disease.

Illegal smoking profits
Professor of Family Medicine & Community Health Joseph R. DiFranza, MD, examined underage smoking statistics and found $1.86 billion on cigarettes, generating millions in tobacco company profits and federal and state tax revenues.

Diverse cancer research projects
The American Cancer Society awarded the University of Massachusetts an Institutional Research Grant to support the cancer research of junior faculty at UMass Medical School and UMass Amherst. Under the direction of investigator Gary S. Stein, PhD, the Gerald L. Haidak, MD, and Zelda S. Haidak Distinguished Professor and chair of cell biology, the three-year grant is funding studies that range from genetic influences on cell division in tumor cells to physiological and behavioral consequences of cancer treatment. As well as directly providing funds for many key investigations, the award has led to extensive, long-term support from the American Cancer Society and the National Institutes of Health.

Support for poor families
Linda F. Weinreb, MD, associate professor of family medicine & community health, received two significant grants for her work with underserved families. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration funded the Worcester Homeless Families Health and Support Program, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Services provided support for the study, “Hunger: Its Risk and Impact on Poor, Female-headed Households with Children.” Through its student and residency programs, the Department of Family Medicine & Community Health has had a positive impact on greater Worcester’s community health centers for over a quarter century.

25th anniversary celebrated
Since 1974, more than 200 pediatricians have been trained in the Pediatric Residency Program, which marked its 25th year with a fall symposium, dinner dance and the establishment of the hamshaw Pediatric Society. Named for program founder James Barry Hamshaw, MD, the society will support pediatric residency education programs.

Macy grant progresses
UMass Medical School, New York University School of Medicine and Case Western Reserve School of Medicine are collaborating on the Macy Initiative in Health Communication, a national education and training program funded by the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation to help improve physicians’ communication skills and facilitate the doctor-patient relationship. To date, the three schools have worked together to identify and define the critical communication skills needed by physicians and initiated a process to develop health communication curricula for implementation in the 2000-2001 academic year.

Ho and Skaryak join faculty
Shuk Mei Ho, PhD, an expert in prostate cancer who has garnered more than $2.1 million in active research funding, was appointed professor of surgery and cell biology in May. Lynn Ann Skaryak, MD, one of fewer than 300 female cardiorthoracic surgeons in the United States, was appointed assistant professor of surgery.

UMMS awards conferred
At the springtime Educational Recognition Awards Ceremony, UMMS students and faculty were honored for their contributions to medical education and public service. David M. Clive, MD, associate professor of medicine, and Barbara F. Banner, MD, professor of pathology, received the Medical School’s most prestigious educational award, the Lamar Souther Award for Excellence in Medical Education. The first Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Dean’s Awards were given to graduate student Laurie A. Boyer and Professor of Pathology Raymond M. Welch, Jr., MD, and the first Graduate School of Nursing Dean’s Awards were given to Mary K. Alexander, EdD, associate dean and professor, and Patricia H. Clevin, EdD, assistant professor. The GSN also awarded Elizabeth Mcintosh ’99 (pictured above with GSN Dean Emerita Lillian Goodman), its Community Service Award for her work with the underserved citizens of Providence.
Leader in humanity
In recognition of her commitment to the promotion of respect and understanding among people of diverse backgrounds, Deborah Harmon Hines, PhD, associate professor of Family Medicine & Community Health, was presented the annual Worcester Women of Consequence Award. Monica Escobar Lowell, director of Cross-Cultural Health Initiatives for the Office of Community Programs, earned the YWCA’s Katharine F. Enzkie Award for Women in the Medicine and Science category for bettering education and health care access for Worcester’s underserved populations.

Innovative center honored
At the UMass/Smith + Nephew Center for Research in Endoscopic Surgery, physicians and engineers invent medical devices and procedures. Smith + Nephew Endoscopy received the Massachusetts Medical Device Industry Council’s 1999 Leadership Award for their collaboration.

Young researcher is Kimmel Scholar
Kai Lin, PhD, assistant professor of pharmacology & molecular toxicology, was named a 1999 Kimmel Scholar by the Sidney Kimmel Foundation for Cancer Research. Young researchers who have made exemplary contributions to cancer research early in their careers, when their work is still developing and other funding can be difficult to obtain.

Rewarding primary care
On National Primary Care Day, physicians, educators, students and residents were honored for their work in primary care.

Studying therapeutic agents for AIDS
Maria L. Zapp, PhD, assistant professor of molecular genetics & microbiology and a member of the Program in Molecular Medicine, was appointed to serve on the NIH AIDS Special Advisory Review Panel for the establishment of Centers for AIDS Research.

Mini-med school founded
With a $10,000 educational start-up grant from Pfizer Pharmaceuticals Inc., the Office of Continuing Education launched a mini-medical school to bring faculty together with local residents who want accurate but understandable health care information. Spring and fall terms offered programs on such timely subjects as medical information on the Internet, Lyme disease, organ transplants and healthy eating.

National health advocates visit
Assistant Secretary for Health and U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher commended UMass for its outstanding contributions to the community. He toured UMass facilities and gave a presentation on the importance of early detection and treatment of cancer.

Collaborative care for children
UMMS was awarded a federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration grant to establish Worcester Communities of Care, a united effort of the Medical School, the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health and local human service agencies to deliver comprehensive, integrated services to children with severe emotional disturbance and their families. The innovative program is the first of its kind in Massachusetts to receive federal funding.

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Awards & Honors
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Innovative center honored
At the UMass/Smith + Nephew Center for Research in Endoscopic Surgery, physicians and engineers invent medical devices and procedures that solve surgical problems. Center partners UMMS and Smith + Nephew Endoscopy received the Massachusetts Medical Device Industry Council’s 1999 Leadership Award for their collaboration.
Susan Billings-Gagliardi, PhD, professor of cell biology, was recently awarded the Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) Robert J. Glazer Distinguished Teacher Award. Established in 1988, this AOA award recognizes just four faculty members from medical schools nationwide who have distinguished themselves in student education.

A fourteen-time recipient of the UMMS Outstanding Medical Educator Award, Dr. Gagliardi encourages students to integrate basic, clinical and social sciences into their medical studies. In addition to her educational innovation, she is recognized for her success as a researcher and the $2.5 million in funding that she and her colleagues have received for the study of the development of central nervous system myelin, the insulating material around the nerve fibers of the brain and spinal cord.

Joseph F. X. McGuirl, executive director for the University System’s Office of Commercial Ventures and Intellectual Property, was named a 1999 Mass High Tech All Star. One of 14 honored as “the best and brightest in New England’s technology industry,” McGuirl was credited with increasing University licensing revenues from less than $200,000 to $4.1 million in four years, as well as for obtaining corporate sponsors for research and development and starting a business incubator.
The first chapter of the UMass Memorial Foundation’s success story has been written and the achievements reported for the inaugural year foretell a bright future in philanthropy. Through the generosity of donors, the impact of biomedical research is enhanced; new medical treatments save more lives; and unparalleled educational opportunities benefit medical students, nurses and scientists.

These investments in the future of medicine are at the heart of the charitable partnership of UMass Medical School and UMass Memorial Health Care. In 1999, the Foundation raised more than $22 million, a figure that represents a substantial increase over the previous year’s total for the pre-existing organizations—UMass Medical Center, Memorial Health Care and HealthAlliance—that are now under the Foundation’s umbrella. The Foundation raised a total of $10 million in cash alone.

Among the academic achievements were the establishment of seven new endowed professorships or chairs in the areas of quality, AIDS research, basic sciences, cancer research, cell biology and cardiovascualr medicine.

The Herbert Smith Charitable Foundation, which established one of the two cancer research chairs through the Worcester Foundation for Biomedical Research, also awarded UMass Memorial a three-year, $150,000 grant to initiate a cancer screening program at Plumley Village Health Clinic in Worcester. The program will serve those at-risk women who may otherwise lack resources for early detection and prevention of cancer.

In fundraising for clinical initiatives, there were significant achievements during the year, including those recorded for three major UMass Memorial campaigns:

• More than half of the $2 million goal for the Hahnemann Center on Lincoln Street was pledged or contributed. In addition, a 1-for-3 challenge grant of $250,000 from the George L. Alden Trust will encourage the raising of $750,000 from the UMass Memorial community. Honorary chair of the campaign is Francis X. Dufault, MD, retired medical director of the former Memorial Health Care, who was also chief of staff at the former Hahnemann Hospital.

• Clinton Hospital’s drive for support of new and renovated patient and visitor facilities raised more than $900,000 toward the goal of $1.2 million, thanks to generous gifts from local donors supportive of community-based care.

• The $2.5 million raised by HealthAlliance has reached half of the goal for capital projects that include renovations at the Leominster campus and development of a cancer center at the Burbank campus.

Of critical importance to the Foundation’s future was the step taken in 1999 to initiate a strategic planning process, with recommendations to the capital campaign’s leadership for the new century. With the next chapters documenting the success of philanthropic support in the improvement of medical care and health for all.
With just 18 days left in the 20th century, the Medical School broke ground for a building that’s key to its expected achievements in the new millennium: a 10-story research laboratory building at the heart of the campus.

Among the key figures at the “digging in” ceremony were four volunteers whose names were announced as co-chairs of the UMass Memorial Foundation/Worcester Foundation for Biomedical Research campaign to raise $33 million toward construction of the building. They are Robert and Nancy Edman Feldman of West Newton and John and Linda Nelson of Worcester.

The Feldmans, whose son Adam is a member of the School of Medicine’s class of 2000, are chairs of the UMass Memorial Parents Council Executive Committee. Robert Feldman heads the RME Group, an investment banking and marketing company, and serves on the board of directors of Aero Products International/ImaginAir, Inc., a company he founded. A former vice president and general merchandise manager of Montgomery Ward, he has been in the retail field more than 25 years. He has helped the fund-raising efforts of the Richard Welling Foundation and the Anti-Defamation League, among other organizations. Nancy Edman Feldman is an interior designer and principal of Nancy Edman Interiors, based in West Newton.

John Nelson, vice-chair of the Foundation’s board of directors, is former chair and CEO of the Wyman-Gordon Company and former president and CEO of the Norton Company, where his career spanned 31 years. He is lead director of the TIX Companies Inc. of Framingham. Among many volunteer interests, he has chaired the board of trustees at both WPI and the Worcester Art Museum.

Linda Nelson’s community involvement includes the boards of the Ecomuseum and the Worcester Redevelopment Authority. She is a former administrator and trainer for executive leadership development programs around the country and a former feature news reporter for a Colorado NBC-TV affiliate.

The Foundation will aim to reach its goal, approximately one-third of the overall initial cost of the $100 million building, through private philanthropy, Aaron Lazare, MD, chancellor and dean, said at the groundbreaking event. The 360,000-square-foot building is expected to be ready for occupancy in the fall of 2001.

Plans for the building and the fund-raising campaign were announced in September. UMMS and UMass Memorial Health Care have already committed $30 million in support of construction, pledged at the time of the merger between Memorial Health Care and the UMass Clinical System in 1998. The Massachusetts AFL-CIO has pledged to raise $5 million for the Cancer Center, which will be relocated to the new building. The remainder of the research building’s cost will be realized through federal grant overhead recovery.
In 1999, the year that UMass Medical School graduating classes reached the quarter century mark, the number of alumni making gifts to UMMS almost doubled.

Indeed, a member of that first “pioneer” class of 1974 set a new standard for alumni giving with a five-year pledge of $100,000. Richard V. Aghababian, MD, one of those celebrating the 25th anniversary, and his wife Anne made the gift launching an endowment fund for a professorship in emergency medicine.

Overall, UMMS alumni participation in philanthropic gifts has increased from less than 10 percent to more than 20 percent in FY ‘99. Creation of a reunion giving program contributed to the rise in participation rates, and the number of first-time contributors almost tripled during the past year.

Special recognition goes to the members of the recent graduating classes, who have established class gift funds. Giving participation rates for the classes of ’98 and ’99 was approximately 60 percent and 50 percent, respectively.

For Dr. Aghababian, professor and chair of emergency medicine at UMMS, celebrating his 25th reunion provided the impetus to make a substantial gift. He expressed the hope that UMMS, in addition to being the first New England medical school to establish emergency medicine as an academic specialty, will be the first to have an endowed professorship in that field.

Afterward, the volunteer whose leadership helped pull it off called the walk “one of the most amazing and moving experiences I have had as a labor leader.” Robert J. Haynes, president of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, had brought his organization into this first-of-its-kind partnership between organized labor and a non-profit charitable institution.

The partnership’s goal is to raise $5 million in five years to support the Cancer Center’s new research facility, which will be located in the research laboratory building being constructed on the UMMS campus. For the AFL-CIO membership, which represents 400,000 working men and women in 750 local Massachusetts unions, the 1999 walk literally was the first steps toward that goal.

“I was truly touched by the determination and commitment demonstrated by the walkers who turned out on Labor Day to help find a cure for this horrific disease,” said Haynes. In testament to the significance of the event, University President William Bulger, state legislative leaders Thomas Birmingham and Thomas Finneran and Worcester Mayor Ray Mariano joined UMMS Chancellor and Dean Aaron Lazare to kick off the walk.

A longtime supporter of UMMS and its Cancer Center, Haynes had announced the $5 million pledge and plans for the annual walk on Labor Day 1998. The idea grew out of his friendship with Dottie Manning and the late Dan Manning Sr., for whose son the Our Danny Cancer Fund is named. The fund honoring Dan Jr.’s memory has become the Cancer Center’s official fund-raising arm.

“T’m extremely excited about next year’s walk, which will undoubtedly attract twice as many walkers as this year’s event,” Haynes said. “And that will bring us even closer to our $5 million goal.”

Red Sox fans throughout New England remember Dwight Evans as the team’s star in right field during the 1970s and ’80s. His 18-year career included the 1975 World Series, and he led the major leagues in home runs and extra bases during the latter half of that storied season.

Now there’s a different game plan for Evans in central Massachusetts, where friends and fans alike cheer his volunteer efforts for the Cancer Center at UMass Medical School. The Dwight Evans Golf Classic benefits not only from his name, which assures a sellout, but also from his presence as honorary chair of the event.

In June 1999, with a record field of 136 players at the Worcester Country Club, the tournament raised $90,000 for the Cancer Center. To date, the overall total raised by the six annual golf events is $430,000, and the tournament has become the Cancer Center’s premier event. With Polar Beverages as sponsor and the EMC Corporation coming on board for the first time as presenting sponsor in 1999, the event has a promising future.

At the root of Evans’ longstanding dedication to UMMS is the Red Sox link to sports medicine physicians at the hospital. And his family’s experience with patient care, as well as friendships made in the Worcester community, have committed Evans to service as a board member of the UMass Memorial Foundation.

But his prime motivation is the “good work” being done at the Medical School in cancer research: “All the money raised in the golf classic goes for research. Everyone pays to play, myself included—we need all the money we can get!”

Gifts can be made in cash, securities or other property and can take many forms: outright gifts, pledges, bequests or various life income arrangements. Contributors may designate their gifts to be used for specific purposes or make unrestricted gifts providing greater flexibility for planning and administering programs in patient care, education and research.

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The Foundation provides information about specific programs and activities, and staff is available to consult with benefactors and their advisors about various gift ideas. For further information, please contact: Kevin G. Courtney Associate Vice Chancellor for Development University of Massachusetts Medical School Four Biotech, 377 Plantation Street Worcester, MA 01605 (508) 856-5520 e-mail: kevin.courtney@umassmed.edu

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Back then, Centroscope, the weekly publication that preceded Focus, our internal newsletter, was weekly in intent only—"when the inspiration struck," is more accurate. The Medical School catalog (there was only one school then) was lightweight in every sense of the word (it’s not easy being green). Press coverage was at best not, especially good press. One fairly representative television expose featured live shots of endless, empty hospital rooms, and a prediction that this white elephant on the edge of Lake Quinsigamond would never fill its beds.

Staff on board boasted about surviving one of the worst snowstorms of the century, when everyone at UMass hunkered down because going home was impossible. Of course, there were all those empty beds. Oh, and something about a bottle of Scotch that would be impolitic to mention.

The names that swirled through my brain then were Roger Bulger, Phil Capet, John Howe, Mike Bice, Bea Chase, Sam Thompson, Edgar Smith. Not that most of them stayed long enough to get to know me. One week after signing on, as I sat at my fake-oak desk (already splintering at the corners), Chancellor Bulger announced his impending departure. One month after Dr. Robert Tranquada came to take his place, my boss announced her departure. Change, always a seven on the Richter scale here, would be the hallmark of the next two decades.

Obviously, much has happened over these years, but it is the aggregate of experiences that forges a retrospective. Some of us who remember deep-mud parking flats, hot breakfasts and phantom valentines (he never confessed), also bear witness to helicopters landing on the front lawn, bending the trees to the ground; Bob Sweetgall’s cross-country walk; Joe Benedict’s annual gift of farm-grown apples; Continuous Quality Improvement; Lakeside Story; cost-containment; the paid-parking tsunami; the furlough; the year Hurricane Gloria came to Convocation; the day the lights went out; and of course, “Men in Tights.”


The intersection of Plantation and Belmont streets has been an area of vitality and innovation that has set the standard for Worcester. The former mud flats will soon become the greensward on the emerging quad. The celebration that attended the opening of the 350th bed is distant memory.

This is a very good place to grow up professionally. Now, after a year of thinking seriously about moving on, I leave UMass. It is time to shape a new beginning.

Ciao.

The Past is Prologue

Twenty-one years. A lifetime. I think back to the genesis of the Medical School’s publications. We launched in October 1978 a bimonthly tabloid written by me, brand-new to health care (but not to communications), an editor who didn’t even know that ophthalmology had two H’s. Not an auspicious beginning.

Myrna L. Baylis retired from UMass in 1999 after 21 years, the last 10 of which she served as associate vice chancellor for university relations. She is principal of MLB Communications of Worcester.