



College of Medicine  
Parents & Family Association

Newsletter – 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr 2012



**PFA Presidents’  
Message**

I can’t believe it’s already 2012! It seems like we just had Family Day and the White Coat Ceremony. The

class of 2012 will graduate in less than 3 months! We are currently planning our support for Match Day on March 16<sup>th</sup>. I want to take this opportunity to thank all the parents and family members for their strong support this year, by joining and/or donating to this organization. We are at an all-time high for members and for donations. Because of your donations and dues we are already planning to significantly increase our financial support for Match Day (M4), Post Comp Party (M1), and June Term Picnic (M2)! We should still have money left over to contribute to the new PFA Student Award Fund that was established just last Spring!

Again, many thanks to Bonnie Maresch (an M3 parent and active PFA Board member) for putting together the newsletter! Also thanks to the Alumni Relations Office staff for enabling our Association to function so well!

We were pleased to welcome the new Dean of the College of Medicine, Bradley Britigan, M.D., at our October meeting. He is keeping busy with the 130 new medical students and noted that he was very impressed with the caliber of all the students at UNMC. It was exciting to meet him and we hope to keep him actively involved in the Parent and Family Association.

Before you know it, your student will be graduating and joining the ranks of the Alumni of UNMC! You can be more actively involved by joining the PFA Advisory Council. If you are interested, it’s not much work and we have a lot of fun at our meetings! Call us at 402-330-4289

if you need more information. Your participation will ensure continuity for your students as they continue in their medical education.

Sincerely,

Jeff and Sandy Passer  
Winter 2012

**2012 Calendar of Upcoming Events**  
**Parents & Family Association (PFA) funds help sponsor events in blue.**  
**College of Medicine Alumni Assoc. (COMAA) funds help sponsor events in green.**

<b>Spring Recess (M1-M2)</b>	<b>Mar 12 – 18</b>
<b>Spring Recess (M3-M4)</b>	<b>Mar 26 – Apr 1</b>
<b>Match Day (M4)</b>	<b>Fri., Mar 16</b>
<b>Coffee Hour (M4)</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>
<b>Ceremony (M4)</b>	<b>11:00 a.m.</b>
<b>AOA Induction &amp; Faculty Recognition</b>	<b>Mar 22, noon</b>
<b>Honors Convocation &amp; Hooding Ceremony (M4)</b>	<b>Fri., May 04 2–4 p.m.</b>
<b>Graduation (M4)</b>	<b>Sat., May 05, 10 am</b>
<b>Post Comp Party (M1)</b>	<b>Mon., May 07</b>
<b>Showdown In O Town (Alumni Relations Office sponsored)</b>	<b>Tues., May 08</b>
<b>June Term (M2)</b>	<b>Wed., Jun 27 – Fri., Jun 29</b>
<b>Term Lunch (M2)</b>	<b>Wed., June 27</b>
<b>Term Picnic (M2)</b>	<b>Thur, June 28</b>
<b>Family Day (new M1s)</b>	<b>Fri., Aug 17</b>
<b>White Coat Ceremony (White Coats sponsored by COMAA)</b>	<b>Fri., Aug 17</b>

**For a full list of events, visit:**  
[www.unmc.edu/alumni/153.htm](http://www.unmc.edu/alumni/153.htm)

## Letter from Dean Britigan

On July 1, 2011 I became the Dean of the UNMC College of Medicine, having moved to Omaha a few weeks before from Cincinnati where I had served as the Chair of the University of Cincinnati's Department of Internal Medicine. Over the last 6 months, it has been a pleasure getting to know the institution, particularly its faculty, staff, and students, for they are the core of what makes the UNMC College of Medicine the outstanding institution that it is. Over the last several years, the nation's medical schools have faced great challenges in accomplishing their goals of: training the next generation of physicians and biomedical researchers; providing the highest quality care to patients; and advancing medical care through research. Fortunately, through hard work and commitment to excellence, UNMC has more than met the challenge. Our students continue their strong performance on the USMLE national certifying exams and remain highly competitive for the best residency positions.



Recent data also show the success of the research endeavors at UNMC. UNMC ranked second among all medical centers in the rate of growth of its federally funded research over the last 10 years – truly a remarkable effort. The expanse of outstanding buildings and facilities, as reflected most recently by the new Maurer Center for Public Health and the rapid progress toward the completion of the Truhlsen Eye Center, also reflects the commitment to excellence at UNMC. The latter has been made possible through the generous support of faculty, alumni, and other friends of the medical center who have continued their commitment to the vision of UNMC in spite of the challenging financial times in which we all currently find ourselves. To them we owe our thanks and appreciation.

This is truly a remarkable institution with its greatest years still ahead of it. It's a pleasure for me to be part of the UNMC College of Medicine. We appreciate that you entrusted the medical education of your sons and daughters to us and look forward to your participation in that effort through the Parents & Family Association.

Wishing you all happiness and success in 2012,  
Bradley Britigan, MD

## Match Day for M4s coming – Fri, March 16th



The National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) is a matching service to provide a mechanism for matching applicants to programs according to the preferences of both as specified on their respective rank order lists. The UNMC College of Medicine's March 16<sup>th</sup> "Match Day" celebration is part of the 2012 Main Residency Match program and is one of many such ceremonies around the U.S. on that day.

The Match process consists of three steps – registration, ranking, and results. Each student, in addition to applying to a residency program, goes online to register and pay with NRMP. Previously, and after this, students have traveled around the country to interview with different programs. Students then list their preference of programs where they interviewed in rank order online. In a similar manner, each program lists applicants in their preferred order. A computerized matching algorithm then is run against the two sets of lists. Neither applicant nor program is allowed to request the other to make a commitment as to how the other will be ranked prior to the matching process. Results are then posted at 1 p.m. EST on Match Day on the NRMP web site. Good luck, M4s!

## UNMC Broomball

Spirit Week, in December, had a lot of fun activities including an ugly sweater contest, a campus scavenger hunt, a broomball tournament, and other activities.



If your student missed out on the Broomball Tournament, there is a new co-ed Broomball Intramural league forming which will play on the ice at UNMC. Play will be on Monday nights, 4-6 p.m. (when enough teams sign up to get the league started). The league is open to UNMC & Nebraska Medical Center students, employees, staff, and volunteers. A team from the College of Pharmacy won the Spirit Week tournament. Let's see a College of Medicine team come out and win!

## UNMC New Major Building Project

We are pleased to share with you a major announcement on behalf of UNMC Chancellor Maurer and University of Nebraska President Milliken. President Milliken recently addressed the State of Nebraska from the Capitol Rotunda to announce plans for "Building a Healthier Nebraska". Three of the four major projects announced will directly benefit the people of Nebraska through collaborative efforts of UNMC.

These projects include:

- \* A new College of Nursing Facility in Lincoln
- \* A cancer research tower at UNMC
- \* An addition to the Bruner Hall of Science at UNK to allow expansion of the UNMC Kearney nursing division and establishment of a new UNK-based UNMC allied health professions program

A short description of each project is listed below. If you have any questions about the projects or would like additional information, please feel free to contact our Alumni Office.

President Milliken has asked the legislature for State support of these projects. As our COM Parents & Family Association members, we want to make sure you are aware of this significant request and the unique opportunity it offers to make a strategic investment that will leverage the University's strengths and provide private and other funding to benefit Nebraska well into the future.

### Cancer Center Project



- The University is requesting \$50 million from the state of Nebraska for the research tower that will be part of the Comprehensive Cancer Center Project, to be located on the current site of Swanson Hall. In all, this project will cost \$370 million, most of which will come from private giving. The project will include a 98-lab research tower, multidisciplinary outpatient

cancer treatment center, an inpatient 108-bed hospital tower dedicated to cancer care, and the expansion of our ambulatory care services. This project, I believe, will be transformational for all Nebraskans and will elevate this campus to an NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. The cancer project also will serve as an economic driver for the state, leading to an estimated 1,200 new jobs and \$100 million annually to the economy by the year 2020.

### College of Nursing, Lincoln Division

- A new College of Nursing building in Lincoln continues to be a top priority. This \$17 million facility would allow the Lincoln Division to accept more qualified applicants (64 more students by 2020). The building – to be located near the College of Dentistry on UNL's east campus – would replace the current leased space in downtown Lincoln. Expansion would focus on the Lincoln area's greatest need, which is for master's and doctorally prepared nurses to take roles in advanced clinical specialization and as educators in the area's nursing education programs.

### Health Science Education Facility in Kearney

- A \$19 million Health Science Education facility on the University of Nebraska at Kearney campus. This new facility would allow the College of Nursing's Kearney division to move into a state-of-the-art facility and expand enrollment, and it also will allow UNMC's School of Allied Health Professions to expand educational opportunities for Nebraska residents who plan to dedicate their careers to rural areas. To date, we have discussed the potential for expanding Allied Health educational programs in clinical laboratory science, diagnostic medical sonography, physician assistant, physical therapy and radiography education.

Roxanna Lynn Jokela, MHA, FACHE  
Director, Alumni Relations Office

### 2011/2012 PFA Advisory Council

Position	Name(s)	Stdnt Yr
Co-Presidents	Jeff & Sandy Passer	2013
Vice President	Tom McKnight	2013
Secretary	Bonnie Maresch	2013
Treasurer	Duane Maresch	2013
Board Member	Tracy McKillip	2013
Board Members	Mike & Susan Westcott	2013
Board Members	Craig & Rita Osborn	2014
Board Members	Sheldon & Kim Gallner	2015
Board Member	Larry Siref	2015

## **FUN FACTS:**

### **2012 Spring Semester is Underway**

What are the different classes experiencing now?

**M1's:** "Grad school on steroids" is now a phrase well understood by these students.

### **Impressions From the Family of a New M1 Student**

The receipt of an acceptance from UNMC is a cause for jubilation, not only to the prospective M1 student, but also for the entire family. The summer before the start of medical school is filled with eager anticipation for the future. Only four years of training and my prodigy will be a doctor. Nothing could make the family more proud. All of the hard work that led to undergraduate academic success will surely replicate itself in medical school.

Within the first two weeks of medical school, however, the entire family learns that their M1 student, who was at the top of their undergraduate class, has found that the competition for medical school success is tough. It is consuming and requires dedication and passion on a 24/7 basis. The complete immersion into medical school is likely a new level of commitment. The role of the family is to serve as a sounding board for everything from frustration to excitement. It is to be visible whenever needed and for whatever purpose including shopping, cleaning, or cooking a meal. In short, be supportive and attentive, pledging that becoming a physician is not an easy task, but a lengthy and rewarding process. Not only is your student learning to be a doctor, but also evolving from a student into an adult.

In the end, the challenge and rigorous work of medical school will pay off. Ultimately, your student will survive and will become a valuable asset to society, as was expected upon acceptance to UNMC. It will just be a little harder than was initially thought. Not only for the student, but also for the family.

Sheldon Gallner, parent of an M1  
Council Member, COM Parent and Family Assoc.

**M2's:** The world for M2's is pretty much like Ground Hog Day. They get up, study, take a test, sleep a little, and then back to studying again. It is the same routine every day. They just finished the Neurology Unit and now they are beginning Psychiatry. Tests before Spring Break include gastroenterology and Integrated Clinical Experience (ICE).

All students have signed up for their USMLE Step 1 exam which they will be taking either in Omaha or Lincoln. It is offered either in May or June.

The M2's have also put in their requests for M-3 clinical rotations for next year.

Steve Osborn, parent of an M2  
Council Member, COM Parent and Family Assoc.

### **M3's: "Learning Life's Lessons as an M3":**

My husband Jeff and I are avid readers of the "Obituary" page in the daily paper. Some might think this is a rather morbid habit, but it is actually fascinating. It is very interesting to read the stories of people's lives, most of them living in anonymity. Their life's accomplishments are amazing. The other side is also to read of those many patients we have collectively cared for over the past years. Our son Joel, an M3, has often questioned our habit and just rolled his eyes and moved on.

During the past year, unfortunately, many pioneers in the medical field have passed away. We have made it a point to have Joel read the obituaries of these "Legends" and learn of their accomplishments and contributions to the advancement of the medical profession. Now, when he walks down the hall of the Clarkson Hospital, he can understand why these professionals are called "Legends".

Recently we learned that our habit had rubbed off, when Joel came into the family room holding a section of the newspaper. In his stoic manner, he announced that he had just read the obituary of a patient he had encountered in clinic. This was a sobering experience, a life lesson, one not learned from a textbook.

Sandy Passer, parent of an M3  
Co-president, COM Parent and Family Association

**M4's:** The end is in sight and excitement is building as we near Match Day 2012 (see previous article). The M4s may still be doing last minute interviews for Residency programs in their chosen specialty as well as continuing rotations. This semester will pass quickly with March Match Day followed by the Honors and Hooding Ceremony and Graduation in May. Then it's off to the next adventure in their education – Residency.

(The editor gratefully thanks these families for their submissions for this newsletter and hopes other students and families will also contribute to future editions.)