

P E R S P E C T I V E



Donors invest in UNMC's mission

The year 2008 promises to be a year of celebration at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, as we break ground and dedicate several new facilities on our campus that will enhance the care of our patients, the education of our students and the research of our medical scientists.

These buildings signify the growth and prosperity that our campus enjoys, and they provide an infrastructure for us to recruit and retain the best students and faculty, as well as provide the best treatments for our patients.

This issue of "Connect" highlights the Weigel Williamson Center for Visual Rehabilitation (page 8), which will open in mid-April. This \$1.2 million facility is the only one of its kind – a free-standing facility dedicated to low-vision services on an academic health sciences center campus. Like so many of our new buildings, this facility was made possible through private donations, notably the lead gifts of Dr. Harry and Beth Weigel of Auburn, Calif., and Robert and Alice

Williamson of Omaha. Dr. Weigel is a 1958 graduate of the UNMC College of Medicine.

This summer, our College of Medicine will have a new home – the Michael E Sorrell Center for Health Science Education. This beautiful, \$52.7 million facility will be the most sophisticated learning environment in America. Bill and Ruth Scott of Omaha made the largest gift toward the building and named it after their longtime physician, Dr. Sorrell. Nearly 1,000 alumni donated more than \$15 million to the new building. State-of-the-art classrooms, auditoriums and small group areas make this a true jewel on our campus.

In addition, a student plaza will grace the east side of the Sorrell Center. This plaza will serve as an outdoor area for student events during the warmer months and will convert to a mechanically frozen ice rink in the winter. For years, I have envisioned having a plaza and skating rink where students and employees can enjoy our campus. This common space will be a remarkable addition that everyone can enjoy. This facility also is made possible by the Scotts.

Early in 2009, we will open our second research tower, adjacent to the Durham Research Center. In this facility, our top scientists will search for treatments and cures to many devastating diseases. Omaha businessman Chuck Durham provided

the facility's lead gift, once again showing his commitment to UNMC's mission of improving the health of humankind. In all, the center will have 96 laboratories and will cost about \$76.5 million to construct.

Recently, UNMC announced plans to build a geriatric center near Leavenworth Street and 38th Avenue. Construction for the Home Instead Center for Successful Aging will begin in August 2008. Paul and Lori Hogan, founders of Home Instead Senior Care, made the lead gift for the \$10.2 million facility. As the baby boomers reach their senior years, this center is of utmost importance. The timing is absolutely right for us to have a facility that will take our already outstanding geriatric programs to a world-class level.

All of these projects – as well as some that have not yet been announced – are important as we continue on our trajectory toward becoming a world-class academic health sciences center. We hope that you share in our excitement in opening these facilities, which will help us better fulfill our mission of teaching, research and patient care.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Harold M. Maurer, M.D." The signature is written in a cursive style.

HAROLD M. MAURER, M.D.
Chancellor