

## Four receive awards at UNMC alumni reunion

Four distinguished alumni were honored at the UNMC Alumni Reunion Weekend on Sept. 19-20 in Omaha.

The College of Medicine Alumni Association awarded the UNMC College of Medicine Alumni Association Distinguished Alumnus Award to Paul Young, M.D., '58, of Lexington, Ky.

A native of Fairfield, Neb., Dr. Young has enjoyed a long career in academic medicine. From 1967-75, he was at the University of Missouri and started the first approved family practice residency program in the state. In 1975, he returned to Nebraska to serve as professor and chairman of the UNMC Department of Family Practice.

From Nebraska, Dr. Young went on to become professor and chairman of the department of family medicine at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. He then joined the American Board of Family Practice as associate executive director and eventually was named executive director. Today, he is executive director emeritus.

Dr. Young is the founding editor of Family Practice Recertification and the Journal of the American Board of Family Practice. He has done consulting work with the Kellogg Foundation to help develop family medicine residencies in Mexico and South America. He and his wife, Betty, are now retired and live in Lexington, Ky.

The College of Nursing Alumni Association awarded the UNMC College of Nursing Alumni Association Distinguished Alumnus Award to Col. Kimberly Siniscalchi, '88, of Dayton, Ohio.

At the time of the award, Col. Siniscalchi served as Deputy Command Surgeon and Command Nurse, Air Force Materiel Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. She assisted the command surgeon in leading the command's eight community-based medical treatment facilities, which provide combat support for more than 7,000 medical personnel and peacetime health care for more than 435,000 beneficiaries. Her leadership experience includes eight years as the Air Force Nurse assigned to the White House Medical Unit, serving Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton.



Alumni honored with awards during the Alumni Reunion Weekend included: Daren Knoell, Pharm.D., '89, UNMC College of Pharmacy Alumni Association Early Career Achievement Award; Patricia Hageman, PT, Ph.D., '79, UNMC Physical Therapy Alumni Chapter Distinguished Alumnus Award; Col. Kimberly Siniscalchi, '88, UNMC College of Nursing Alumni Association Distinguished Alumnus Award; and Paul Young, M.D., '58, UNMC College of Medicine Alumni Association Distinguished Alumnus Award.

In December, Col. Siniscalchi was promoted to major general – a unique accomplishment as she skipped over the brigadier general ranking. She and her husband, Col. Joe Siniscalchi (Ret.), have moved to Washington, D.C., where she is stationed at Bolling Air Force Base.

After earning her bachelor of science degree in nursing from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Col. Siniscalchi received her commission in 1979 through the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps Scholarship Program at the University of Pittsburgh. She then was assigned to Offutt Air Force Base from 1982 to 1988. During this time, she earned her master's of science degree in nursing from UNMC and worked as a clinical nurse specialist.

The College of Pharmacy Alumni Association awarded the UNMC College of Pharmacy Alumni Association Early Career Achievement Award to Daren Knoell, Pharm.D., '89, of Columbus, Ohio.

A native of Chadron, Neb., Dr. Knoell joined The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy in 1994. He is director of the Heart and Lung Research Institute and associate professor in the departments of pharmacy and internal medicine. He also serves as a clinical pharmacist/asthma educator and is a member of the OSU Center of Pharmacogenomics.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), the American Lung Association, the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP) and the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy fund Dr. Knoell's research on lung disease.

Dr. Knoell's research has been published in leading scientific journals and he is frequently invited to present at national meetings. His accomplishments have earned him recognition as a fellow in ACCP and committee appointments with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the NIH.

The Physical Therapy Alumni Chapter awarded the UNMC Physical Therapy Alumni Chapter Distinguished Alumnus Award to Patricia Hageman, Ph.D., '79, of Ithaca, Neb.

Dr. Hageman has been director of the physical therapy education program in UNMC's School of Allied Health Professions for the past 19 years. In October, she stepped down as program director to begin a

yearlong faculty development fellowship. She will continue as a tenured professor in the physical therapy education program and focus her efforts on education and research in rural health and gerontology.

Throughout her career, Dr. Hageman has been a national leader in advancing physical therapy education. Nearly 70 percent of the UNMC physical therapy graduates completed their course of study during her tenure as program director. Also during that time, the PT program enjoyed continuous accreditation and underwent two major curriculum changes and degree conversions. Class size has grown 100 percent – from 20 to 40 students.

One of the top accomplishments of the PT program under Dr. Hageman's leadership occurred in 2006 when the program was awarded the prestigious University-Wide Departmental Teaching Award from the University of Nebraska.

## Jokela named new alumni director



Roxanna Jokela has been named the new director of alumni relations. Jokela, who has served as interim director since October, will take over on April 13, said Bob Bartee, vice chancellor for external affairs.

At that time, Jokela also will step away from her duties as director of the Rural Health Education Network (RHEN) at UNMC.

"As alumni director, I look forward to working closely with UNMC graduates from all corners of the state and nation," Jokela said.

She will take over as alumni director 16 years and one day after she joined UNMC to lead the RHEN program.

During her time as RHEN director, she oversaw the development of several innovative initiatives and programs that have garnered national prominence for UNMC.

In 2001, Jokela also took on the position of deputy director for the AHEC (Area Health Education Centers) Program. Through her work with Mike Sitorius, M.D., UNMC chairman of family medicine, the medical center's AHEC and RHEN programs have become leaders in meeting the rural workforce needs.

Among other developments Jokela helped initiate were the Rural Health Opportunities Program (RHOP), eighth grade science meets and other health career promotion programs.

RHOP was established to draw more students to UNMC from rural areas. Program participants are granted admission into UNMC programs right out of high school pending their successful completion of undergraduate course work at certain state colleges.

Jokela serves on the congress and the board of trustees for the National Rural Health Association and she is a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

As alumni director, Jokela said she looks forward to taking a more unified approach to dealing with medical center alumni from the various colleges and schools.

"It will be beneficial to all parties to see how we can bring our various alumni groups under a more cohesive umbrella," Jokela said. "Although we must promote each alumni chapter's identity, all of our alumni are UNMC alumni and it's important that we build and maintain collaboration among our various alumni organizations and members."

"Roxanna has performed superbly as interim director and has demonstrated the vision and passion to take our alumni activities to the next level," Bartee said. "She clearly emerged from a national search as the leading candidate among an outstanding field of candidates."

# Record crowd turns out for alumni weekend



Physical therapy class of 1993 members Cindy Dennis, Jake Wear, Natalie Harms and Barb Leymaster catch up on the past 15 years.



Pharmacy class of 1968 alumni Arlan Stutheit, Fran Moore, Dan Hughes, and his wife, Patty Hughes, enjoy the alumni reception.



Doug Brouillette and Rod Markin, both from the College of Medicine class of 1988, present UNMC College of Medicine Dean John Gollan, M.D., Ph.D., with their class gift of \$243,200 to be used for new technology in the Michael F. Sorrell Center for Health Science Education.



Reminiscing at their 50-year reunion are College of Nursing graduates: Loretta Little, Marilyn Seidel, Jo Ann Mulligan and Jeanne Greving-Hauseman.

A record 550-plus people attended the UNMC Alumni Weekend Reunion on Sept. 19-20.

"It was a great turnout," said Kim Cuda, then director of alumni relations. "We received lots of calls and e-mails from people who really enjoyed the reunion."

For the first time, many of the alumni events took place in the new Michael F. Sorrell Center for Health Science Education. "The Sorrell Center is a wonderful facility and our alumni were proud to see it," Cuda said.

For the second straight year, the reunion brought together alumni from four different UNMC academic units – the colleges of medicine, nursing and pharmacy and the School of Allied Health Professions.

Prior to 2007, each unit held its own separate reunion.

This year's alumni reunion honored the classes of 1943, 1948, 1953, 1958, 1963, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2003 and those who graduated more than 50 years ago.

During a luncheon in the Sorrell Center's Truhlsen Campus Events Center, alumni heard presentations from the four deans of the academic units involved in the reunion.

Later that day, a reception for all attendees was held in the Truhlsen Campus Events Center followed by reunion parties and dinners for the honor classes at a variety of Omaha locations. Several of the honor classes presented class gifts to their alumni associations at the reception.

Alumni activities on Sept. 20 included a presentation on philanthropic tax advantages, campus tours and a trolley tour of Omaha.

The day culminated with the UNMC Alumni Celebration and Awards Dinner at the Holiday Inn Central. Festivities included a video of alumni reminiscences, a tribute to alumni award recipients and a special recognition of Half Century Club members (those graduating 50 or more years ago).

During the video presentation, 12 UNMC alumni reflected on their careers and student days at UNMC. Representing their colleges and class years were, from the College of Medicine – Muriel Frank, '43, Dave Goldner, '98, John Goldner, '63, Don Skoog, '58, Ed Smith, '58, Denny Strauss, '68; College of Nursing - Jeanette Ekberg, '58, Karen Kresnik, '98, Sharon Redding, '68; College of Pharmacy - Paul Athey, '83, Frances Moore, '68; and School of Allied Health Profession's physical therapy program - Natalie Harms, '93.

"You could really feel an electric atmosphere in the crowd at the awards dinner," Cuda said. "The video reminiscences were well received. Some of them were quite funny, and it was obvious that the crowd enjoyed them."

The 2009 UNMC Alumni Reunion Weekend is slated for Oct. 2-3.