

# Among the Best

## Programs receive national acclaim

By Bill O'Neill

Six programs at UNMC have been ranked by U.S. News & World Report as among the best nationally in their respective areas.

"Taken together, these rankings demonstrate the high opinion of UNMC programs by faculty and administrators at other academic health science centers," said Chancellor Harold M. Maurer, M.D. "Our faculty, staff and students should be extremely proud of these rankings, as they are indicators that we are on a trajectory toward becoming a world-class academic health sciences center."

In the 2004 edition of U.S. News and World Report's guidebook of best graduate schools, the magazine ranked several UNMC programs, including the College of Medicine's first-ever ranking in research, at No. 67 nationally. The selection was based on seven factors, including peer assessment, selectivity, NIH funding and faculty/student ratios, among others. Overall, the UNMC's external research support has grown to about \$60 million, from just over \$30 million in 1998. Campus leaders are hoping to increase that amount to \$100 million around 2005.

"We are pleased with the continuing growth of the research enterprise, and certainly we're pleased with the College of Medicine's ranking in the magazine," said Thomas Rosenquist, Ph.D., vice chancellor for research at UNMC.

Several other programs also made the rankings. They include:

- The College of Nursing master's programs were ranked 39<sup>th</sup> out of more than 300 such programs in the country. The rankings were based on assessment surveys of deans, other administrators and faculty at accredited programs.
- The Physician Assistant program in the School of Allied Health Professions was ranked 14<sup>th</sup> out of 40 such programs. That ranking was based on the above criteria, as well.
- The College of Medicine was ranked 10<sup>th</sup> out

of about 125 programs in the rural medicine category, based solely on ratings by deans and senior faculty at peer institutions.

- The College of Medicine also was ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> out of about 140 programs in the primary care category, based on its percentage of graduates entering primary care, peer assessment, selectivity and faculty/student ratios.

In addition to the U.S. News rankings, UNMC was ranked among the top 10 "Best Places to Work for Postdocs" by The Scientist magazine.

UNMC was ranked fifth out of the 150 postdoctoral programs ranked by the magazine. The survey asked postdoctoral students to rate their experience in a number of categories, including training opportunities, communications, mentoring, funding, networking and other areas of concern.

At UNMC, there are more than 100 postdoc research associates and fellows, in addition to about 40 research associates who essentially fill the same kinds of roles, said David Crouse, Ph.D., associate vice chancellor for academic affairs. "This is a 1,000 percent increase from seven postdocs and seven research associates in 1994."

"The people (at UNMC) are very helpful and excited about science," said Steven J. Schreiner, Ph.D., who is doing his first postdoc at the Eppley Institute. "They do whatever they can for you, whether you need to borrow stuff or get technical information."

A native of Elmwood, Neb., Dr. Schreiner is working in the lab of Rob Lewis, Ph.D. "The competition isn't cut-throat like at other places where there's great emphasis on who has the most grants and who the big investigators are," he said. Postdocs at

UNMC have an opportunity to meet with individuals outside the institution, which gives them additional research perspectives, he said.

