

DR. WILLIAM BERNDT, FORMER UNMC CHANCELLOR, DIES

William Berndt, Ph.D., former chancellor of the University of Nebraska Medical Center, died Aug. 31 at The Nebraska Medical Center due to ongoing lung complications.



William Berndt, Ph.D.

Dr. Berndt, 73, joined UNMC in 1982 and held several key administrative posts over the next 20-plus years, serving as chancellor from 1996 to 1998. He was the seventh full-time chancellor in UNMC history and was one of the key leaders involved in the 1997 merger of University Hospital and Clarkson Hospital to create The Nebraska Medical Center.

"Bill was a great man who did wonders for UNMC at the time of our darkest days," said Harold M. Maurer, M.D., UNMC chancellor. "He was the Walter Cronkite of UNMC and was trusted by everyone at the University. He always seemed to make the right decisions for the benefit of the medical center."

Dr. Berndt joined UNMC in 1982 as professor of pharmacology and dean for graduate studies and research and was elevated to vice chancellor for academic affairs three years later. Berndt served as vice chancellor until his retirement in 2002, with the 17-year stint interrupted only when he served as interim chancellor in 1991-1992 and chancellor in 1996-1998.

Following his retirement as vice chancellor, Dr. Berndt remained active at UNMC, serving as interim chairman of the pharmacology department from 2002 to 2004. In addition, he chaired the search committees for a chairman of the department of the cell biology, anatomy and genetics in 2003 and for a chairman of the department of psychiatry in 2004.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE HELD IN OMAHA

Five hundred and twenty-five people from 44 states, including Alaska, Hawaii and international visitors from Canada and Australia, attended the National Area Health Education Center Organization (NAO) conference held June 10-14 at the Qwest Center in Omaha.



From left: Dr. Michael Sitorius, Chancellor Harold M. Maurer, Gov. Dave Heineman and Roxanna Jokela.

Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman welcomed attendees to the conference and presented Michael Sitorius, M.D., professor and chairman of family practice at UNMC, with a proclamation.

The conference provided participants the opportunity to learn about distance education, health career awareness and how to improve special community needs through 40 health education sessions and keynote speakers, said Roxanna Jokela, director of the Rural Health Education Network and deputy director of the Nebraska AHEC Program Office at UNMC.

The biannual conference is an opportunity for members of AHECs and HETCs to share ideas, learn new fundraising strategies and effective ways to approach community health issues.

PRESTIGIOUS AWARD GIVEN TO COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY

The UNMC College of Dentistry received the Hope Medical Outreach Coalition Outstanding Service Provider award this past spring. The award is given annually for "most admirably representing and promoting the principles and mission of the coalition."

The coalition is a non-profit organization that partners with more than 12 area clinics and 500 health professionals each year, to help an estimated 6,000 men, women and children. Volunteers represent hospitals, federally qualified community health centers, UNMC, Creighton University Medical Center, the Omaha District Dental Society, insurers, the business community and community organizations.

During 2005, about 300 dental and dental hygiene

faculty, students and residents provided free oral health services to about 1,000 children, with an estimated value of \$390,000.

The UNMC College of Dentistry was recognized for its work with the Hope Medical Outreach Coalition in a variety of ways, including its Sealing Smiles program, which provides free sealants for underprivileged children in Omaha Public Schools. The college also hosts Dental Day, in which it has provided free services to underserved children from Lincoln, Hastings, Lexington, Norfolk and Madison.

NEW ASSOCIATE DEAN OF SAHP STARTED AUG. 1

Kyle Meyer began his appointment as associate dean of the School of Allied Health Professions on Aug. 1.

Meyer follows Mary Haven, who retired as associate dean, a position she held for 11 years.

Prior to this appointment, Meyer served as assistant professor and director of clinical education in the Division of Physical Therapy Education since 1991, and held academic appointments at UNMC for more than 25 years.



Kyle Meyer

EXCELLENT FACULTY RECOGNIZED

Six faculty members at UNMC were recognized this past spring for their excellence in teaching, mentoring and community service.

Luis Marky, Ph.D., professor of pharmaceutical sciences in the College of Pharmacy, received the Outstanding Mentor of Graduate Students Award. Dr. Marky's firm-yet-caring reputation stems from his graduate students' description of him: demanding, yet always willing to provide additional help. He makes students feel as if they are his top priority.

Linda Jensen, Ph.D., assistant professor in the College of Nursing Kearney Division, received the Spirit of Community Service Award. Since 1991, Dr. Jensen has become one of Nebraska's most vocal advocates for persons with mental illness. Dr. Jensen takes part in many councils, groups and commissions focusing on mental illness including the Behavioral Health Oversight Commission of the Nebraska State Legislature.

Faculty members who received Outstanding Teaching Awards were:

Mary Lynn Froeschle, D.D.S., associate professor of adult restorative dentistry, UNMC College of Dentistry; Pete Iwen, Ph.D., associate professor of pathology and microbiology;

Louise LaFramboise, Ph.D., assistant professor of adult health and illness, College of Nursing; and

Gordon Todd, Ph.D., associate professor of genetics, cell biology and anatomy.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE HONOR GOES TO PHYSICAL THERAPY DIVISION

The UNMC Division of Physical Therapy Education received the University-wide Departmental Teaching Award this past spring. The annual award is given to a department within the University of Nebraska that has made unique and significant contributions to teaching.

Pat Hageman, Ph.D., director of the Division of Physical Therapy Education said the department's 14 faculty members are dedicated to being excellent teachers and are committed to improving as teachers.

Dr. Hageman's faculty is no stranger to receiving teaching awards. Over the past five years, four faculty members have received the School of Allied Health Teacher of the Year Award.

UNMC RESEARCH GRANTS REACH NEARLY \$80 MILLION

UNMC researchers received nearly \$80 million in research funding from external sources during the past year. Vice Chancellor for Research, Tom Rosenquist, Ph.D., expects that UNMC's research total will reach \$98 million by the end of next year.

Research and education in molecular genetics are the basis of a \$3.4 million grant received by James Turpen, Ph.D, professor of genetics, cell biology and anatomy. The grant will provide support and research training using state-of-the-art technology. The grant is headed by UNMC, in partnership with 11 other Nebraska colleges and universities.

UNMC's research funding has resulted in the creation of more than 2,600 highly skilled jobs in the state.

Other major grants UNMC researchers received include:

A \$2 million grant to Irving Zucker, Ph.D., cellular and integrative physiology, will combine basic physiology and biology to develop methods that will improve treatment of heart failure patients.

A \$1.7 million grant was awarded to John Chan, M.D., pathology/microbiology, to study the appearance and makeup among tumors and create a "diagnostic

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gene chip” that characterizes the molecular structure of the tumor.

A \$1.2 million grant was awarded to Dr. Rosenquist to research how environmental factors interact with genetic information during embryonic development.

TOM BROKAW TO BE HONORED WITH 2006 AMBASSADOR OF HOPE AWARD

The UNMC Eppley Cancer Center will recognize legendary newscaster Tom Brokaw with the prestigious Ambassador of Hope Award on Friday, Oct. 13, at Qwest Center Omaha.



Tom Brokaw

The event marks the first time the Ambassador of Hope Gala will be broadcast to other locations in the state. Brokaw’s speech will be broadcast live to Sidney, Lexington and Norfolk, as each of these communities will be holding their own fund-raising events for the UNMC Eppley Cancer Center.

The Ambassador of Hope Award is given to individuals who have made significant contributions in the fight against cancer through research, patient care activities or by raising public awareness of cancer. Previous recipients of the Ambassador of Hope Award include General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Sam Donaldson and Chuck Durham.

A world renowned journalist, Brokaw is best known as the anchor of the “NBC Nightly News” from 1983 to 2004. During his tenure, the program was consistently the highest rated evening news show. Brokaw began his broadcast journalism career in Omaha working at KMTV from 1962 to 1965.

In addition to the Ambassador of Hope Award, the family of the late Harlan Noddle, a prominent Omaha businessman, will receive the Margre and Chuck Durham Spirit of Nebraska Award.

For information, call (402) 934-4668 or visit www.hope-06.org.

DELEGATES PROGRAM INTRODUCED

The UNMC Delegates Program is a new grassroots advocacy program comprised of a network of people who are willing to advocate to state and federal policy makers when issues arise that are important to UNMC. This program is cost-free and involves a very minimal time investment. To learn more or to enroll, visit: www.unmc.edu/dept/unmcdelegates.

STUDENTS MIX HEALTH, SCIENCE, FUN

In a UNMC pharmacy lab, three eighth-graders – Jordyn Lechtenberg, Devin Marie Jones and Tonnie Blount – conducted an experiment about the principles of drug compounding. The result: a recipe for rubbery-textured, gummy candy.

The trio was among 58 eighth-graders from 31 schools across Nebraska exposed to the health sciences during UNMC’s 14th annual Health/Science Meet June 1-3. The goal of the meet is to provide educational and fun experiences in hopes of inspiring students, especially those from rural communities, to pursue careers in health care.

The expense-paid meet exposed students to the health professions, medical research and patient care. Events included hands-on science activities, presentations about a variety of health science disciplines, tours on campus, entertainment and a team science competition. The students qualified for the meet with science projects in regional science competitions earlier in the year.



From left: Jordyn Lechtenberg of Ainsworth, Neb., Devin Marie Jones of La Vista, Neb., and Tonnie Blount of Bellevue, Neb., participated in UNMC’s 2006 Health/Science Meet.

The evolution of *UNMC Discover*

Beginning with the next issue, *UNMC Discover* magazine will focus on UNMC’s innovative research. In addition, a new campus/alumni publication will debut next spring.