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construction, research growth continue

As I write this in my laboratory on the eighth floor of the Durham Research Center, I have the opportunity to watch the growth of its twin, the latest research facility on campus.

The DRC and the new tower together are appropriate symbols of the UNMC research enterprise, growing steadily before our eyes.

UNMC research continues to grow during a time of National Institutes of Health (NIH) famine, thanks to the diligence, hard work and world-class excellence of our scientists. This issue highlights some of them and their great work.

Joe Sisson, M.D., is one of five UNMC faculty members to receive the prestigious NIH MERIT award, and the third member of this elite group who is a physician-scientist. This is a well-deserved honor, indeed. Dr. Sisson is an outstanding example of the successful physician-scientist in the 21st century: he is devoted to his patients, nurturing and knowledgeable; and at the same time, is a sophisticated, creative, basic biological scientist – as comfortable in the laboratory as he is in the clinic.

Dr. Sisson has competition at home for the household research award: his spouse is Jennifer Larsen, M.D., also a physician-scientist who is highlighted in this edition. She has an enviable record of accomplishment that includes winning NIH support during this difficult time of limited funding opportunities. Her work is an elegant complement to the overall UNMC organ transplant program, which is one of the biggest, and surely one of the most successful, in the world.

During this century of remarkable advances in biomedical technology, UNMC's scientists are pioneering work in surgical robotics. One example you'll read about here is a brilliant collaboration between a surgeon and an engineer whose work will further refine the surgical experience, providing patients speedier recoveries and a reduced rate of infection.

As a health sciences center, one of our principal roles in society is basic discovery. But another, equally important role is to harness laboratory discovery and put it into use for the benefit of mankind. Elliott Bedows, Ph.D., and his new protein purification technique illustrates how that process works.

I'm sure you will enjoy this issue as much as I have. I'm proud to be a part of this research family, and look forward to another great year in 2008.

Thomas H. Rosenquist, Ph.D.
UNMC Vice Chancellor for Research

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