

# UNMC discover

EXPLORING RESEARCH AT THE  
**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA MEDICAL CENTER**  
AND BEYOND...

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success  
against  
the odds

The research enterprise at the University of Nebraska Medical Center continues to grow, against the odds. When the economy struggles, institutions often view their research dollars as discretionary budget items that can be reduced, rather than seeing basic discovery as the engine that ultimately revives the economy. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is an example of this phenomenon.

The NIH is the most successful and most respected biomedical research institution in the world. Its support of the basic sciences is unique. For 50 years or more, the NIH has provided the basis for most of the major discoveries in human biology. These discoveries have led to improved therapies, which have prolonged and enriched lives. Nevertheless, over the past few years, the annual funding increases for the NIH have failed to meet inflation and the availability of NIH dollars has fallen by about 25 percent.

We are losing a myriad of opportunities to support wonderful, innovative projects. We do not know which discoveries will most directly lead to improved diagnosis, treatment or cure; but we do know no gains are made without discovery. We hope and trust that our leaders in government and in the private sector will see the grave error inherent in this strategy and change directions, soon.

Nevertheless, the competitive environment is intense and for many institutions, disheartening. But at UNMC, we have had continuous gains. The first quarter for this fiscal year set a new record for total extramural research funding of more than \$32 million.

This remarkable achievement is the result, in part, of the determined efforts of a reliable corps of deans, directors and department chairs who understand well that the principal role of the academic health sciences center is discovery. These men and women have worked hard and used great vision to keep or recruit outstanding scientists and nurture them. Of course, the fundamental strength of our research enterprise is in the scientists themselves, whose creativity and performance under duress has been remarkable.

This issue of UNMC Discover focuses on a few of these admirable men and women. It is impossible to read about their excellent, innovative work and not see with greater clarity why UNMC is succeeding against the odds, and why it is so important to expand the research enterprise globally.

Tom Rosenquist, Ph.D.  
UNMC Vice Chancellor for Research