

## a look to the future

by Harold M. Maurer, M.D.

Your University of Nebraska Medical Center is hard at work for the people of Nebraska.

During my first few months as chancellor, I've traveled from one corner of Nebraska to another. I've met many hard-



Harold M. Maurer, M.D.,  
Chancellor

working people who believe in their state and are looking to the Medical Center for assistance.

One of the constant themes I've heard during these trips

is the need for more health-care professionals in underserved areas of Nebraska. We're listening and we promise to help.

During my travels throughout Nebraska, I've shared my vision for my term as chancellor. Now, I'd like to share it with you in this inaugural edition of *UNMC Discover* magazine. Some of you may have received *Impact* magazine in the past. We've changed its format and its name. We'll be sharing word of our endeavors and accomplishments through *UNMC Discover*. We hope you like it.

One of my goals during my term as chancellor is to raise the educational bar at UNMC. We want to attract the brightest and best students. Part of our mission is to

educate primary care health professionals for the state. As you may know, about one-half of the health-care professionals practicing in Nebraska were educated at UNMC. We pledge to do our best to prepare our students to one day serve you.

Another part of my vision for UNMC is to create a rich environment for the faculty, staff and students at the Medical Center. We will continue to focus on diversity at UNMC.

Improving the health of all Nebraska is UNMC's mission. This mission challenges us to reach out to all, including the underserved — whether they be in Omaha or across the state.

During my travels throughout the state, I've asked the people I have met how their medical center can better serve them. Your input is greatly appreciated.

This is an exciting time at UNMC. As you may recall, UNMC, along with its partner Nebraska Health System, dedicated the Lied Transplant Center late last year. The center is receiving positive responses from the patients and their families who are staying there. Our scientists have moved their laboratories into the transplant center. They tell me the environment is ripe for discovery.

Research always has been a staple of the University of Nebraska Medical Center. During the last fiscal year, UNMC researchers received more than \$34 million in grants — up 26 percent from the previous year.

We can do better — much better. I have challenged our faculty to double that research funding in the

next five years. To do so, will mean UNMC is on its way to becoming a world-class academic health sciences institution.

Now is an exciting time at UNMC for many other reasons. Our master plan includes the creation of two research towers on the western end of our campus.

One building will be devoted to the neurosciences. Our scientists already are experts in the study of Alzheimer's disease, brain tumors, AIDS and stroke. Through collaboration, they may be able to stymie these afflictions of the brain.

The other tower will be devoted to stem (seed-like) cell research. What may have seemed like science fiction just a few years ago is becoming reality. Scientists hope to grow cells into organs. This may help alleviate the vast shortage for organ donors in this country.

UNMC's history runs long. Our record of service to Nebraska is without equal. Now is not the time to become complacent. We can be content with our achievements or we can push forward, striving for discovery and new knowledge. We choose to push forward — and we invite the people of Nebraska to come along. *d*