

Irving Zucker, Ph.D., professor and chairman of physiology and biophysics, is one of the nation's leading cardiovascular researchers.

His laboratory facilities

are some of the nation's worst.

# Attaining A HIGHER LEVEL OF excellence

By Lindsay Willis

Housed on the fifth floor of UNMC's Bennett Hall, Dr. Zucker's laboratories face the corner of 42nd and Emile streets.

When heavy trucks and machinery pass the building, his equipment vibrates and his experiments suffer.

Dr. Zucker has special tables to help minimize the movement, and screens to help block electrical noise. However, for his highly technical work, the tables and screens are not enough.

Dr. Zucker is not alone.

Nearly 20 percent of the Medical Center's existing research laboratories are in pre-World War I buildings. In some cases, UNMC scientists are conducting cutting-edge research in laboratory space that until recently, sported duct tape along the windowsills to keep out the north wind.

The National Science Foundation recently reported that 23 percent of research space at the top 100 U.S. institutions is in need of replacement or major renovation. The amount of unsuitable research space at UNMC is 34 percent, significantly higher than the national average.

Laboratories in Poynter, Bennett and Shackleford halls and the University Geriatric Center need to be replaced and cannot accommodate the highly technical research of UNMC scientists.

A new infrastructure is needed to accommodate UNMC's growth. The answer: The Research Center for Excellence.

The new building, which will help alleviate UNMC's space shortage, will be constructed on the western edge of the Medical Center's main campus on 45th Street, between Emile Street and Dewey Avenue.

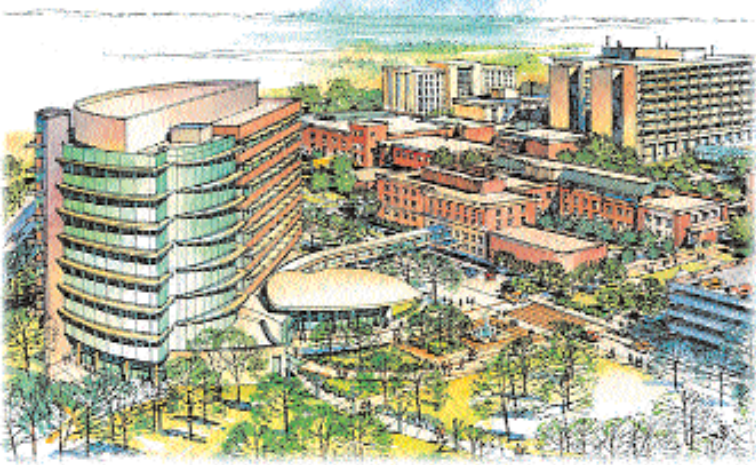
It will replace the University Geriatric Center, which will be razed in January 2001, with construction of the new building to begin that April. A utility plant, which will supplement the existing plant and support campus growth, will be built on the southwest corner of Dewey Avenue and 40th Street. The University of Nebraska Board of

Regents recently approved building the utility plant and proceeding with design of the Research Center for Excellence, all of which are expected to be completed in 2003.

The \$77 million research center will house state-of-the-art laboratories, classrooms and a large amphitheater. No state tax dollars will be used to build the center, but state funding will be requested for operating and maintenance costs. Most of the funding to build the center will come from private and community support.

The new research facility will promote collaboration among researchers across disciplines and house multidisciplinary research activities in UNMC's strategic priority areas. UNMC administrators expect that research in cancer, cardiovascular diseases, developmental biology, genetics/molecular genetics, neurobiology and organ transplantation biology will be enhanced through the center.

UNMC Chancellor Harold M. Maurer, M.D., strongly believes in the power of research. He knows it is essential to achieving all aspects of UNMC's mission, including education and patient care.



working in the facility.

In addition to Web access in the small group rooms, a large computer cluster room that will network with patient rooms, research laboratories, the library and other universities will provide students a myriad of information at their disposal.

“At a time when UNMC is poised to confront medical challenges and push medical advancement, the Research Center for Excellence is a vehicle to achieve the Medical Center’s vision. The blueprint for success requires new research space to keep pace with UNMC’s accelerated drive toward research excellence,” Dr. Maurer said. *d*

“Achieving our vision will dramatically improve the health and well-being of all Nebraskans,” Dr. Maurer said. “UNMC stands poised to confront medical challenges, and as it has done before, push medical advancement to improve and save lives.”

The possibilities for progress are endless — UNMC expects to be at the forefront.

“Working collectively, UNMC scientists from a variety of research programs will achieve new heights. Collaboration sparks inquiry, which leads to discovery,” Dr. Maurer said.

Tom Rosenquist, Ph.D., chairman and professor of cell biology and anatomy, is leading UNMC’s research efforts. As director of research development, he is confident the collaborative environment will enhance UNMC’s current research efforts.

“UNMC has an open research environment,” he said. “Scientists continually marvel at our collaboration and cooperation among researchers. Our scientists realize that research can’t be conducted in a vacuum. We must work together.”

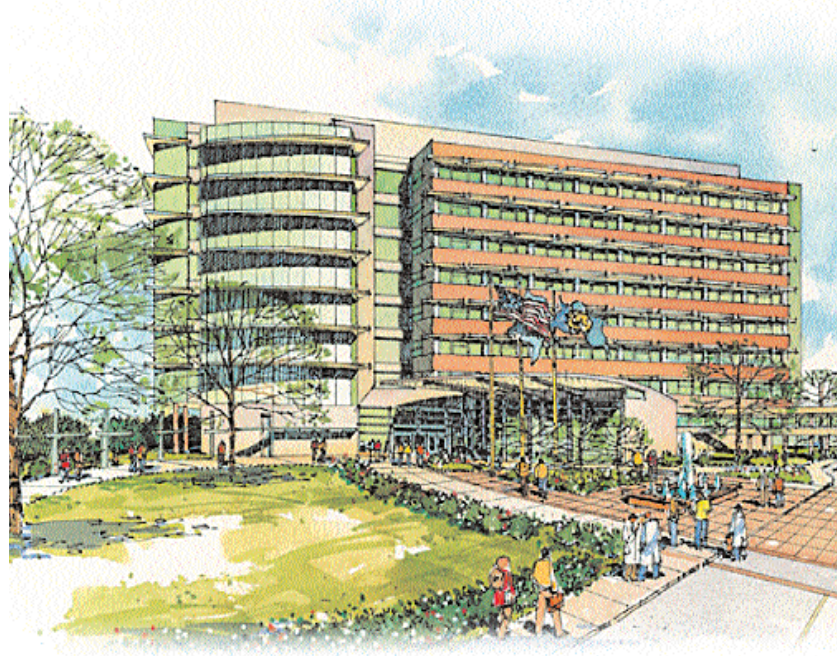
In addition to leading cutting-edge research initiatives in Nebraska, the Medical Center is committed to education. UNMC has a proud tradition of educating health professionals.

Educational facilities equipped with the finest instructional technology will help UNMC continue its mission of training health-care professionals for the state. More than one-half of the health-care professionals practicing in Nebraska were educated at UNMC.

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The research center will include a 225-seat auditorium ideal for symposia, workshops and community outreach programs, as well as two larger classrooms. Expanded and collaborative programming between the colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy and Dentistry and the School of Allied Health Professions will be possible with the addition of these facilities.

As the curricula of the various UNMC colleges focus more on problem-based learning, a method of small group learning in which students work through clinical problems or patient cases, the need for small group rooms is increasingly important. Small-group classrooms will help UNMC face its current shortage of quality educational space. These rooms will be located throughout the building and also will serve as seminar/conference rooms for faculty and students



## CAMPUS MASTER PLAN

### CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE: 2003

#### BUILD:

East Utility Plant, on the southwest corner of Dewey Avenue and 40th Street, will supplement the existing plant and support campus growth, enhance utility reliability and improve energy costs.

#### DEMOLISH:

University Geriatric Center in January 2001.

#### RENOVATE:

Poynter, Bennett and Shackelford halls.

#### BUILD:

The Research Center for Excellence on the former location of University Geriatric Center, with construction to begin April 2001.