

## Facilities key to



Harold M. Maurer, M.D., Chancellor

# UNMC's growth

*On the following pages, you'll find a lot of information on UNMC's newest building, the Durham Research Center. We're very proud of the DRC, and we couldn't be more grateful toward its benefactors, including principal donor Chuck Durham.*

*It's amazing to me what the building has done for the perception of our university. After seeing the building for the first time, a few people told me almost apologetically, "I didn't know you did research at UNMC."*

We certainly do conduct research – some of the world's best. The Durham Research Center allows us to take our research to a higher level. Scientists from various disciplines are tackling key research questions in strategic areas, including ophthalmology, cardiovascular disease, neurosciences, transplantation biology and others. In addition, the Durham Research Center already has helped to recruit more than 30 scientists to the campus.

Already, the sparks have flown. As scientists move from buildings nearly a century old to a building that has all the latest advances, they are filled with enthusiasm. Morale is at an all-time high. We look forward to their work leading to finding cures to many debilitating diseases and illnesses.

The positive energy that the Durham Research Center has spawned, as well as its success as a recruiting tool, are just a couple of reasons why I continue to push for new facilities at UNMC. We must have cutting-edge facilities if we are to continue our momentum toward becoming a world-class academic health sciences center.

Many of our buildings are old and out-of-date. We have not kept up with construction advances that would allow for our scientists to perform the best research, for our students to learn in the best environment, or for our clinicians to provide care in state-of-the-art surroundings. Because of that, the Medical Center has been primarily a place to provide a good education and good clinical care. If we want to get beyond that, to be truly world-class, we've got to build facilities. This would allow our programs to succeed and our vision to become reality.

On page 10 of this issue of Discover, you'll find more information about another facility – the Center for Health Science Education – that will make us cutting-edge in our educational delivery.

In addition, three other facility projects are noteworthy:

- Construction already is under way for a \$56.5 million addition to the hospital of our partner, The Nebraska Medical Center. Set to open in May 2005, this facility will house a new emergency room, surgical area, radiology department and neonatal intensive care unit.
- An 11,825-square-foot current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP) Transplant Production Facility has been approved by the Board of Regents. It will process cells and tissues for transplantation, as well as experimental new vaccines developed at UNMC.
- The sister building to the Durham Research Center is still in its planning stages. About a third of the building would be used for bioterrorism preparedness research laboratories; one-third would be used for cancer research; and one-third would be designated for other researchers. Gov. Mike Johanns recommended, and the Legislature approved, that UNMC receive \$6 million from homeland security funding and another \$6 million from the tobacco settlement fund, to advance the state's efforts in bioterrorism preparedness. The \$12 million would be contingent upon UNMC receiving private funding of \$30 million. All of those monies would assist UNMC in constructing the second research building.

All of these facilities are fundamental to the success of UNMC. A vibrant medical center must grow, or it will die. We must maintain a vision for the future, and that vision must include new buildings, in which we will research the best ideas, educate the best students, and provide the best care for patients from across Nebraska and beyond.

*Harold M. Maurer, MD*