

# 'The Developer'

*Gollan brings people together  
to advance college*

**Q:** How do you hope to move UNMC's College of Medicine forward in the next five years?

**A:** In short, my primary goal is to make this a nationally competitive College of Medicine. To do that, we're developing a strategic plan for the College of Medicine that takes the broad concepts in the UNMC Strategic Plan and applies it to the college. Overall, we want to enhance and expand the educational environment, increase our prominence as a research health sciences center, develop selected new technologies to advance health education, enhance our community partnerships and our clinical services with The Nebraska Medical Center, and create a culturally competent organization that builds employee loyalty and satisfaction.

In addition, we're doing a systematic review of each department to ensure the highest quality clinical care and teaching program. We're also working to further improve communication since working relationships are absolutely critical to our success as an academic health science center.

We've also starting to prepare for our accreditation visit at the end of 2005 and are trying to increase our program development funds and the number of endowed chairs. If we make strides in these areas, we'll be on track to more broadly enhance our standing nationally.

**Q:** As the largest college on campus, what role does the College of Medicine play at UNMC?

**A:** We're essentially the driver because without the College of Medicine, University Medical Associates (the physician group practice for UNMC faculty) doesn't exist, the hospital doesn't have doctors, half the research dollars disappear and medical students aren't trained. The college drives much of what is related to medicine, education, research and patients.

**Q:** How do you envision the partnership with UNMC's hospital partner, The Nebraska Medical Center, evolving in the future?

**A:** I can't overstate the importance of the partnership between The Nebraska Medical Center and the college. I truly believe a lot of what we've achieved so far is due to a mutual respect and a really excellent working relationship between the hospital and ourselves. That doesn't mean we always agree on all issues, but we both have a common vision of where we want to go and, mutually, are so entwined that we'd be foolish to jeopardize that. The hospital has a well-oiled, functional strategic planning committee, which meets on a regular basis and represents the private side and the university side. As a result, a mutual respect between university and private physicians has been developed, which has enabled the hospital to enhance its function and created an environment where you can introduce new ideas.

**Q:** How will UNMC's plans for a new education building enhance student learning?

**A:** It will unlock a whole new dimension of education for our students by moving us from 'tired' facilities into state-of-the-art classrooms, in which informational technology plays a central role. The Center for Health Science Education also will have intimate settings in which students practice and learn clinical skills in preparation for their first patients.

The building itself will become the heart of campus and a 'home' for the College of Medicine. Socially, it will put our faculty members and students in one location and enhance and encourage mentoring and personal interaction, which is critically important to education.

**Q:** In an increasingly diverse society, how do academic health science centers improve the cultural competency of their health care professionals?

**A:** There is no simple answer. The response has to be by all of us. Dr. Rubens Pamies (vice chancellor for academic affairs) has done an outstanding job in driving a number of initiatives that in time will leave their mark, including an online pre-matriculation program and an affiliation with five Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Virginia and a leading Virginia junior college. We're also looking at revising the curriculum so it is more culturally competent.

**Q:** How have your professional experiences in the United States and in your native Australia influenced your outlook on the role of academic health science centers?

**A:** How any of us think at a moment in time is a reflection of our past experiences. The vision I have embodies pieces of the east coast and west coast (Harvard Medical School in Boston and the University of California-San Francisco), the University of London and University of Adelaide in Australia. The most recent administration experience I have was at Adelaide – the Australian/British system is a very fragmented structure where different people serve as chief of medicine for the university, head of internal medicine for the hospital and chief of the research institute. When we sat down, I said, in a not so modest way, that I'm going to be chief of all three pieces as I'd seen in the United States, and we basically merged all three areas. They now use that model in other Australian schools. Overall, I believe working in a united fashion is key to an institution's success. The more pieces you can bring into the core, the more successful you can be in terms of management. It's all about togetherness.

**Q:** What attracted you most to UNMC?  
**Q:** What has surprised you most about Nebraska?

**A:** I was attracted to UNMC by the people and the opportunity that abounded here, in terms of where the college can go. The potential is enormous. Michael Sorrell, M.D., who is probably the epitome of loyalty and dedication to a school, urged me to visit and told me great things are happening on campus. He was right, there is a great opportunity to achieve something special. The Midwest mentality people talk about is very real and you notice this having lived on the coasts. This is a different world and it's terrific to be a part of it.

**Q:** In addition to being a physician, researcher, and administrator, you've described yourself as a "developer." Explain.

**A:** This is what I most enjoy – bringing people together, creating from an idea an entity that can ripple out and impact patient care and education, and enhancing research that will further our understanding of the complexity of medicine. (Chancellor Hal Maurer, M.D.) is a brick builder, but I like filling the buildings with high quality faculty and great ideas. I don't see all those ideas emanating from the dean's office. In an academic world, I see them emanating from the faculty and staff who get excited with a new idea, break down my door and who I then have the privilege of working with to get a new project on the rails and moving. ■

