

Capital projects essential to long-term success



Harold M. Maurer, M.D., Chancellor

A few years ago, I went on record as saying that I hoped that there would be construction cranes on the UNMC campus for the next decade. By this time next year, I'm proud to announce, a couple of the iron-armed machines will hover over two new construction projects on campus. The two new buildings – one devoted to education and the other to research – will allow us to reach new heights as an academic health sciences center.

Located at the northeast quadrant of 42nd and Emile Streets, the Center for Health Science Education will be home to the College of Medicine. The education center will include state-of-the-art learning environments, including simulation and clinical-skills teaching laboratories; a large computerized testing facility; student support services; commons areas for students interaction; and other amenities. Site preparation for the center is under way with construction will begin in the next few months.

For many years, our medical faculty have done an outstanding job of educating our students despite antiquated, outdated facilities. The new building will

provide our faculty with the capabilities to use 21st-Century teaching methods to educate the physicians of tomorrow. The greatest beneficiaries will be the citizens that these physicians serve in Nebraska and around the world.

Across campus, plans are being finalized for the Research Center of Excellence II, the sister building to the Durham Research Center. The second research tower will be located just south of the DRC, and it will have nearly an identical look. An extremely generous gift from Omaha businessman Chuck Durham provided a significant boost to building the second research tower. In addition, the Nebraska Legislature designated \$12 million over the next three years to go toward a bioterrorism preparedness facility within the second research tower.

This tower will enable UNMC to improve the health and biosecurity of Nebraskans. We will accomplish this by providing additional infrastructure for biomedical research, biosecurity preparedness and clinical laboratory service. The tower is essential if we are to maintain the momentum of our research enterprise. Since 2000, our annual research funding has grown from around \$30 million to more than \$72 million. Before the end of this decade, we aim to reach \$200 million.

A key component of our future research growth will be our ability to recruit world-class medical scientists. Certainly, the Durham Research Center has enhanced our ability to do this, and the DRC already is full despite the stringent requirements that scientists must meet to earn space there. The second tower will provide us with much-needed “growing space” for our research enterprise, and it will enhance our reputation even further. Construction for the Research Center of Excellence II could begin early next year, with substantial completion slated for October 2007.

I am extremely excited about these projects because of how they will stimulate our campus to provide even better medical research and education for the people of Nebraska and beyond. I hope that you share in my enthusiasm. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or write.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Harold M. Maurer, M.D." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Harold M. Maurer, M.D.