

December 3, 2020

Dear COPH Students, Staff, and Faculty,

We have made it through another month of 2020. I hope everyone had a lovely Thanksgiving holiday and found ways to “virtually” spend time with your family and friends. I hope you were able to take time to remember those who are no longer with us and give thanks to those on the frontlines working 24/7/365 to protect lives in Nebraska and beyond. This year, I am truly thankful for your kindness and commitment to the health of our communities.

Our country had a Presidential election that was a significant moment in American history and one that evoked strong reactions and emotions from many. These events have reinforced that our efforts and mission do not change. We strive every day for a better tomorrow with a focus on disease prevention, health equity, healthy communities, and social justice. I look forward to bold new ideas to address the social injustices and health inequities in our communities and know that we will stand together to reaffirm our commitment to those who are disenfranchised or discriminated against.

Congratulations to Aislinn Rookwood of the Department of Health Promotion, our November Silver U Award winner! Aislinn is known for demonstrating the UNMC values of teamwork as a community member and has successfully networked to build trusting relationships in the urban American Indian community in Omaha. Her dedication to the YES! program has resulted in exceptional relationships with community partners, a rise in student participation, the development of research opportunities, and more Native student interest in public health research related to cancer. Thank you, Aislinn for your continued dedication to public health and our community!

We had a great turnout for the virtual Deans Town Hall this morning! Thank you to everyone who joined me. Special thank you to Mrs. Brenda Nickol for providing us with a Career Services updates and insights. Thank you to Dr. Katie Brandert, Ms. Colleen Svoboda, and Dr. Brandon Grimm for providing me with the Ideas to Action update. I love being able to see all of you “in-person” and being able to answer questions and hear your comments. I look forward to our next town hall on March 3, 2021!

To enjoy this holiday season, our UNMC community partners offer holiday events geared to the entire family. Please see UNMC Today for a full list of [holiday activities](#).

This month is the last of 2020 and we have many students who will earn their degrees after years of hard work. I hope everyone will make time to congratulate these students. [The College of Public Health Virtual Convocation Ceremony](#) is Friday, December 18th at 9:00 a.m. CDT and the [UNMC Virtual Commencement Ceremony](#) is at 2:00 p.m. CDT.



Always listening and learning,

ask

Ali S. Khan, MD, MPH

Retired Assistant Surgeon General, USPHS

Dean and Professor

College of Public Health | Office of the Dean