

November 30, 2016

Dear Team,

November has been full of activity and change.

As everyone has heard, there are many fiscal challenges facing the state of Nebraska and those challenges will result in cuts to our University system's state funding. There will be difficult decisions ahead and this has required us to immediately begin exercising great fiscal restraint. President Bounds and Chancellor Gold have communicated to all of us that they are committed to protecting our students, faculty, and staff during these challenges.

Our country had a Presidential election that was a significant moment in American history and one that evoked strong reactions and emotions from many. The campus and the College held forums to provide faculty, staff, and students the opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns.

These events have reinforced that our efforts and mission do not change. As I wrote in an email earlier this month, 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.

There are many congratulations to give this month. Senior Associate Dean, Dr. Jane Meza, will soon begin a new role as [interim associate vice chancellor for global and student support](#) for UNMC, the University of Nebraska at Omaha and Nebraska Medicine. Although she is stepping down as Chair of the Department of Biostatistics, she will continue her Senior Associate Dean role in the College. Dr. Fernando Wilson was honored by the Midlands Mentoring Partnership at an event on November 16. He was generous in donating his research this year to help the organization study the return on investment for mentoring in Nebraska. Dr. Melissa Tibbits was awarded a 2016 Distinguished Scientist Award. Melissa earned this award by being a research leader at UNMC with a history of significant funding and recognition based on her scholarly activity. Last, but not least, Dr. John Lowe was one of three principal investigators on a project that was awarded nearly \$20 million by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to develop a [Training, Simulation and Quarantine Center](#) to teach federal health care personnel procedures in treating highly infectious diseases and to create a place to monitor persons who have received a high-risk exposure to a highly infectious disease, such as Ebola.



Our awesome students threw a pre-Thanksgiving Potluck that was a huge hit. I can't tell you how disappointed I was to miss out! The active and welcoming student body is one of the things that makes me so proud to be your Dean

I hope everyone had a lovely Thanksgiving holiday with their loved ones and were able to take time to remember and give thanks to those who are no longer with us. Sadly, one of our own, Roxanne Jessen, passed away this month leaving behind her sister, her children, and their families. She will be greatly missed.

Next month is the last of 2016 and we have many students who will earn their degrees after years of hard work. I hope everyone will make time to attend [convocation and commencement](#) in celebration of these students.

Always listening,
Ask

Ali S. Khan, MD, MPH

Retired Assistant Surgeon General, USPHS

Dean and Professor

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