

October 5, 2015

Dear Team:

In my August Random Musings, I thanked Fred and Eve Simon for their very generous gift to the College to support scholarships, enhance the student experience, develop programs, and to provide seed grants for research. At that time I had no idea that we'd be saying goodbye to Fred in September. Fred Simon passed away on September 28, 2015 at the age of 78. Fred served as Chair of the College of Public Health Capital Campaign Committee. Fred and Eve Simon were principal donors for our building and without them the Maurer Center for Public Health would not have been possible. Mr. Simon was a friend and mentor who introduced me to the Omaha community when I first arrived. He was a dedicated, vocal advocate for healthier Nebraskans, and his and his wife Eve's support has been truly impactful. He will be greatly missed by the entire public health community. We will continue to honor them with a new named scholarship and prize during our annual award ceremony.

I enjoyed meeting with each set of the College's Strategic Planning Workgroup co-chairs to discuss their proposed Action Plans for Year 1. I have to say, I was impressed with all of the great ideas generated by stakeholders at the Consensus Workshops and the activities chosen to focus on this academic year. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee will meet in mid-October to finalize the Year 1 Action Plans for all four strategic priority areas. Your participation is vital to the success of these activities, so if you haven't signed up for a group and would like to contribute your time and talent, please contact the Strategic Planning Workgroup co-chairs directly or Aleta Gaertner. Visit the 2015 Strategic Planning intranet page for more info.

Some exciting news from Shinobu Watanabe-Galloway: She and her team are preparing to launch a pilot study of binge drinking screening and treatment at the University of Nebraska Medical Center Midtown clinic. This pilot study is part of our efforts to decrease the amount of binge drinking in our state, which is a serious public health issue.

Congratulations to Denise Britigan who was appointed as Director of the newly created UNMC Office of Community Engagement. She will lead an office that will focus on growing and enhancing student, faculty, college and institutional capacity for community engagement. Serving our community is such an important part of our mission and Denise will, no doubt, do an excellent job in this role.

We had the honor of listening to the inaugural lecture of the Drs. Warren L. and Gretchen G. Berggren Lectureship Series. This is the first endowed lectureship for the College established through a gift from Carol Swarts, M.D., UNMC COM class of 1959, a longtime friend of the couple. Dr. Gretchen Berggren provided us a fabulous lecture on her vast experiences with



global maternal and child health. She and Dr. Swarts were gracious enough to spend several hours with our students, which I know was time well spent.

It has been great to see so many students, staff and faculty attending Special Topics in Epidemiology: Emerging Infectious Disease. One of the perks of being the Dean is I can teach whatever I want (smile). The course is every Friday from 10:00 – 12:00 in MCPH 3013 and we still have plenty of exciting guest lecturers left this semester! Students can contact the Student Association President if they'd like to join me and guest lecturers for lunch after class.

Always listening,
Ask

Ali S. Khan, MD, MPH

Retired Assistant Surgeon General, USPHS

Dean and Professor

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