UNMC Connect

UNMC students make a difference
In my first several months at its helm, I have found UNMC to be a highly focused, strategic organization. Yet, it is at the same time dynamic, warm, welcoming, innovative, engaged and what I would characterize as highly “relevant.”

By this, I mean this is an academic health sciences center that is building upon its legacy but focused on its future. As am I.

A good part of our future lies in the hands of our students, who are, as you will read in this issue of UNMC Connect, reaching for excellence.

It is part of our core mission to educate the next generation of health care professionals, physicians, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, physician assistants and many other allied health and public health professionals. We always look for ways to challenge them to be their very best.

At their best, as you’ll note in upcoming pages, our students always look for ways to challenge themselves.

But this work is not just about them. As you will see, these projects also often intersect with another part of our mission – outreach. You may sometimes hear me refer to it as engagement.

This is engagement with our local community, engagement with the state of Nebraska, across the United States and engagement on a global stage, to ensure that we remain relevant.

At first glance, the stories in this issue may seem to be simply about education. But they also are about engagement, engagement that benefits us as much as it does those we strive to serve.

If we are not an engaged university we can’t have the very best educational programs, our research will not be as relevant as it can possibly be, and our clinical care will not reflect the lessons learned from our partners here in Nebraska, throughout this country and around the world.

It is my goal that everyone at UNMC and our clinical partners, our 5,000-plus employees, our supporters and all of our colleagues, align his or her personal mission with the concept that we are changing the world by improving the human condition.

I would like everybody involved with UNMC to get up in the morning, as I do, and say, “I know today is going to be a great day, because today I am going to help improve the human condition.” And, I’d like every one of them also, when they get home at night, and are asked, “What did you get to do today?” That their answer will be, “Today, I improved the human condition.”

This is what we do.

Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.
UNMC Chancellor
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Matthew Rizzo, M.D., named chair of neurological sciences

In April, University of Iowa neurologist Matthew Rizzo, M.D., joined UNMC as the Frances and Edgar Reynolds Professor and chair of the department of neurological sciences. He also was named the co-director of the Nebraska Neuroscience Alliance (NNA) joining Howard Gendelman, M.D., chair of the department of pharmacology and experimental neuroscience, in that role.

Dr. Rizzo said the key subspecialties in the department – stroke, epilepsy, neuromuscular disorders, multiple sclerosis, movement disorders and behavioral neurology – provide a promising nucleus on which to build. He is especially intrigued by the collaborative opportunities that can take place with neurosurgery, psychiatry, pharmacology and experimental neuroscience, nanomedicine and regenerative medicine.

Toby Warden, Ph.D., who serves as scientific administrator for neurological sciences and facilitates neuroscience research growth in the department, the NNA and throughout UNMC, joins Dr. Rizzo. She previously served in an administrative role with the National Academy of Sciences.

James Armitage, M.D., has received the 2014 American Society of Clinical Oncology’s Special Recognition Award. The award honors individuals for major contributions in areas of clinical oncology, cancer research, clinical trials, reimbursement, and patient advocacy activities and who have given long-term service to ASCO and to clinical oncology.

Dr. Armitage, Joe Shapiro Professor of Internal Medicine in the division of oncology/hematology, is globally recognized as a leading expert on non-Hodgkin lymphoma, and played a critical role in advancing bone marrow transplantation. The Kearney, Neb., native developed and directed the bone marrow transplant programs at the University of Iowa and later at UNMC, where he also served as vice chair of internal medicine, chief of the section of oncology and hematology, chair of the department of internal medicine, and dean of the College of Medicine.

“My association with ASCO over the last 35 years has been a rewarding part of my career,” he said. “ASCO has never wavered from its commitment to cancer patients in getting patients the best possible treatment and care.”

Whenever there is an E-coli outbreak, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention collects data from public health laboratories in the affected states using a data exchange system created by a group spearheaded by Steven Hinrichs, M.D., chairman of pathology and microbiology at UNMC.

Before public health laboratories were catapulted to the spotlight by anthrax scares post-9/11, data was gathered the old-fashioned way, with pen and paper. After 9/11, federal officials realized how antiquated that system was.

With the leadership and help of Dr. Hinrichs, a model was created and piloted at the Nebraska Public Health Lab and later implemented across the country at other labs. “It really transformed the public health lab and how information is collected and shared,” Dr. Hinrichs said.

For his contributions to public health laboratory science and practice, Dr. Hinrichs was given the Association of Public Health Laboratories Lifetime Achievement Award in May.
Ebola patient arrives at The Nebraska Medical Center

At the request of the U.S. State Department, Dr. Rick Sacra, M.D., arrived Sept. 5 for treatment at The Nebraska Medical Center and UNMC after contracting the Ebola virus while treating patients in West Africa. Dr. Sacra works for SIM, an international mission group that responds to people in need across the globe.

“This unit is specifically designed to care for patients of this nature and is staffed with infectious disease experts who have prepared for years for situations like this one,” said Phil Smith, M.D., medical director of the Bioccontainment Unit. “The unit is sealed, guarded and secure. It’s separate from other patient care areas.”

UNMC’s 10-bed unit is the largest of three similar facilities in the United States: Emory University in Atlanta, operated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Md.; and the Rocky Mountain Laboratory in Montana.

Hospital partner expands to 24/7 trauma care

On Aug. 1, The Nebraska Medical Center expanded its trauma services and began operating its trauma center 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

“This is the right thing to do for everyone who lives here,” said P.J. Schenarts, M.D., professor of surgery in the UNMC College of Medicine and trauma medical director at The Nebraska Medical Center. “Although the trauma system we’ve used for the last 20 years is functional, we have an obligation to provide something more.”

Since 1993, The Nebraska Medical Center had worked cooperatively with CHI Health in a combined trauma system. The joint program resulted in two part-time trauma centers that couldn’t be recognized by the American College of Surgeons - the national accrediting body that is the gold standard for trauma centers in the U.S.

Last year, external, independent reviewers noted that while the current system met patient needs, it could be optimized even further, suggesting that the center “could function independently” and “this option should be explored vigorously.”

The timing was right, clinical leaders said, because resources and infrastructure were in place and health care reform continues to push systems to operate more efficiently.

“The patients are our number one priority,” Dr. Schenarts said. “We provide specialty care in areas like vascular surgery, neurosurgery, pediatric trauma, ophthalmology and burn care every day as it is. It’s the right thing to do to provide access to that care for everyone in the region, regardless of what day of the week it is.”

Already recognized by the state as a Level 1 trauma center, The Nebraska Medical Center will now undergo a further certification process by the American College of Surgeons to verify Level 1 status.

Fitness center redevelopment approved

In May, the University of Nebraska Board of Regents approved a $6 million redevelopment and expansion of UNMC’s campus fitness facility. Construction likely will begin in December and be completed by December 2015.

The existing fitness facility, known as the Center for Healthy Living, opened in 1996 inside the 64,755-square-foot Student Life Center on the east edge of the Omaha campus. Approximately 3,000 faculty, staff and students use the facility and equipment, intramural programs and fitness classes.

“As our emphasis on campus wellness has increased, so, too, have student concerns for improved fitness facilities,” said Jayme Nekuda, director of benefits and work-life programs at UNMC. “Thanks to generous private funding and considerable student input we’re ready to move the project forward.”

Longtime UNMC supporters Ruth and Bill Scott are the lead donors on the project, which was initiated by the UNMC Student Senate. The Scotts’ generosity has transformed the UNMC campus, leading to new buildings for the Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Public Health and Pharmacy. They also provided the lead gifts for the UNMC Ruth and Bill Scott Student Plaza and the campus art feature.

The proposed project includes:

- A new 6,525-square-foot addition to the Student Life Center building that relocates the entry of the Center for Healthy Living from the south side of the building to the north side, facing the Ruth and Bill Scott Student Plaza.
- Renovating 11,845 square feet on two floors in the existing facility to provide larger strength and fitness machine areas; additional dedicated group fitness activity areas; permanent areas for stretching and table tennis, which is popular with international students; and larger locker rooms with private changing areas and showers.
- Replacing the gymnasium’s synthetic floor with a wood sports floor for user comfort and safety.
- Installing outside bicycle lockers for UNMC personnel who want to securely store their bicycles.
- Students are strong advocates of the project, said Student Senate President Krupa Savalia. Student leaders, including fourth-year College of Medicine student Eric Nagengast, grandson of the Scotts, have worked alongside administrators to survey the campus about their fitness center needs and helped with the conceptual programming. The project is one of the Student Senate’s top priorities.
This spring, eight UNMC faculty members were honored for their exceptional teaching, mentoring and community service.

The University of Nebraska Innovation, Development and Engagement Award (IDEA)

Dmitry Oleynikov, M.D., and University of Nebraska-Lincoln colleague and co-IDEA recipient Shane Farritor, Ph.D., have developed miniature, mobile, remotely controlled surgical robotic devices that fit entirely inside the abdominal cavity. Their partnership has resulted in multiple patents and technology commercialization and is a model for cross-campus collaboration. Dr. Oleynikov is the Joseph and Richard Still Endowed Professor of Surgery in the department of surgery, director of the Center for Minimally Invasive Surgery and director of the Center for Advanced Surgical Technology.

Watch a video about Drs. Oleynikov and Farritor and their work. unmc.edu/connect

UNMC Spirit of Community Service Award

Debra Romberger, M.D., interim chair of internal medicine, vice chair of research for internal medicine and associate chief of staff for research at Omaha’s VA medical center, grew up in a farming community near Abilene, Kan., with parents who valued volunteer work. She began volunteering as an M.D. at One World Health Clinic in Omaha around 1995 and has since served numerous community groups. Being involved, she says, enriches her life.

UNMC Outstanding Faculty Mentor of Graduate Students Award

Tony Hollingsworth, Ph.D., the Dr. and Mrs. Tim D. Leon Professor, instills confidence in every graduate student he mentors. Of 27 current and former students mentored, he’s given each the freedom to pursue scientific questions that interest them and the responsibility to test their hypotheses. He tells them to not be afraid to fail because when you work on problems as difficult as pancreatic cancer you learn how to overcome adversity and be successful.

UNMC Outstanding Faculty Mentor of Graduate Students Award

Howard Gendelman, M.D., Margaret R. Larson Professor of Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases and chair of pharmacology and experimental neuroscience, knows mentoring is more than a single paper accepted for publication, a new job acquired or a grant funded. It’s a continuum. In fact, the “knowledge that my influence, my time and my energies have made a positive difference in someone else’s professional journey is one of life’s biggest rewards.”

Inaugural UNMC Outstanding Mentor of Junior Faculty Award

Carol Skowron Lomneth, Ph.D., associate professor and vice chairwoman for medical education, provides junior faculty members in the department of genetics, cell biology and anatomy with ample opportunities to grow, develop new skills and tap into their potential. Said one: “She encourages you to develop your own path and play to your strengths. She helps you look like a rock star.” For Dr. Lomneth, the payoff is seeing people recognize their own potential.

UNMC Outstanding Teacher Awards

Ernie Sigler, D.D.S., ’75, assistant professor in adult restorative dentistry, enjoys seeing students improve, especially those who struggled initially. His lessons transcend the classroom as he teaches everyone to be at their best, approach the world with passion and always do the right thing. As he himself says: “If I’ve only helped our students become better dentists – but have not helped them become better people – I have not been successful.”

Chandrakanth Are, M.B.B.S., vice chair of education, associate professor of surgical oncology and program director of general surgery residency, has established a global health rotation with surgeons in India, improved surgical residency training and developed a unique surgical training curriculum with lightly embalmed cadavers. Dr. Are inspires others, just as his father, a respected general surgeon in remote rural India, inspired him. “It’s a privilege to nurture, influence and train the future generations of clinicians, scholars, academics and leaders.”

Howard Liu, M.D., director, Faculty Development Programs, medical director, Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska and psychiatry clerkship director, brings energy and enthusiasm to all he does. Under his guidance, the Psychiatry Interest Group is more vibrant then ever and more medical students are seeking further training in psychiatry. In addition, he brought the Clinic for Outpatient Education to fruition, allowing medical students to actively participate in the evaluation and care of patients with mental illness.
College of Dentistry
- Approximately 70 COD students, faculty and staff traveled to western Nebraska and provided more than 230 underserved children with free dental care on June 6-7 during Panhandle Children’s Dental Day. The clinics were staffed in Gordon, Chadron, Alliance (including operating room cases at the Box Butte Hospital), and Sidney.
- The 2014 graduates of the College of Dentistry’s baccalaureate degree dental hygiene program kept a record intact as their class had a 100 percent first attempt pass on their National Board Dental Hygiene examination for 15 consecutive years. They have not had an individual failure in the current century/millennium.

College of Medicine
- The college has been recognized by the American Academy of Family Physicians as one of the top 10 programs in the country in building the family physician workforce. Family physicians are qualified to treat most ailments and provide comprehensive health care for people of all ages, newborns to seniors. Awardees employ initiatives that support students interested in becoming family physicians, student outreach, students from rural and medically underserved areas and strong student-run family medicine interest groups.
- The ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease) Association welcomed UNMC and its clinical partners to the organization’s Certified Treatment Center of Excellence Program. The medical center’s ALS program includes physicians, physical therapists, occupational therapists, nurses and clinics staff. ALS is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord.

College of Nursing
- Ruth and Bill Scott of Omaha made a leadership gift to the University of Nebraska Foundation to support nursing’s new facility on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s east campus. More than $2 million of the $5.5 million needed in private support has been committed for the $17.5 million building project. The Nebraska State Legislature appropriated $12 million for the project during its 2013 session. The building further allows the college to address the state’s critical shortage of nurses and nursing educators. It will be the first permanent home for the College of Nursing in Lincoln, replacing the college’s current location in downtown Lincoln.

College of Pharmacy
- The college ranks eighth nationally among 130 pharmacy schools in terms of National Institutes of Health research dollars per Ph.D. faculty member, according to the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. UNMC also moved up to No. 19 from No. 25 in terms of total awards received by its investigators.
- Construction is underway on the Lozier Center for Pharmacy Sciences and Education/UNMC Center for Drug Discovery with projected occupancy in October 2015.
- Forty seniors were vested with their doctoral hoods and took the Pharmacists Oath at the Spring Honors Convocation on May 9. Senior recognition awards and the 2014 Preceptor of the Year Award also were presented. Eric Gall, Pharm.D., ’05, and Casey Diekmann, Pharm.D., ’07, were awarded the Preceptor of the Year award. Drs. Gall and Diekmann work at the Lincoln Surgical Center.

College of Public Health
- Nebraska State Sen. Jeremy Nordquist received the 2014 Chancellor Robert D. Sparks, M.D., Award in Public Health and Preventive Medicine at the COPH Annual Awards Dinner. Dr. Sparks, who was UNMC’s second chancellor (1972-1976), established the award through the University of Nebraska Foundation to recognize individuals who have shown outstanding innovation, excellence, collaboration and impact on health promotion, disease prevention and advancement of effective public health. Dr. Sparks died July 1 in California at the age of 82.
- The Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health at the College of Public Health hosted the 2014 International Society for Agricultural Safety and Health Conference – Cultivating Ag Safety and Health. Nearly 200 attendees from seven countries participated in the July 22-26 conference, which focused on agricultural safety and health issues.

Eppley Institute/Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center
- The 2014 Cattlemen’s Ball was held on June 6 & 7 in Harrisburg, Neb., at the Hoot Owl Ranch. The event raised $1.3 million for cancer research. More than 3,500 people attended the annual event and enjoyed live and silent auctions, a fashion show, art show and concert by Montgomery Gentry. The 2015 Cattlemen’s Ball will be held June 5 and 6 at the Redbird Ranch in Lynch, Neb., along the Niobrara River.

Munroe-Meyer Institute
- Cindy Ellis, M.D., associate professor of developmental medicine, was elected a member at-large for the Association of University Centers on Disabilities, an organization that supports and promotes a national network of university-based interdisciplinary programs.
- Cytogenetics fellows Lois Starr, M.D., and Jennifer Samann, Ph.D., have completed their two-year American Board of Medical Genetics and Genomics’ Clinical Cytogenetics Fellowship training.

School of Allied Health Professions
- Kim Michael, director of diagnostic medical sonography, has been awarded the school’s latest named professorship: the Joseph and Darlene Anderson Distinguished Professorship of Imaging Sciences. The professorship is named for Joseph Anderson, M.D., professor and vice chair of radiology, and his wife, Darlene, thanks in part to their lead gift. The Charles R. O’Malley Charitable Lead Trust matched the Andersons’ gift.
In the middle of his third year of medical school, Eric Nagengast realized he wasn’t ready to graduate just yet.

“All of my classmates were talking about applying for residency, but I was not ready for all of that. I remember thinking, now is the time to get global health experience. If I don’t do it now I may never get a chance,” Nagengast said.

He had pursued a career in medicine because he was fascinated with people and programs that provided medical care for people in remote parts of the world. Before starting medical school, he volunteered with Mission of Healing Eyes, a charitable organization that provides eye care in Mexico.

“As I watched people who had been blind leave the clinic with perfect vision, I vowed that I’d continue to help people in this way,” he said.

Nagengast searched for international surgical programs and eventually gained acceptance into the Program in Global Surgery and Social Change (PGSSC) at Harvard Medical School as a Paul Farmer Global Surgery Research Associate, a position that has taken him to the far reaches of the world.

PGSSC addresses disparity by providing global surgical and anesthesia care to people in resource-limited settings. Nagengast started the year-long program last summer with classes at the Harvard School of Public Health and then was assigned three major projects – the Lancet Commission, cleft lip and palate surgery in India and Columbia, and ear, nose, and throat research and care in Rwanda.

*The Lancet*, one of the highest impact journals in medicine, recently formed commissions on important areas of medicine that need more direction or consensus. The goal is to increase foreign medical aid for surgical programs, which now stands at less than 1 percent of the total of medical outreach funding.
This year marked the beginning of the Lancet Commission on Global Surgery. PGSSC collaborates with King’s College in London and Lund University in Sweden to spearhead the commission. Nagengast served as research assistant for the information management group.

His group was tasked with advising global surgery metrics – basically, determine the type of data needed to be collected to monitor the status of surgery in low and middle income countries. “This is not as easy as it sounds,” he said. “Medical records are quite poor in some areas. They are not using Epic (an electronic health record vendor) in Rwanda. The final paper will definitely be a landmark paper, but most importantly, it will get recognition in the field.”

In India, Nagengast worked in Operation Smile, Guwahati Comprehensive Cleft Care Center in Guwahati, the highest volume cleft center in the world. Surgeons performed more than 8,000 operations in the center’s first three years. He worked on several research projects, the largest of which was on the quality of life of patients, and families of patients, who have cleft lip or palate.

“Many people in India live their entire life with this birth defect without access to surgical care,” he said. He interviewed patients and family members regarding the impact the defect has on their quality of life and economic productivity.

He also studied the financial impact the center has on the region. “Before the center was built in Guwahati, cleft care was provided by international missions. The center provides training, salaries for local employees and increased productivity. Now, Guwahati has more qualified health care providers, more money flowing into the region and a lower number of untreated cleft patients.”

Nagengast saw patients pre- and postoperatively and participated in surgery. “I learned from some of the best cleft surgeons in the world and have seen more cleft operations this year than any plastic surgery resident in the United States.”

One of the most remarkable cases was a baby unable to breast feed because of a cleft lip and palate. “This child was skin and bones. To be honest, I couldn’t believe the baby was still alive. He was put on a nutrition program, brought back to a healthy weight and operated on. It was a second chance at life. In reality, that is what the center provides all of the patients… a second chance at life.”

In Rwanda, Nagengast worked at the University hospital in Kigali with the otorhinolaryngology team on ear, nose, and throat disease research projects. Part of his research demonstrated how the lack of care created a burden for the country. “We hope these projects will help establish education and training for primary caregivers to manage ENT disease before it becomes a surgical condition,” he said.

While there, he also volunteered with the Starkey Hearing Foundation to provide ear examinations, basic ear care and free hearing aids. In one day he examined 250 patients. He performed otoscopic examinations at several missions and follow-up clinics. At a school for deaf children, Nagengast tested children whose ear disease could not be helped by a hearing aid. He recalls one child who could hear and was fitted with a hearing aid. “Hopefully, this child can return to traditional school and live a normal life.”

Nagengast said he could write a book about what he’s learned this past year, but his two main lessons: Every student could benefit from spending time working with a marginalized population, and all students in medical school should take an extra year to pursue research, extra clinical experience or another degree.

“Most people in medical school chose this career path because they want to help people. It is easy to get caught up in the long hours and hard work and lose sight of this amazing side of medicine. But, spending time helping people who would not otherwise receive care reminds you of the incredible power we have as health care providers.”

“I also have learned about providing care in low-resource settings. One of the most important things I have learned is that context is key. Every place you work is different. And, you need to understand your environment, the local health system, and the population you intend to treat before you can make any plans. Having a big heart and good intentions is not enough,” he said.

“This year has made me thankful for all I have and the opportunities I have. But, it also has made me much more aware of the injustices that exist in our world.”

The only downside to Nagengast’s year abroad: all his classmates graduated without him. “It would have been nice to be on stage with them. Now they all make me call them ‘doctor.’”
Darcy Dawson always knew that she wanted to live and work in a small town. In order to finish her master’s degree in community counseling at Doane College, the Bruning, Neb., native needed to complete 1,000 hours of internship training to realize her goal of becoming a licensed mental health professional.

She was accepted into an internship program at UNMC’s Munroe-Meyer Institute and assigned to a pediatric clinic in Fremont, Neb. It turned out to be a perfect way to jump-start her career.

After completing her residency at a Lincoln agency for a year, she accepted a part-time position in a family medicine clinic in York, Neb., working two days a week seeing patients referred by family physicians in her clinic. She and her husband, Paul, live on an acreage near Fairmont, Neb., about 20 miles south of York.

“It’s exactly what we wanted,” Dawson said. “We love the rural area and I enjoy my job. It’s great to help people going through psychological issues.”

Dawson’s situation illustrates one example of how UNMC is attempting to address the critical shortage of mental health professionals in rural Nebraska.

“It’s a huge challenge,” said Howard Liu, M.D., a child and adolescent psychiatrist for UNMC and interprofessional education director for the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN). “Our best chance for getting more mental health professionals for rural Nebraska lies with students from rural communities. If we can expose them to rural medicine, that’s our best way to get them to return to a rural community.”

Dr. Liu and his counterpart at the psychology program for the Munroe-Meyer Institute, Joe Evans, Ph.D., are hoping that rural training programs through BHECN will provide some relief to smaller communities in need of mental health professionals.

Through BHECN’s rural psychiatry residency program, each of the 36 UNMC/Creighton psychiatry residents spend one month of their residency in a rural hospital. BHECN also sponsors 13 graduate students in psychology, psychiatric advanced practice nursing, social work, and counseling to spend an entire year in a rural community.

BHECN collaborates with a variety of behavioral health education programs at UNMC and at universities across the state, including Chadron State, Doan and the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

The MMI psychology program has two federal training grants for placing doctoral interns into rural and underserved urban areas. MMI program graduates are now providing behavioral health services to children and families in 19 rural Nebraska towns (including Dawson’s clinic in York) and in 13 clinics in the Omaha and Lincoln metropolitan areas. Next year, MMI psychology trainees will be providing “learning through service” behavioral assessment and interventions in Chadron, Nebraska City, Kearney, Grand Island, Columbus and Hastings.

In addition, BHECN and MMI jointly support practicum and internship training for 18 trainees annually from other behavioral health professions including social work, counseling, marriage and family therapy, and psychiatric nursing.

“The opportunities are endless,” said Nathan Bruce, D.O., a fourth-year resident who did his training at a clinic in Kearney, Neb. “When it comes to mental health, rural patients typically are much sicker. They don’t have access to the type of mental health care that someone would receive in Omaha.

“You see a wide variety of psychiatric problems, such as psychosis, depression and catatonia. There’s also a major methamphetamine problem in rural Nebraska, which can lead to serious mental health consequences.”

But, in Dr. Bruce’s assessment, the rural residency program is definitely a step in the right direction.

“I know the hospital administrators in Kearney and Hastings, and they are grateful to have UNMC residents there,” he said. “They see it as a recruiting tool. It’s a win-win for everyone.”
Salomon Compaore, M.D., spent the summer in his homeland, Burkina Faso, a landlocked country in West Africa, conducting research on cervical cancer.

He was one of six College of Public Health students who conducted cancer research in Africa this summer through the college’s Cancer Epidemiology Education in Special Populations (CEESP) program. Five other students had research projects in minority and special populations in the United States.

The CEESP Program funds master’s and Ph.D. public health students who conduct cancer research in minority populations within the U.S. and around the world. Funded by a grant from the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health, the program provides educational opportunities and mentored field internships for students to learn about cancer epidemiology and translation of epidemiology into cancer control and prevention interventions.

Dr. Compaore pitched his project to Amr Soliman, M.D., Ph.D., professor and chairman of epidemiology and program director for CEESP, one day after he was admitted to UNMC’s master’s of public health program.

“The project was shaped under the guidance of my mentor Dr. Soliman, who visited me in Barkina Faso, and conducted on the field with the help of my preceptors Ouedraogo Charlemagne, M.D., Ob/GYN, and epidemiologist Dr. Koanda Sem,” he said.

At the Yalgado Ouedraogo University hospital in Ouagadougou, the capital and largest city in Burkina Faso, Dr. Compaore interviewed women daily to learn what barriers they face to cervical cancer screening.

“Many women seemed to confuse cervical cancer with breast cancer. When asked about cervical cancer symptoms, many of them talk about breast lumps. Even after the screening and biopsy, some women still had a low awareness about the disease,” he said.

Dr. Compaore spoke to women who had lived in exile for more than a decade and were happy to finally have access to health care and women who required a translator because they could not speak French or any of the local languages.

“I learned from this adventure that simple public health interventions, such as awareness activities, can make a big difference in developing countries such as Burkina Faso where the literacy rate is far from optimal,” he said.

“This experience broadened my perspective of public health practice and provided me the opportunity to deal with the challenges of working in countries with limited resources. It was enriching.

“I would recommend this program to every public health student.”
By July of 2015, one lucky ophthalmologist will embark on a unique two-year fellowship that will take him or her around the world.

The fellowship, designed by Orbis International and the Prevention of Global Blindness Division of the Truhlsen Eye Institute (TEI) at UNMC, serves as the most comprehensive program available to any ophthalmologist in the world who has a significant interest in global blindness prevention.

Orbis is a nonprofit organization that works in developing countries to prevent and treat avoidable blindness using a converted DC-10 airplane that is the world’s largest flying eye hospital. This is the first time Orbis has partnered with an academic medical center on a fellowship.

“This fellowship features a strong emphasis on public health and program development, which puts it in a category of its own,” said Michael Feilmeier, M.D., chief of the Prevention of Global Blindness Division and assistant professor of ophthalmology at the TEI.

“The fellow will split their time working at the same international partner institutions we already serve, whereby amassing the same skills and relationships offered by the one-year program, while also taking on the critical role of developing a country specific program for Orbis’ flying eye hospital.”

Quan Dong Nguyen, M.D., the McGaw Memorial Endowed Professor, chair of the department of ophthalmology and inaugural director of the TEI, said the institute already has garnered distinction by being one of only three eye centers in the United States to offer a formal fellowship in the prevention of global blindness.

“By partnering with Orbis International, TEI extends its lead in training ophthalmologists to devote their careers to serving patients who are truly in need of eye care,” Dr. Nguyen said.

The Prevention of Global Blindness Division is accepting applications for the 2015 fellowship through Oct. 25. The fellowship is primarily spent abroad and is open to any applicant who has completed one or both of the following ophthalmology residencies: the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates; or the U.S. Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

The fellowship begins at TEI and UNMC’s College of Public Health, where a certificate in public health must be completed within the two-year time frame, Dr. Nguyen said.

Shortly after enrolling in public health courses, the fellow will begin training aboard the flying eye hospital. Subsequently, the fellow will be assigned a country in which Orbis plans to conduct a program.

“It will be the responsibility of the fellow to conduct a regional needs analysis, communicate with local eye care providers and ultimately plan the program that will be conducted by Orbis when the flying eye hospital arrives,” Dr. Feilmeier said.

The TEI/Orbis program is the second fellowship offered through the Prevention of Global Blindness Division. A one-year fellowship allows fellows to spend time working at partner institutions in Nepal, Haiti, Ethiopia and Ghana, among others, where the focus is learning about different eye care delivery systems while simultaneously enhancing and mastering a unique surgical experience.

“The final month of the one-year fellowship is spent working on community outreach programs delivering eye care to local Native Americans in the United States,” Dr. Feilmeier said.

Since the 1970s, Orbis has trained 325,000 medical professionals and impacted more than 23 million lives in 92 countries.

Learn more about the TEI/Orbis Fellowship. unmc.edu/connect
If you’re sick or hurt around the Cramer family, you’re going to get a lot of free advice.

Cramer brothers Paul, 27, and Dan, 25, both graduates of the UNMC College of Nursing’s bachelor’s degree program, are nurses and both enrolled in the college’s family nurse practitioner program.

Health care runs in the Cramer family. No less than 10 members of the Cramer family, direct and extended, are UNMC students, health care practitioners, faculty members and alumni.

Nancy, mother to the Cramers, had a dream to be a nurse. But a car accident at the age of 17 left her blind. Her dream lives on through her sons.

“It’s been a real blessing to be able to make our parents happy,” Paul said. “My mother’s visual impairment exposed me to the amazing capabilities of the human body at a very early age. Since high school I knew I wanted to get into some area of health care.”

His initial thought about nursing was that it’s a profession for women. “Sure, there’s a stereotype. But I have seen a lot of male nurses. It’s a well-respected profession. I just love it. I couldn’t be happier with my choice.”

Both said the stigma of being a male in nursing is fading.

“I remember a nursing school instructor saying you are going to have issues with patients who don’t want a male nurse. I can honestly say no patients have ever raised the issue,” Paul said.

Dan said when people find out he’s a nurse, they ask different questions.

“All of a sudden they feel very comfortable asking me to look at various ailments they have been having,” he said.

He loves the interaction in nursing.

“It’s rewarding to be there with patients. They can count on me to make their hospital stay as enjoyable as possible. I love being that person that helps take care of someone during what probably isn’t the high point in their life.”

“We were raised to be caring and helpful to others,” Dan said. “I have always wanted to take care of others. Nursing allows me to do that both physically, emotionally and spiritually.”
Key CDC leader selected as public health dean

by Tom O’Connor

As senior administrator for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and former assistant surgeon general, Ali Khan, M.D., M.P.H., has joined UNMC as the new dean of the College of Public Health.

“I look forward to being involved in nurturing the next generation of public health innovators and leaders and developing the science for new public health solutions,” he said of his appointment, which was effective July 1.

“I am thrilled that Dr. Khan has joined the UNMC leadership team,” said UNMC Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D. “His public health skills and global leadership experience run the gamut. Among an incredibly strong field of finalists, he stood out as the individual whom we are confident will be able to lead the College of Public Health to new heights.

“With his vast experience and strong public health contacts around the world, he is someone who can make a difference and will elevate the college’s presence nationally and internationally.”

“Public health is fundamentally changing due to advances in technology, shifting demographics, globalization and new opportunities for preventive health care due to the Affordable Care Act,” Dr. Khan said. “I’m eager to be at an institution that is committed to excellence with a strong partnership between the colleges and health care enterprise. We are in a unique position to help define the future of public health as the primary means to improve the health of individuals and our communities.

“Nebraska has an extremely engaged community. I am excited about the opportunity to pursue work with private industry, other public health entities, and the community who share a vision of transforming Nebraska into the healthiest state in the nation.”

Dr. Khan cited a number of things that attracted him to this position:

- A chancellor who is thinking five to 10 years in the future.
- The young and imaginative faculty and staff at the College of Public Health.
- Tremendous collegiality between the various UNMC colleges and clinical services.
- Passionate state and local public health practitioners.
- A generous community that already has built a new building for the college.

Dr. Khan becomes the third dean of the UNMC College of Public Health, which was founded in 2007. He succeeds Ayman El-Mohandes, M.B.B.Ch., M.D., M.P.H., who held the post from 2009-2013.

Jane Meza, Ph.D., chair of the department of biostatistics in the College of Public Health, served as interim dean, and will continue to serve as senior associate dean for the college.
Native Iowan named new dean of College of Dentistry

by John Keenan

Janet Guthmiller, D.D.S., Ph.D., associate dean of academic affairs and professor in the department of periodontology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Dentistry, returns to her Midwestern roots as the new dean of the College of Dentistry.

On Sept. 1, Dr. Guthmiller succeeded John Reinhardt, D.D.S., who stepped down after 14 years as UNMC’s dentistry dean.

“Dr. Guthmiller brings a wealth of experience as a dental educator and researcher,” said UNMC Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D. “She possesses the leadership qualities we need to build on the reputation and accomplishments of the College of Dentistry.”

Prior to her current position, Dr. Guthmiller served on the faculty of the Baltimore College of Dental Surgery (now the University of Maryland School of Dentistry) and the University of Iowa College of Dentistry. She has been the associate dean at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill since 2007.

Dr. Guthmiller said she is excited to lead the College of Dentistry.

“I am honored to be a part of this great institution,” she said. “I hope to sustain the excellence and build on the strengths of the College of Dentistry.” Dr. Guthmiller said she plans to partner with students, faculty, staff, and alumni and friends of the College of Dentistry, as well as UNMC’s other colleges, on initiatives that will benefit all Nebraskans.

“As a statewide campus, UNMC has a mission not only in education, research and clinical care, but also in service,” she said. “I look forward to seeing how the college can work and collaborate to help identify and address oral health needs throughout Nebraska and beyond.”

Dr. Guthmiller is an accomplished researcher, author and teacher with special interests in genetic studies of periodontal bacteria and the expression and activity of innate antimicrobial peptides. During her time in academia, she also spent 14 years as a practicing periodontist. As an educator, she has a deep interest in mentorship programs for students and faculty. She is the recipient of multiple collegiate and national recognitions.

“Dr. Guthmiller separated herself from a talented field of candidates through the scope of her research and educational work, as well as her ability to quickly connect with all groups,” said Joan Sivers, D.D.S., chairwoman of the search committee.
HOLI FESTIVAL OF COLORS flew everywhere at the Holi festival celebrated on the Ruth and Bill Scott Student Plaza.

See the Holi festival celebration on video or in a gallery of photos. unmc.edu/connect
About 300 voices united in the countdown on the first Saturday of April – not to start a race, but to start a Hindu celebration of spring. At noon, people young and old released a carnival of colors to begin the Holi Festival.

Dry, colored powder flew through the air dousing anyone and everything in pink, purple, orange, blue, green and yellow. Some serious celebrants carried water guns full of colored water.

Aditya Bade, a graduate student in pharmacology and experimental neuroscience, introduced the ancient, and now widely popular, Hindu religious festival to UNMC’s campus this year. As the first international chairman of the Graduate Student Association, Bade also chaired the International Students Affairs Committee Subcommittee, a position that allowed him to seek funds for the festival, which symbolizes rejuvenation and optimism.

With international students and visitors from more than 60 different countries on campus, Bade thought the festival could be a way to promote cultural interaction. “It’s a great way to build unity and educate students, staff and faculty to a different culture,” he said.

The day started with a traditional meal donated by local Indian restaurants that brought together people from different nationalities. Bade hopes to make it an annual event.

“Holi definitely helps develop camaraderie among students,” he said.
Nephrology, the treatment and study of diseases of the kidney, is a relatively new subspecialty at UNMC and with that comes some growing pains.

But, a gift by 1973 College of Medicine graduate, Dennis Ross, M.D., may help ease those pains by providing resources that allow the division to pursue important opportunities for growth.

The gift to the University of Nebraska Foundation establishes the first endowed chair in the Division of Nephrology – the Dr. Dennis Ross Chair of Nephrology. The funding supports growth in the division’s research and clinical programs, physician recruitment and scholarly activities. It also continues a longstanding support to UNMC by Dr. Ross and his wife Ann, a 1971 graduate of the UNMC College of Nursing.

Dr. Ross and the chair’s first recipient, Troy Plumb, M.D., director of the UNMC Division of Nephrology, were honored at the College of Medicine’s second Circle of Distinction event in May, when the college recognized faculty members who currently hold endowed chairs and professorships and the donors who made these honors possible.

Dr. Plumb said he’s honored to be the first recipient of the endowed chair and is thankful for the family’s support and the increased recognition it brings to the division.

“Their support shows that we are doing the right things. When people put their own resources into the program, it gives us a lot of credibility, and I thank...
Dr. Ross and Ann for their generosity and for making more opportunities possible.”

Dr. Plumb, a 1997 graduate of the college, returned to UNMC in 2004 to help grow the nephrology program, which, at the time had only two nephrologists. He has since added four more.

Dr. Ross’ own interest in the field of nephrology fueled his desire to support UNMC’s program.

“As a nephrologist I would like to see the medical center excel in nephrology,” Dr. Ross said. “Since this is a relatively new subspecialty at UNMC, I am hopeful my gift will help the program.”

Dr. Ross practices in Wichita, Kan., where he started a physician-owned dialysis company in the city in the mid-1980s. In 1996 his group merged their dialysis facilities with four other dialysis companies nationwide to form Renal Care Group, a publicly traded company. By the time the company was sold in 2006, it was caring for more than 32,000 patients.

His support of UNMC’s nephrology division extends beyond his philanthropic commitment. His extensive experience in forming dialysis units and clinical trials already has benefited the division, Dr. Plumb said.

“We will be doing a trial later this fall with a new home dialysis machine because Dr. Ross recommended us to the sponsor,” he said.

Establishment of endowed chairs and professorships represent significant investments in the college, said Bradley Britigan, M.D., dean of the UNMC College of Medicine. But the return on these investments is what really makes them special.

Endowed chairs and professorships allow colleges to:
- Attract the best and brightest faculty.
- Recognize faculty members for the excellent work they are doing.
- Support the salary of outstanding faculty.
- Hire additional people or provide resources to support excellent programs.
- Attract outstanding students who wish to learn from the best faculty.

Said Dr. Britigan: “Collectively, all the endowed chairs and professors ultimately impact our mission to educate the next generation of health care professionals, provide outstanding patient care, fuel lifesaving and life-enhancing research and serve our local, state, national and global communities.”

Faculty support remains a top priority for UNMC through Campaign for Nebraska: Unlimited Possibilities which ends Dec. 31. For more information contact Amy Volk at (402) 502-0300 or avolk@nufoundation.org.

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Sarah Thayer, M.D., Ph.D., Merle M. Musselman Centennial Professor of Surgery and chief of surgical oncology at UNMC, humbly downplays her groundbreaking research on pancreatic cancer.

“There was some low-hanging fruit,” Dr. Thayer said.

But now, it seems, we are reaching higher. Tony Hollingsworth, Ph.D., UNMC’s 2011 Scientist Laureate, has often said he investigates pancreatic cancer because so few others do. But with, among others, Dr. Hollingsworth, Surinder Batra, Ph.D., UNMC’s 2012 Scientist Laureate, and now the recent hiring of Dr. Thayer, an internationally recognized physician-scientist, UNMC has assembled a powerhouse team to fight the disease.

Medical center leadership has trumpeted the hiring of Dr. Thayer, who began May 1 as associate director for clinical affairs and physician-in-chief for the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center.

“This is a prominent example that the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center will attract the brightest minds in cancer care and research who will look to take advantage of world-class infrastructure and to collaborate with what is already an outstanding team,” said UNMC Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.

Dr. Thayer comes to UNMC following a stint as Austen Scholar in Academic Surgery and director of the pancreatic cancer biology lab at Harvard Medical School, where she practiced at its teaching hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital.

She has a $2 million pancreatic cancer research project funded by the National Institutes of Health’s National Cancer Institute.

Said Bradley Britigan, M.D., dean of the UNMC College of Medicine and president of the medical center’s clinical enterprise: “She is what we call a ‘triple-threat,’ someone who excels in all three areas of academic medicine: education, research and clinical practice.”

Dr. Thayer joins UNMC just as the innovative, state-of-the-art $323 million Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center comes to life.

“It’s a wonderful opportunity to realize what the very best of cancer care can be,” Dr. Thayer said.

As for pancreatic cancer, Dr. Thayer said that its current statistics are stark, but work by UNMC and others is likely to bear fruit. As funding and attention has turned to pancreatic cancer, she expects to see the kind of progress made when the same happened with other cancers.

In the meantime, she channels her frustration with current outcomes into developing breakthroughs in the lab and clinic.

Watch the building of the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center. unmc.edu/connect
She traveled three hours from Wagner, S.D., to Omaha, for her eye appointment, but for Conceta Zephier, 80, it was well worth the trip.

Her eyesight is vital to see the drawings and craft projects her grandchildren make, the Ponca tribal elder said.

And it makes her proud to come to her own tribe’s clinic to receive care.

“Just looking at the eye chart on the wall with the eagle mural next to it makes me feel more at home,” Zephier said.

Zephier was one of 224 American Indians who received free comprehensive eye exams during a five-day clinic held in June at the Fred LeRoy Health and Wellness Center in south Omaha.

In partnership with the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, the UNMC Truhlsen Eye Institute’s Prevention of Global Blindness Division provided an ophthalmologist, a fellow, residents and medical students to perform the eye exams.

Situated in the middle of an inner-city neighborhood, the three-story health and wellness center is the medical home for more than 6,000 American Indians representing 157 different tribes. The clinic, which incorporates traditional practices in the care provided, includes a small pharmacy and medical, dental and behavioral health services.

American Indians from Lincoln, Norfolk, Niobrara, Sioux City, Omaha and South Dakota received eye care that week; for many, it was their first comprehensive eye exam by an ophthalmologist.

“A majority of the people we serve have no health insurance and many rely on Indian Health Services to provide care,” said Becci White, tribal health planner and Ponca tribal member. “Because of a lack of funding, we are unable to provide all the preventive care we would like so this partnership with UNMC fills a desperately needed gap.”

Throughout the week patients were diagnosed with a variety of issues including glaucoma, cataracts, macular degeneration, corneal dystrophy and a suspected case of a retinal vascular abnormality that could be life-threatening.

“So many people in the world suffer needlessly with blindness or various types of eye disease that can lead to blindness if left untreated,” said Mike Feilmeier, M.D., chief of the Prevention of Global Blindness Division. “It’s part of our mission to reach out to those people wherever they are, whether that is in a third world nation or in our own back yard.”

During a screening, Conceta Zephier was pleased to discover her eyes remain healthy and she only needs to use her reading glasses.
College of Medicine Alumni Chapter Presents 27th John S. Latta Lectureship

On April 24, the College of Medicine Alumni Chapter hosted the 27th John S. Latta Lectureship, “A Historic Nebraska ‘Never Event’ - How Do We Prevent Others?” presented by Evelyn McKnight, AuD, and Tom McKnight, MD ’77. The ‘never event’ lecture topic occurred in 2000-2001 when nearly 100 patients in Nebraska contracted hepatitis C through unsafe injection practices. Lecture invitees included alumni, UNMC faculty, staff, and students.

The lectureship was established in 1980 to commemorate Dr. Latta’s dedicated service to the College of Medicine. Dr. Latta taught embryology and histology at UNMC from 1921 until 1963. He was chairman of the department of anatomy from 1940 to 1960, when he retired. Dr. Latta remained active for three more years and then was given an appointment in the Eppley Institute for Research in Cancer and Allied Diseases where he continued his work until 1968. He became one of the most admired and respected faculty members of the college. He died in 1989 at the age of 94.

The 28th John S. Latta Lectureship is scheduled for March 24, 2015.

Alumni Association Hosts Second Annual Spring Training Event

The Alumni Association hosted its second annual spring training event in Arizona in March. The event included networking for alumni in suite seating at the San Francisco Giants vs. Kansas City Royals game in Scottsdale, Ariz.

“Spring training with the alumni association was an enjoyable afternoon of networking and re-connecting with fellow UNMC alumni,” said Gordon Hrnicek, M.D., ‘72. “I enjoyed the opportunity to visit with our colleagues while also taking in a baseball game; I look forward to more alumni events in the future.”

In addition, the Alumni Association hosted three networking events in February for alumni in Tucson, Scottsdale, and Sun City, Ariz. A fourth event was held for alumni and physicians who volunteer with the College of Medicine Alumni Chapter’s HOST program (Host Our Students as they Travel). The series of events is part of the UNMC Alumni Association’s outreach and engagement efforts in areas of the country that are heavily populated with UNMC alumni. More than 400 UNMC alumni live in the Phoenix/Scottsdale area.

Continuing Education Activities Sponsored

As part of the UNMC Alumni Association’s mission to facilitate continuing education (CE) opportunities for alumni, discounted rates for two CE offerings were made available for alumni this year.

In April, the Alumni Association sponsored discounted registration for the Infectious Disease Symposium hosted in Kearney, Neb., with a target audience of physicians, nurses, physician assistants, and other health care professionals. The symposium was jointly sponsored by Good Samaritan Hospital, Creighton University and the UNMC Alumni Association. UNMC alumni were eligible for a $25 discount on the registration fee.

In addition, the UNMC College of Nursing Alumni Chapter sponsored a $20 discount off early registration for the 19th Annual Pharmacological Conference for Advanced Practice Nurses “Pharmacological Management of Clients across the Life Span” in July. The conference was hosted in Omaha, and broadcast to each UNMC College of Nursing campus, with a target audience of nurse practitioners, advanced practice nurses, physician assistants, primary care providers, and other interested health care professionals.
New Design, Features for UNMC Alumni Website

The UNMC Alumni Relations Office (ARO) has participated in a UNMC campuswide initiative to redesign the UNMC website with a focus on you. This summer, the ARO’s website, www.unmc.edu/alumni, was updated to the new layout. During this process, the website was re-evaluated to provide additional resources for alumni. Easier access is provided to several tools, such as: transcripts, duplicate diploma or immunization record requests, alumni association memberships, white coat donations, and alumni chapters’ activity updates. Visit www.unmc.edu/alumni and see what’s new.

Alumni Association Hosts Central Iowa Alumni Reception

The UNMC Alumni Association recently traveled to West Des Moines for a central Iowa UNMC alumni reception. Guests from the colleges of medicine and nursing and the School of Allied Health Professions gathered on June 12 at the Embassy Club West. Speaking at the gathering were deans: Bradley Britigan, MD, College of Medicine; Juliann Sebastian, PhD, RN, FAAN, College of Nursing; and senior associate dean Kyle Meyer, PhD, PT, School of Allied Health Professions. The central Iowa reception was part of the UNMC Alumni Association’s mission to increase outreach and engagement efforts on behalf of UNMC through networking with alumni in their home community. Alumni enjoyed telling stories about their time at UNMC and getting to know colleagues from the central Iowa area.

Chancellor Gold Addresses Alumni at All Board Member Retreat

Board members from each chapter of the UNMC Alumni Association recently gathered at Mahoney State Park in Ashland, Neb., to orient new board members, share ideas and develop a strategic plan with UNMC and University of Nebraska Foundation leadership.

UNMC Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold, MD, joined the group during the June 27 retreat and shared his thoughts on the vital role alumni play in advancing UNMC including how:

- Alumni serve as an important sounding board for UNMC leadership. Dr. Gold said that his door is always open; he welcomes feedback from alumni on UNMC’s mission now and in the future.
- Alumni serve as key advocates for UNMC in their home communities. As UNMC’s greatest ambassadors, alumni share their knowledge and pride in their alma mater to enhance student recruitment and advocate on UNMC’s behalf to state and federal representatives.
- Alumni play key roles in several areas of UNMC’s strategic plan, including helping UNMC reach key programming and philanthropic goals.

“It was insightful to hear Dr. Gold’s vision for how he plans to work with alumni,” said Michele Kassmeier, MPH’12. “He set the bar high for alumni board members to lead our chapters into the future by encouraging us to think outside the box and work together to best serve our members and UNMC.”

UNMC Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D., second from left, with UNMC alumni chapter board members from left to right, Michele Kassmeier MPH’12, Phyllis Byrd M’94, and Mike Moravec PT’04.
Medicine

David Johnson M’65
Osmond, Neb., received the Alumni Achievement Award from Wayne State College in Wayne, Neb., during the school’s December 2013 commencement. He operated his own medical clinic in Osmond from 1969 until his retirement in 2013.

Robert Travnicek M’65
Long Beach, Miss., was recognized by the Harrison County, Mississippi Board of Supervisors with a section of public street named in his honor. The proclamation commemorates his extensive career in medicine and public health.

Jeffery Snow M’73
Spokane, Wash., retired as a partner in the Spokane Eye Clinic and from the practice of medicine on Jan. 1, 2012.

William Weigel M’76
Spokane, Wash., joined Northwest Orthopaedic Specialists. He specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of spine conditions.

Gregg Dimmick M’77
Wharton, Texas, is beginning his 34th year of private practice in pediatrics. He has been married for 41 years. His son is a dermatologist and his daughter is a nurse. He recently participated in a medical mission trip to Costa Rica.

Joel Elson M’77
Omaha, Neb., was inducted as a fellow in the American College of Radiology (ACR) in April 2014. Recognition as a fellow is one of the highest honors the ACR can bestow on its members and approximately 10 percent achieve this distinction. He is chairman of the department of radiology at Lakeside Hospital in Omaha.

Ken Follett M’77
Omaha, Neb., received the honorary Doctor of Law Degree from Concordia University. He has been in practice for more than 30 years in the practice of dermatology care for both the University of Nebraska-Lincoln University Health Center and Husker athletic teams.

Howard McCollister M’77
Deerwood, Minn., was recently appointed chief of surgery at Cuyuna Regional Medical Center in Crosby, Minn. He is the current president-elect of the Minnesota chapter of the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery. In addition, he has been an affiliate academic faculty at the University of Minnesota Medical School as well as clinical instructor at the University of Minnesota-Duluth Medical School for more than 25 years.

David Holdt M’78
Scottsbluff, Neb., practices ob/gyn at the Regional West Medical Center Women’s Center.

Susan Strate M’79
Wichita Falls, Texas, was re-elected in May 2014 to a third term as vice speaker of the Texas Medical Association House of Delegates, which is the association’s policymaking body. She is the president and chief executive officer of Texoma Independent Physicians in Wichita Falls, Texas.

James Boenhouse M’80
Lincoln, Neb., is the stroke center medical director at St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center and Bryan Medical Center. He is married with one son.

Steven Mayfield M’80
San Francisco, Calif., has been retired for 10 years and is working as a writer with his next book, Delphi Oracle, scheduled for release in 2015.

David Hult M’83
Lincoln, Neb., after 27 years of private practice in Galtensburg, Neb., moved to Lincoln, Neb., and practices at LincCare Urgent Care.

Sherrill Murphy M’86, N’74
Omaha, Neb., retired from private practice with Heart Consultants in January 2014.

Monty Sellen M’87
Fremont, Neb., was recognized by UNMC with the Marion D. and Theodore H. Koefoot Jr., M.D. Outstanding Preceptor in Rural Family Medicine Award, which recognizes outstanding teaching and mentoring of medical students during their family medicine rural rotations. He is a family physician at 23rd Family Med in Fremont and has been a preceptor for 23 years.

David Ermer M’90
Sioux Falls, S.D., was elected as a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association.

Scott Strasburger M’90
Lincoln, Neb., opened Strasburger Orthopaedics in Lincoln, Neb. He is an orthopaedic surgeon specializing in sports medicine and injuries, complex rotator cuff injuries and shoulder and knee replacements. He is married with three children.

Seth Smith M’94
Suamico, Wis., is the current chief of surgery at Prevea Health Community Memorial Hospital in Oconto Falls, Wis.

Jennifer King M’97
Grand Island, Neb., joined Wagoner Medical Group in Grand Island and practices internal medicine.

Troy Plumb M’97
Omaha, Neb., was selected as the new division chief of nephrology at the UNMC Department of Internal Medicine after a national search. He has served as interim division chief since 2011.

Shiuvaun Jaeger M’98
Cambridge, Neb., was selected Physician of the Year by the Nebraska Academy of Physician Assistants. She is a family physician with Tri Valley Health System.

Katrena Lacey M’01
Omaha, Neb., received recognition from the Diabetes Recognition Program from the National Committee for Quality Assurance. The recognition acknowledges clinicians who use evidence-based measures and provide excellent care to patients with diabetes.
Kate Boos M’05
Kearney, Neb., joined Kearney Clinic, P.C., as a family physician and began seeing patients there in February 2014.

Dustin Volkmer M’06
Columbus, Neb., completed a sports medicine fellowship at Kerlan-Jobe Orthopedic Clinic in Los Angeles after his residency. Now, he works at the Columbus Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Clinic. He and his wife have one daughter.

Nicholas Barber M’07
Portland, Ore., joined Providence Medical Group-Seaside at the Providence Cancer Care Center Oncology and Hematology Care Clinic-SeaSide. His areas of expertise are hematology/oncology, internal medicine and benign hematology and lymphoma.

Erin Pieroa M’07
Norfolk, Neb., is a pediatrician with Faith Regional Health Services in Norfolk. She and her husband have three boys.

Garrett Pohlman M’07
Kearney, Neb., joined Kearney Urology in October 2013. He also sees patients at his outreach clinics in Ord and St. Paul, Neb.

Cameron Sidak M’07
Osceola, Neb., is one of two practicing physicians at Annie Jeffrey Family Medicine in Osceola. He and his wife have five daughters.

Nick Boyle M’08
Norfolk, Neb., is a general surgeon at Faith Regional Health Services in Norfolk. He and his wife have three children.

Daniel Mosel M’09
North Platte, Neb., joined Great Plains Regional Medical Center’s Greater Nebraska Dermatology Clinic, P.C. He and his wife Melissa, M’09, have one daughter.

Johanna Missak M’10
Bellevue, Neb., joined the Alegent Creighton Clinic in Schuyler, Neb. She previously worked at One World Community Health Center in Omaha.

Melissa Teply M’10
Baltimore, Md., works in outpatient general internal medicine at Sinai Hospital in Baltimore, Md., where she also is an associate program director of the internal medicine community residency program. She is married to Ben Teply, M’10, who is completing a fellowship in hematology/oncology at Johns Hopkins University.

Anthony Marsh M’12
New Orleans, La., is working on a research project during his residency at Tulane University titled, “The Down Low: Curbing the HIV Epidemic in Rural Louisiana.” The project focuses on reducing rates of HIV transmission in underserved populations, particularly targeting men who have sex with men.

Nursing

• Joan Vehec N’67
Hernando, Va., recently celebrated 20 years of working in private allergy/asthma practice. In her spare time, she and her husband enjoy visiting national parks. This year they will visit several parks in Utah and are planning “easy hikes” with lots of photography.

Joe Bechtel N’76
David City, Neb., retired in 2014 after 38 years in the nursing profession. He plans to enjoy retirement through his hobbies of bird watching and reading.

Tracey Stark N’94
Pratt, Kan., joined the Bone and Joint Center in Pratt. She is a family nurse practitioner.

Clark Philson N’95
Gering, Neb., accepted a new position at Goshen Care Center, a long-term care facility in Torrington, Wyo., as the director of nursing. He will oversee all licensed nursing staff and certified nursing assistants. He previously worked 15 years at Prairie Haven Hospice as a registered nurse.

Margaret Woeppe1 N’99
Lincoln, Neb., was elected to the 2014 Nebraska Rural Health Association’s board of directors. She is a regional services consultant for Bryan Health in Lincoln, where she provides support and facilities collaboration between area hospitals. She also is a clinical research liaison and has clinical and teaching experience.

Shane Fleming N’01
Columbus, Neb., is the director of transitional care at Columbus Community Hospital. The position is focused on what level of care patients need and receive once they leave the hospital, with a goal of reducing readmission rates. His diverse career has included: golf pro, trauma nurse coordinator, small business owner, in-flight nurse, surgery nurse and critical care nurse. He and his wife have four children.

Kathy Harrison N’01
McCook, Neb., accepted a new position as director of nursing at Mid-Plains Community College in North Platte, Neb. During her career, she has worked in long-term care, acute care, home health and hospice. She has worked at Mid-Plains Community College for 13 years.

Libby Nuzman N’01
Milford, Neb., attended the spring 2014 Nurse in Washington Internship program hosted by the Nursing Organizations Alliance in Washington, D.C. The program provides nurses the opportunity to learn about influencing health care through legislative and regulatory processes.

Katie Sturdevant N’05, ‘13
Lincoln, Neb., joined Cheney Psychiatric Associates. She is a family psychiatric and mental health nurse practitioner.

Amy Birdsong N’08
Warrensburg, Mo., earned a master’s of science in nursing from the University of Pennsylvania Family Nurse Practitioner Program.

Teri Peterson N’12
Gering, Neb., joined Avera Medical Group as a behavioral health nurse practitioner.

Joni Sautter N’12
Lincoln, Neb., was elected to the 2014 Nebraska Rural Health Association’s board of directors. She is a regional services consultant for Bryan Health in Lincoln, where she provides support and facilities collaboration between area hospitals. She also is a graduate of the UNMC Radiation Science Technology Education program.

Katy Goulding N’13
Aberdeen, S.D., joined Horizon Health Care to serve at the organization’s Aberdeen Community Health Center. She is a nurse practitioner specializing in women’s health.

Theresa Langan N’13
Kearney, Neb., joined Community Hospital in McCook as a radiation oncology nurse. She is certified as a hospice and palliative care nurse with additional certification in pain management. She also is a graduate of the UNMC Radiation Science Technology Education program.
Pharmacy

• Lawrence Helser P’51
  Rockwall, Texas, is excited that his granddaughter will begin classes at the UNMC College of Pharmacy in August 2014. He is proud to have several family members who have entered the pharmacy profession and told him his successful career inspired them to become pharmacists themselves.

• John Liska P’69
  Lake Havasu City, Ariz., retired from clinical compounding pharmacy in 2008. He now enjoys mountain biking, hiking, kayaking, golfing, running and driving shifter go-karts. He gave up snowboarding after having both knees replaced. He and his wife travel in their motor home and spend summers in southern California.

Glenda Hartmann P’70
Fort Collins, Colo., retired as a pharmacist from the Loveland Community Health System.

Ron Hartmann P’70
Fort Collins, Colo., retired from Sandoz Pharmaceuticals as the director of government affairs.

Jim McHargue P’72
Aurora, Neb., retired from his business, Jim’s U-Save Pharmacy, at the end of 2013. He sold the business to a longtime staff pharmacist and the business will continue to serve the community. He now spends more time with his family.

Michael Yantzi P’76
Omaha, Neb., retired in April 2012.

Patrick Woster P’78, ’87
Charleston, S.C., is a professor and SmartState Endowed Chair in Drug Discovery at the Medical University of South Carolina and has been selected as a fellow of the American Chemical Society (Class of 2014).

Carla Frye P’82
Hebron, Neb., joined the pharmacy staff at Thayer County Health Services in Hebron in May 2014.

Ally Dering-Anderson P’86
Lincoln, Neb., was one of eight participants nationwide named as a 2014-2015 participant in the National Association of Chain Drug Stores Faculty Scholar Program. The program is designed to educate faculty about effective and meaningful community pharmacy-based patient care research. She is a clinical assistant professor in the UNMC Department of Pharmacy Practice.

Jeremy Walte P’05
Beatrice, Neb., opened the Arbor State Pharmacy in April 2014 in Wymore, Neb.

Brooke Heine P’07
Crawford, Neb., marks seven years this summer since opening Crawford Pharmacy with her husband David.

Patrick Meyer P’11
Albion, Neb., is a hospital pharmacist at Boone County Health Center in Albion. He and his wife have three daughters.

Sarah Gorczynski P’04
Belton, Texas, accepted a position as pharmacist in charge of one of the Army Medical Home Pharmacies at Fort Hood, Texas.

Dentistry

Jim Anderson D’71
Aurora, Neb., retired in 2013 after practicing dentistry for 40 years.

Howard Miller D’72
Hardy, Neb., retired from dentistry and sold his practice in 2013 to fellow UNMC alumnus, Stephanie Cobb D’13

Carl Trout D’07
Harrold, N.D., joined the dental office of Dr. Brent L. Holman in Fargo, N.D. He specializes in pediatric dentistry and completed his certificate of pediatric dentistry from UNMC in 2013.

Brett Carranza D’08
Kearney, Neb., joined Lexington Regional Health Center as a visiting specialist in pediatric dentistry. He also has his own practice, Kearney Pediatric Dentistry. He completed a two-year pediatric specialty program at the University of California Los Angeles College of Dentistry before returning to Kearney, which is near his hometown of Lexington, Neb.

Kalie Johnson D’08
Pierce, Neb., started her own practice, Smiles Dental P.C., in Norfolk, Neb. She previously worked as the full-time dentist at Norfolk Community Healthcare Clinic.

Miles Berg D’12
York, Neb., joined Rosenu Dentistry in York.

Kate Wolford D’13
North Platte, Neb., is a full-time dentist at West Central District Health Department in North Platte.

Physical Therapy

Steve Line PT’97
Columbus, Neb., is co-owner of Columbus Physical Therapy.

Mike Uhrlaub PT’97
Omaha, Neb., is owner and physical therapist with Flex Physical Therapy in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Misti Fidelike PT’98
Ravenna, Neb., is a physical therapist with Family Physical Therapy & Sports Center in Kearney, Neb. She specializes in: women’s health, lymphedema, orthopedic and sports physical therapy, neuromuscular, geriatric rehabilitation, strokes, balance and mobility, and pediatrics.

Betsy Becker PT’99
Omaha, Neb., graduated with a doctorate in physical therapy from the University of South Dakota in May 2014. At the hooding ceremony she received the Dr. Roy Osborn Lifelong Learner Award for graduating with the highest GPA in her class. She is an assistant professor at UNMC in the physical therapy education division.

Nikki Gracey PT’04
Mullen, Neb., opened a satellite location of Sandhills Physical Therapy & Sports Rehabilitation in Mullen, Neb. She also makes regular visits to see patients at Pioneer Memorial Nursing Home, while also working with high school athletes from Hyannis, Neb., and Mullen.

Prior to their rotations, students in the UNMC College of Pharmacy class of 2015 gather at the Alumni House for the P3 send-off lunch on April 17. Hosted by the College of Pharmacy Alumni Chapter, the lunch was sponsored by CVS Caremark.
Diana Holthaus PT’07
Seneca, Kan., joined the Nemaha Valley Community Hospital physical therapy department. She previously worked in pediatrics and home health. In Seneca, she also supports the special education programs at area schools by providing physical therapy to students.

Melissa Truksa PT’07
David City, Neb., recently joined Dynamic Life Therapy and Wellness in Columbus, Neb., after working in Lincoln for six years. She and her husband have one daughter.

Tim Wrenholt PT’12
Norfolk, Neb., joined Spier Physical Therapy in Norfolk. He has been a certified strength and conditioning specialist since 2011.

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J. Charles Speed PA’98
Port Angeles, Wash., joined Olympic Medical Physicians Primary Care Clinic. He comes to Washington after 15 years in a family medicine clinic in Monahans, Texas.

Mike Nesbitt PA’00, ’02
San Antonio, Texas, is the director of Connally Memorial Urgent Care in La Vernia, Texas.

Saundra Brennan PA’01
Council Bluffs, Iowa, practices dermatology with Dermatology Specialists of Omaha. She also sees patients in Council Bluffs.

Benin Lee PA’01
Reynoldsburg, Ohio, received the 2014 Outstanding Physician Assistant Leadership Award at the Society of Army Physician Assistant conference in Fayetteville, N.C. The award is presented by the Veterans Affairs Physician Assistant Association.

Jill Jensen PA’04
Neola, Iowa, joined the UNMC Physician Assistant program. She previously worked in rural family medicine, emergency medicine, occupational medicine, employee health and wound care. She and her husband have two children.

Julie Wiekamp PA’05
Lincoln, Neb., joined Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center in the emergency department. She previously worked in Fremont, Neb., at Heartland Urgent Care and Urgent Care of Fremont.

Joel Schwartzkopf PA’06
Ft. Collins, Colo., was accepted into the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine Class of 2018 for the doctor of osteopathic medicine program.

Jason Olmes PA’07
Albion, Neb., is a physician assistant at Boone County Health Center in Albion. He and his wife have three children.

Tara Porr PA’08
Gardner, Kan., is a physician assistant with Mirabile MD Beauty, Health and Wellness. She is the manager of the wellness division, specializing in physician-supervised weight loss.

Melissa Hall PA’09
Lexington, Neb., joined Plum Creek Medical Group in Lexington. She is married with one son.

Benjamin Abbey PA’12, ‘13
Alexandria, S.D., joined Avera Medical Group Orthopedics and Sports Medicine. He and his wife have two daughters.

Mikaela Dierks PA’12
Worthington, Minn., joined Sanford Worthington Orthopedics and Sports Medicine in April 2014.

J. Charles Speed PA’98
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Worthington, Minn., joined Sanford Worthington Orthopedics and Sports Medicine in April 2014.

Doni Jaeger PA’13
Geneva, Neb., joined the medical staff at Fillmore County Medical Center, PC and Fillmore County Hospital.

Holly Lanoha PA’13
Omaha, Neb., accepted a position at the Charles Drew Health Center in Omaha. She will practice at the Homeless Health Centers and the Benson Community Health Center.

Clinical Laboratory Science

Amber Melero CLS’04
Austin, Texas, graduated from the University of North Texas Physician Assistant program in 2012. She and her husband have one child.

Students in the Clinical Laboratory Science (CLS) class of 2014 proudly show tumblers they received as graduation gifts from the CLS Alumni Chapter.

Samantha Sullivan PA’12, ‘13
Tucson, Ariz., joined Urgent Care 24/7 in Savannah, Ga., as a physician assistant. She was trained as a combat medic in 2003 with the Army National Guard and served more than 10 years.

Cassandra Arens PA’13
Craford, Minn., joined Wausau Medical Clinic in Wausau, Neb.

Bethany Berg PA’13
Fairbury, Neb., joined the Fairbury Clinic in family practice.

Heather Warren PA’13
Norfolk, Neb., joined Osmond Family Practice in Osmond, Neb.

Whitney Hiebner PA’13
Kingman, Kan., joined the Bone and Joint Center in Pratt, Kan.

Students in the Clinical Laboratory Science (CLS) class of 2014 proudly show tumblers they received as graduation gifts from the CLS Alumni Chapter.

Radiation Science Technology Education

Donald Johanns RSTE’74
Hopkins, Minn., retired in 2013 from his position as director of medical imaging at United Hospital in St. Paul, Minn. He now enjoys time with his family, travels and relaxes at his lake house in southern Minnesota.

Jay Kocian RSTE’93, D’13
Gretna, Neb., is now a partner in the dental business of Reichert Family Dentistry.

Lisa Lohr RSTE’92
Elkhorn, Neb., was elected in May 2014 to the UNMC RSTE Alumni Chapter board of directors.

* Indicates alumni dues-paying member | © Life Member in alumni association
Matthew Schuman RSTE’93
Prairie Village, Kan., received an executive master of business administration degree from Benedictine College in Atchison, Kan. in August 2013.

Jana Koth RSTE’98, PH’12
Bellevue, Neb., was elected in May 2014 to the UNMC RSTE Alumni Chapter board of directors.

Natalie Tymkowycz RSTE’00
Omaha, Neb., joined Dinklage Medical Clinic in West Point, Neb., in August 2014. She earned her doctor of medicine degree from the University of South Dakota and did her residency at Clarkson UNMC Family Medicine.

Ashley Wissing RSTE’06
Saint Libory, Neb., was recognized as one of the Grand Island, Neb., Area Chamber of Commerce’s 35 under 35 honorees. The honorees are selected based on their dedication to the growth of the community, their professional and personal accomplishments, and leadership. She is a patient navigator at St. Francis Medical Center’s Cancer Treatment Center. She and her husband have two daughters.

Kelsey Lechtenberg RSTE’12
Jacksonville, Fla., was elected in May 2014 to the UNMC RSTE Alumni Chapter board of directors.

Beth Niedbalski RSTE’12
Omaha, Neb., was elected in May 2014 as president of the UNMC RSTE Alumni Chapter board of directors. Her term as president began July 1.

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Public Health

Heather Nutsch PH’03
Omaha, Neb., was elected in June 2014 to the UNMC College of Public Health Alumni Chapter board of directors.

Kara Gehring PH’10
Omaha, Neb., in January 2014 started working as public health project coordinator at CityMatCH, a national membership organization of city and county health departments’ maternal and child health programs and leaders representing urban communities.

Graduate Studies

M. Patricia Leuschen PhD’76
Omaha, Neb., has been installed as president of the UNMC Faculty Women’s Club for 2014-2015.

Apar Ganti, MD, G’11
Omaha, Neb., was recently elected to the board of directors of Academic and Community Cancer Research United, a clinical research network that brings together leading scientific researchers from more than 65 academic institutions and community-based cancer treatment practices in the U.S. and Canada. He specializes in hematology/oncology at The Nebraska Medical Center.

Residents

Shane Havens, MD, returned to UNMC Aug. 1 as an assistant professor of ophthalmology and visual sciences. He completed his internship in internal medicine and a residency in ophthalmology at UNMC and was chief resident from 2012 to 2013. He completed a fellowship at the Duke University Eye Center. Dr. Havens will provide medical and surgical specialty care and comprehensive ophthalmology at the Trihusen Institute and at the TEI Village Pointe Clinic. Dr. Havens also will assist in residency training especially in glaucoma and cataract surgery at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Omaha.

In Remembrance...

LeRoy Kleinsasser M’36
Austin, Texas, May 9, 2014.

Virginia (Lundberg) Johnson N’45
Santee, Calif., Feb. 27, 2014.

Arthur Pedersen M’47
Gaffney, S.C., May 9, 2014.

Walter Johnson P’49

Charles Mohler D’49

Adrian Sampeck D’51
Dallas, Texas, March 25, 2014.

Donald Hagel M’51

Edwin Lebsack D’52

John Peckler M’52
Fresno, Calif., June 6, 2013.

Robert “Bob” Bell M’53
Brandon, S.D., April 12, 2014.
Herman Shyken M’54

Col. Harold Halvorson M’55

James Morse M’57
Rapid City, S.D., March 10, 2014.

Bruce Snyder D’58
Sun City, Ariz., April 22, 2014.

Jerald Brodkey M’60
Cleveland, Ohio, May 20, 2014.

John Justice D’61

Patricia Meyer CLS’61

Kenneth Stormo M’63
Fond du Lac, Wis., May 17, 2013.

William Bar M’64

Carl Jensen D’67

Mary Mitchell N’72, ’78
Omaha, Neb., June 8, 2014.

Christopher MacKnight D’82

Kathryn Eppel M’93
Lincoln, Neb., March 5, 2014.

Ruby Bowman N’96

Kim Reid P’97
Omaha, Neb., and her husband Chris welcomed a daughter, Willow Rae, on Feb. 1, 2014.

Jessica Grosse PA’06
Omaha, Neb., and her husband Luke welcomed a daughter, Emma, on Jan. 25, 2013.

Erica Haake M’06
Grand Island, Neb., and her husband Trevor welcomed a son, Ira Spencer, on March 7, 2014.

Lyndsey Casaceli N’07
San Antonio, Texas, and her husband David welcomed a son, David Francis III, on Dec. 11, 2013.

Sheryl Pfeiler P’07
Oak Grove, Mo., and her husband Scott welcomed a son, Garrett Cooper, on Aug. 2, 2013.

Tara Brandt RSTE’09
Kearney, Neb., and her husband Kasey welcomed a daughter, Finley Jo, on Feb. 7, 2014.

Brianne Manglitz PA’10

Births

Kim Reid P’97
Omaha, Neb., and her husband Chris welcomed a daughter, Willow Rae, on Feb. 1, 2014.

Jessica Grosse PA’06
Omaha, Neb., and her husband Luke welcomed a daughter, Emma, on Jan. 25, 2013.

Marriages

Austin Rupp M’14 & Kirsten Foster M’14

Please visit www.unmc.edu/alumni for a complete listing of class notes. Thank you for your notes.

UPCOMING EVENTS

College of Nursing West Nebraska Division Alumni Reunion
Sept. 12 – 13
Scottsbluff, Neb.

UNMC Alumni Association Tailgate Party Miami (Fla.) at Nebraska
Sept. 20
The Grand Manse
Lincoln, Neb.

College of Dentistry Alumni Homecoming
Sept. 26 – 27
Lincoln, Neb.

UNMC Alumni Reunion Weekend
Oct. 17 – 18
Colleges of Medicine, Nursing & Pharmacy
Omaha, Neb.

We love hearing from you! Please send your professional and personal news for Class Notes to:

UNMC Alumni Relations
985200 Nebraska Medical Center
Omaha, NE 68198-5200

Phone: (402) 559-4385
Toll free: (888) 725-8664
Email: alumni@unmc.edu
Website: www.unmc.edu/alumni

Prefer to receive UNMC Connect electronically?

Send your request and email address to:
alumni@unmc.edu

Be sure to indicate if you are a UNMC alum.

For more information about these events, contact the UNMC Alumni Relations Office at (402) 559-4385 or alumni@unmc.edu.
The Campaign for Nebraska began in July 2005 and will conclude in December 2014.

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MELONIE WELSH
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FRED & PAMELA BUFFETT CANCER CENTER
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MUNROE-MEYER INSTITUTE
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PATTY SHERMAN
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FOR INFORMATION ON HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT UNMC, PLEASE CONTACT:

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CAMPAIGN FOR NEBRASKA ENDS DECEMBER 31.
BUT YOU STILL HAVE TIME TO JOIN IN ITS SUCCESS.

EARLY INVADE

Thank you for your support.
campaignfornebraska.org/unmc

ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN

$559M* Raised for UNMC to Date
707 Total New Funds Established
17,282 Number of Individuals Who Have Given to the Campaign
12/31/14 Date the Campaign Ends

* In addition to this fundraising total $243.7 million has been committed for the Fred & Pamela Cancer Center building project. This funding was provided from sources other than private gifts or were private gifts committed but not yet meeting the Campaign for Nebraska’s reporting criteria. To date, a total of $392.1 million has been committed to the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center building project.

The Campaign for Nebraska began in July 2005 and will conclude in December 2014.


Thank you for your support.
campaignfornebraska.org/unmc
WHEN ASKED ABOUT HIGH SCHOOL, BRIANNA WEBER ALWAYS CREDITS DUAL ALMA MATERS.

“I say I graduated from Millard West High School and I went through the High School Alliance at UNMC,” the first-year nursing student said. “I always list the two of them together.”

The High School Alliance is UNMC’s health science enrichment program for high school juniors and seniors. Each year 55 students from among 21 high schools and 10 participating school districts take classes at UNMC’s Omaha campus. They spend school-day afternoons learning from medical center professors, including physicians, researchers and health care professionals, and Omaha Public Schools’ science teachers.

Entering its fifth year, the High School Alliance boasts a 93 percent program completion rate and 96 percent college attendance rate. Seventy-three percent of program graduates have indicated they planned to pursue a health STEM field (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) in college.

Weber is among them. She became interested in a career in health sciences the way many do: she was a patient. She blew out her knee playing high school sports.

She considered a variety of potential career options. But after shadowing in the High School Alliance, decided she wanted to become a nurse anesthetist.

“I like that in nursing there is a relationship between the patient and the caregiver,” she said. “I wanted that emotional bond.”

She also liked that, in nursing, it’s possible to shift specialties midcareer, she said at a recent orientation session for the incoming class of UNMC’s Omaha nursing students.

Weber is among the first wave of High School Alliance alums now beginning their formal health science educations.

In addition to unique hands-on opportunities and exposure to real life health care and research, alliance alums also gain the invaluable experience and confidence of having been in a college environment, program coordinator Heidi Kaschke said.

Weber agreed: “UNMC holds high expectations of its students,” she said, “and this trained me to be prompt, efficient and never to procrastinate.”

This training came not only from professors and teachers, but from fellow UNMC students themselves. Students and student interest groups from the Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, School of Allied Health Professions, and Graduate Studies assist with the program’s course work throughout the year.

“We love it,” said Joseph Rohr, an M.D./Ph.D. scholar who worked with High School Alliance students as a second-year medical student in the Pathology Interest Group.

Now, Weber is one of those UNMC students.
UNMC Alumni Reunion Weekend
October 17–18, 2014

For alumni of the UNMC Colleges of Medicine, Nursing & Pharmacy

Honor Years:
Half Century Club Members: Those who graduated prior to 1964

Accommodations:
Embassy Suites Downtown/Old Market
Special Rate of $142/night available until Sept. 26
Make your reservation now!
402-346-9000

For more information visit: www.unmc.edu/alumni or call (888) 725-8664