Nearly 14 million Americans – about one in 20 people – have impaired vision. In Nebraska, that’s 15 percent of the population. UNMC’s new Weigel Williamson Center for Visual Rehabilitation will provide a means to assist people who have low vision to gain – or regain – their independence and quality of life.

At this state-of-the-art center, low vision devices, such as this microscopic spectacle that magnifies eight times to help with reading, will be available for clients to borrow before purchase. On Page 8, you’ll read about John Shepherd, M.D., the center’s first medical director, and the benefits of the new center, scheduled to open in April.
The year 2008 promises to be a year of celebration at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, as we break ground and dedicate several new facilities on our campus that will enhance the care of our patients, the education of our students and the research of our medical scientists.

These buildings signify the growth and prosperity that our campus enjoys, and they provide an infrastructure for us to recruit and retain the best students and faculty, as well as provide the best treatments for our patients.

This issue of “Connect” highlights many devastating diseases. Omaha made the largest gift toward the building and named it after their founders, Home Instead Senior Care, made the lead gift for the $10.2 million facility. As the baby boomers reach their senior years, this center is absolutely right for us to have a facility that will take our already outstanding geriatric programs to a world-class level.

In addition, a student plaza will grace the east side of the Sorrell Center. This plaza will serve as an outdoor area for student events during the warmer months and will convert to a mechanically frozen ice rink in the winter. For years, I have envisioned having a plaza and skating rink where students and employees can enjoy this true jewel on our campus.

All of these projects – as well as some that have not yet been announced – are important as we continue on our trajectory toward becoming a world-class academic health sciences center. We hope that you share in our excitement in opening these facilities, which will help us better fulfill our mission of teaching, research and patient care.

HAROLD M. MAURER, M.D.
Chancellor

We value your opinion and welcome letters to the editor. Please send your letter to UNMC Connect Editor, UNMC, 5851 Leavenworth Street, Omaha, NE 68198-5230, or email ekumru@unmc.edu. Letters will be verified before they are printed.

We refer to the UNMC Research Enterprise and University of Nebraska Medical Center in our publications. Please use the shortened form UNMC when referring to the Research Enterprise.

Donors invest in UNMC’s mission

WILLIAMSON OF OMAHA DR. WEIGEL IS A 1958 GRADUATE OF THE UNMC COLLEGE OF MEDICINE.

This summer, our College of Medicine will have a new home – the Michael E Sorrell Center for Health Science Education. This beautiful, $52.7 million facility will be the most sophisticated learning environment in America. Bill and Ruth Scott of Omaha made the largest gift toward the building and named it after their longtime physician, Dr. Sorrell. Nearly 1,000 alumni donated more than $15 million to the new building. State-of-the-art classrooms, auditoriums and small group areas make this a true jewel on our campus.

In addition, a student plaza will grace the east side of the Sorrell Center. This plaza will serve as an outdoor area for student events during the warmer months and will convert to a mechanically frozen ice rink in the winter. For years, I have envisioned having a plaza and skating rink where students and employees can enjoy this true jewel on our campus.

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STREET-WISE LEARN ABOUT BEING HEALTH-WISE

by Lisa Spellman

Twenty women walk into the room, single file, and sit down around three long tables shaped in a U. A young girl with black hair arrives for the weekly health education class. Lowering herself into a chair, the girl’s swollen belly brushes against the table. Sitting across from her is Tammie Toney, a single mother of four incarcerated for shoplifting, trespassing and driving during suspension.

Once inside the concrete walls of the minimum security facility, the women are able to reflect on their lives and their health, she said.

“These women are grossly undereducated about how to protect themselves from AIDS, or how to recognize the signs and symptoms of when a friend or family member needs medical attention.”

Deb Winckler, trauma therapist, Douglas County Department of Corrections Day Reporting Center.

“Many of these women come from the street,” said Deb Winckler, a trauma therapist. “On many of these women come from the street,” said Deb Winckler, a trauma therapist. “On many of these women come from the street,” said Deb Winckler, a trauma therapist. “On many of these women come from the street,” said Deb Winckler, a trauma therapist.

Struggling to survive on a daily basis, many of the women have little time to think about how to prevent diabetes or sexually transmitted diseases.

“Many of these women come from the street,” said Deb Winckler, a trauma therapist.

Winckler, along with Connie Pfeiffer, manager of the reporting center, decided it would benefit the women to have a health education program at the corrections facility.

Alison Ramey and Sarah Dance, two students in the UNMC College of Medicine, took on the challenge of developing a women’s health program at the corrections facility.

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Who range in age from their early 20s to late 40s, are.

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Alison Ramey and Sarah Dance, two students in the UNMC College of Medicine, took on the challenge of developing a women’s health program at the corrections facility.

Ramey and Dance work under the supervision of their UNMC Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) adviser, Paul Paulman, M.D., a professor in the department of family medicine.

“I thought this would be a great way to bring in students to teach about personal health,” Winckler said.

At the time, Ramey was in her second year of medical school and was vice president of FMIG.

She relished the idea of being able to make a positive difference in someone’s life.

“I wanted to make sure that I did something with my position,” Ramey said. “You know in college or high school how people get positions in clubs but never do anything? I wanted to do more.”

Dance said understanding basic health care is an important aspect of preparing the women to be successful in their lives.

“I’m just glad we’ve had the opportunity to talk to the ladies from the university,” Toney said. “We’ve learned more about our bodies, our children’s health and how to take better care of our families.”

Dance and Ramey periodically poll the inmates to find out what they want to learn.

Topics of interest include depression, parenting and heart disease.

“We’re giving the women additional tools to succeed when they leave the facility,” Dance said. “We hope knowing when and how to receive medical care, the importance of medicine and the benefits versus consequences of different actions will encourage the women to make healthy choices.”

Ramey and Dance hope to start a program for men once they have the women’s program running smoothly.

The pair plan to recruit both male and female medical students to help with the programs.

“I just glad we’ve had the opportunity to talk to the ladies from the university,” Toney said. “We’ve learned more about our bodies, our children’s health and how to take better care of our families.”

Once inside the concrete walls of the minimum security facility, the women are able to reflect on their lives and their health, she said.

“The women are grossly undereducated about how to protect themselves from AIDS, or how to recognize the signs and symptoms of when a friend or family member needs medical attention, especially if there isn’t blood or a broken bone,” she said. “I was spending a lot of time teaching them about their bodies instead of doing the life skill training that they also need.”

That’s when she contacted UNMC.

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Dr. Fletcher began his new position at UNMC in November. With 25 years of academic pharmacy experience behind him, Dr. Fletcher immediately set to work to start a new era at the College of Pharmacy that will strengthen the research enterprise and educational curriculum.

His vision for the college is to develop strong leadership among faculty and students. “I want our faculty and students to be nationally and internationally recognized as a community of leaders who are scientists, educators and practitioners, guided by the highest ethical standards. They should focus on advancing science, enhancing the education of pharmacists and other health professionals, and developing graduate and postgraduate students to improve human health,” he said.

Dr. Fletcher’s foot fell upon the path to a career in pharmacy and research only after his second year in community college, where he excelled in chemistry, math and biology. He had always leaned toward pharmacy, having played in the dirt as a child in Greybull, Wy, where his mother worked.

After earning his doctor of pharmacy degree from the University of Minnesota in 1982, Dr. Fletcher held academic appointments in the department of clinical pharmacy, School of Pharmacy, and the division of infectious diseases in the department of medicine at the Colorado Health Sciences University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Denver, 1983-2002
• Clinical Pharmacist, surgical intensive care and nutritional support, Mercy Hospital Center
• Associate Director, Colorado HIV Pharmacology, College of Pharmacy, 1997-2002
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PUBLIC SERVICE:
• AIDS Discovery and Development of Therapeutics Study Group, 1982-1991
• Clinical Practices for the Treatment of HIV Infection Panel, Department of Health and Human Services, since 1981
• Executive Committee, Adults AIDS Clinical Trials Group, National Institute of Health and Infectious Diseases, since 2003

PUBLICATIONS:
Antiviral expert becomes new pharmacy dean

Dr. Fletcher’s research is focused on trying to treat viral infections in immunocompromised patients. Much of his early research work was done at the University of Minnesota, where the Antiviral Pharmacology Laboratory was founded in 1983. Minnesota, like UNMC, is home to a major solid organ transplant center. He became interested in the AIDS virus when many AIDS patients were being diagnosed with cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection of the eye. He had done extensive research on CMV, which can be life threatening for patients who are immunocompromised.

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When Janice Tompkins first flew to Tanzania she knew the clinical laboratories would not resemble those in which she had spent years working. Even so, it was disconcerting to find blood specimens in unlabeled medication vials sitting on handwritten requisition forms, latex gloves hung on clothes drying racks so they could be reused, and blood for transfusions stored in refrigerators with unmonitored temperature settings and doors that did not latch.

Until recently, health care professionals in the agricultural country – slightly twice the size of California – have been battling an HIV/AIDS epidemic with outdated microscopes and a few pieces of automated equipment.

Now, UNMC clinical laboratory scientists, including Tompkins, are lending their “know how” to colleagues in Tanzania – where 7 percent of its 37 million residents are infected with HIV/AIDS – and other African countries to improve conditions in the labs and improve treatment for those affected by the epidemic.

“Actually, Tanzania is in better shape than a lot of countries in the regions,” said Linda Fell, program director of the UNMC School of Allied Health Professions (SAHP) Clinical Laboratory Science (CLS) program. “But the disease is still taking a massive toll on the country and its people.”

Fell and Tompkins, director of distance education in the SAHP, are leading UNMC’s effort to help strengthen the curriculum for clinical lab education at five clinical laboratory training institutions in Tanzania. In addition to Fell, who earned a master’s degree in pathology from the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, the State University of New York at Stony Brook and UNMC – to help clinical lab technologists in African countries educate future technologists through their laboratory schools.

UNMC’s involvement in the project dovetailed off its participation in an earlier project sponsored by the ASCP and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that involved the development and presentation of continuing education materials for African laboratory technologists.

The latest project already has helped several laboratories in Tanzania acquire funds and new equipment.

The project also helps African clinical laboratory professionals acquire more technology and design curriculum that will educate future laboratory technologists in a standardized method.

In turn, the scientists trained by the UNMC team will teach Tanzania’s next generation of clinical laboratory professionals the necessary skills for performing reliable, automated testing. The project also calls for current and future Tanzanian scientists to learn the theory behind the testing and the instrumentation, as well as the collection processes needed to ensure the integrity of the specimens.

Fell and Tompkins, who have both been to Tanzania to help laboratory technologists design curriculum and provide continuing education for working professionals, said one area in which most Tanzanian educators have expressed a great interest is teaching methods.

“For the most part, the education system in Tanzania is lecture-based, and they are good at that,” Fell said. “But the educators we worked with are interested in the different teaching methods used here as well as the teaching technology we use.”

So far, the Tanzanian educators have decided to implement almost every bit of guidance Fell, Tompkins and the others have provided.

“They are very aware that they are fighting an uphill battle in dealing with the disease,” Tompkins said. “But they are extremely enthusiastic about applying the principles and practices we have discussed with them.”

In general, Tompkins said, Tanzanians are resourceful people who reuse and recycle religiously. Because some labs are situated far from supply distribution points, some scientists have taken up practices including rewashing gloves and conserving supplies.

“They do not know if their supply of disposable items will last or be enough to continue the testing,” Tompkins said. “The protocol of ordering and delivering these disposables is not reliable.”

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UNMC PITCHING IN TO BATTLE HIV/AIDS IN AFRICA

Allied health faculty share clinical lab expertise
Up to 200 slides await testing for malaria every day in Tanzania. By contrast, up to 10 such tests are processed.

"The bottom line is that the CLS program faculty members are the right people for this task," Dr. Meyer said. "Their skills, expertise and experience stand to benefit many people who are suffering from HIV/AIDS."

The project benefits UNMC in that it allows the medical center to showcase its CLS programs, said Fell, who along with Tompkins, has more than 70 years of experience working in labs and educating technologists. Another benefit is that it allows UNMC faculty to gain insight into other leading CLS education programs.

The UNMC team also has begun helping strengthen school curriculums in Lesotho, Ethiopia, Kenya and Rwanda.

"HIV/AIDS is taking lives at a startling pace in many of these countries," Tompkins said. "This is just glad we are able to help lessen the toll the disease is taking on so many people."

The dedication and courage shown by health care professionals on the ground in Tanzania and other AIDS-ravaged countries makes Fell believe they are suited to deal with the epidemic. She is glad to help them get the resources they need to educate those who will contribute to the battle against HIV/AIDS.

"The people we are working with over there are wonderful, caring people," Fell said. "They want to provide the best care they can in the face of this epidemic. Our hope is that our assistance will help them in their fight against HIV/AIDS."

"From a resource standpoint, that was the best they could do," Tompkins said. "Today we are teaching them what they could do."

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I became an ophthalmologist who couldn’t do surgeries. I was a father who couldn’t play football with my kids, or pick up my youngest child. It made me sit back and look at the issues my patients face.”

He asked himself many questions.

“What happens when a physician runs out of options for patients? Are we taking care of the eye or the person? People still need to function and people who have low vision need rehabilitation, just as stroke victims do. The most vulnerable populations, the young, old and disabled, want options.”

A colleague suggested he look into developing a practice that helped people with low vision, but it took eight years before he took a class on the subject at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

That class opened a new window of opportunity for him. With no fellowship training available, Dr. Shepherd invented his own. His wife and six children stayed in Minnesota while he flew to San Francisco to work with ophthalmologist Dan Fletcher, M.D., an expert in low vision rehabilitation at the California Pacific Medical Center.

Dr. Fletcher also sent him to train at other low vision centers in California, Michigan and Florida, all without pay.

“I performed about five cataract surgeries every week, in addition to a variety of laser surgeries and minor procedures. I trained rural family practice residents to become familiar with problems of the eye through my clinical appointment with the University of Minnesota,” said Dr. Shepherd, who earned his medical degree from St. Louis University School of Medicine in 1990.

If there was a problem he could fix, he would. For patients beyond his help, well, there was nothing he could offer – at the time.

“An identity crisis set in.”

“Low vision care is an entirely different type of practice,” Dr. Shepherd said. “It’s time intensive.”

Normally, an ophthalmologist spends limited amounts of time per patient on an eye exam. But, with low vision patients, a physician could spend up to two hours doing an exam and discussing issues and coping mechanisms.

“I came to realize that having low vision was an emotional and physical parallel with my back injury,” Dr. Shepherd said.

He found a desire to dedicate his whole career to this, but where? His search finally led him to Omaha when he was introduced to Kathy VonDollen, coordinator of UNMC’s Low Vision Clinic, and Pat Jones, assistant coordinator, at a low vision meeting in Kansas City in 2000. It was an encounter that would give them all what they needed.

VonDollen and Jones wanted to expand UNMC’s 25-year-old clinic into a comprehensive vision rehabilitation service. The two were pursuing a dream they’ve had since 1996, the development of a low vision center on campus. But, they needed help and Dr. Shepherd was willing to consult on the project on a volunteer basis. Last fall, he was hired to be the center’s medical director and made assistant professor of ophthalmology.

“It’s amazing to see the heart and passion of these two women,” he said. “They have so much perseverance – they are making a dream become reality.”

Nearly 14 million Americans — about one in 20 people — have impaired vision. By 2020 this number is expected to increase by more than 60 percent.

“It was a mistake to not realize earlier that I could give patients hope and the ability to move forward,” he said.

The Weigel Williamson Center for Visual Rehabilitation is the first low vision house in the United States connected with a university medical center. It will be unique in many ways, Dr. Shepherd said.

“Seeing hope in new light”

Low vision patients to receive comprehensive care at new center

John Shepherd, M.D., knows what it’s like to lose hope.

It was an experience that taught him empathy for people who live with chronic conditions, especially low vision.

As an ophthalmologist, life for Dr. Shepherd was good. He had been in private practice in Mankato, Minn., for three years, providing medical and surgical solutions to people with vision problems.

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If there was a problem he could fix, he would. For patients beyond his help, well, there was nothing he could offer – at the time.

But then in 1997, a lower back injury started him on a journey that would take him around the country, and finally to Omaha.

The injury led him into many hours of physical therapy that did not ease the chronic pain. A year later, he tore the meniscus in his right knee. Two knee surgeries and three years later, he could finally walk without throwing his back out.

Still, the back pain forced him to give up his surgical practice.

“I saw several doctors and nothing helped,” he said. “I was imprisoned by my back pain.”

An identity crisis set in.

“I feel blessed that I’m able to see the issues more clearly for low vision patients because of what I’ve been through,” he said.
Dr. Raymond discusses the safety issues surrounding imported food at an October Import Safety Working Group meeting in Washington, D.C.

It took six years and funding from the state and federal government, but Dr. Raymond was able to establish 18 multi-county public health departments.

“This accomplishment provided the state public health officials with partners throughout the state of Nebraska that could respond to emergencies and also on a daily basis provide public health education,” he said.

Not long after Johanns was appointed secretary of the USDA by President George Bush, Dr. Raymond was tapped to become under secretary for food safety.

In this role, Dr. Raymond oversees the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), which carries out USDA’s food safety regulatory program, as well as important public health outreach and education activities focused on enhancing the safety of the U.S. food supply.

"Most of the time, the attention and emphasis at FSIS is placed on our inspection activities, which have had a daily effect on nearly every household in America since the 1906 Meat Inspection Act was passed," he said.

The FSIS has more than 9,400 employees, approximately 7,600 of whom are inspection and veterinary personnel present daily in nearly 6,000 meat, poultry and egg product slaughter and processing plants throughout the United States.

More recently, the agency has increased its focus on food safety by expanding the reach and impact of FSIS’s food safety education messages to consumers and at-risk populations.

"We’re dedicated to improving our food safety and inspection service," Dr. Raymond said. “This isn’t an ‘either/or’ proposition. It is high time we begin to remind people the ‘and’ in FSIS means we have a bigger role than ‘just’ inspection. We want to become known as the public health branch of the USDA.”

Since joining the USDA staff in 2005, Dr. Raymond has made significant contributions to improving the safety of food Americans eat, the inspection process of production plants and the recall process.

"It only makes sense to help the consumer protect themselves and their families," Dr. Raymond said. (220)

Dr. Raymond plays with his 4-month-old grandson, Drew Allen Raymond.

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A native of Loup City, Neb., Dr. Raymond knew he wanted to raise his children in a rural setting.

After graduating from UNMC in 1972, he established a family practice in O’Neill with his wife, Carol Jane Raymond, a nurse who also graduated from UNMC in 1971.

Dr. Raymond's first foray out of rural medicine came in 1990 when he was asked to establish the family practice residency program at Clarkson Hospital.

It was a challenge he relished.

"I enjoyed the challenge of taking on something new and watching the students grow from being young, anxious residents to becoming confident and competent physicians," he said.

An even bigger challenge came when former Nebraska Gov. Mike Johanns asked him to become the state’s chief medical officer.

During his tenure as chief medical officer, Dr. Raymond solved one of the biggest challenges facing the state.

At the time, Nebraska didn’t have many public health departments that could conduct epidemiology investigations, track outbreaks or provide mass immunizations and public health education, something that was badly needed in the state, he said.

Dr. Raymond discusses the safety issues surrounding imported food at an October Import Safety Working Group meeting in Washington, D.C.
Delegates program mobilizes UNMC supporters
by Chuck Brown

A program run through UNMC’s Government Relations office gives medical center backers a forum to express their support. The grassroots advocacy program – called the UNMC Delegates – is composed of people willing to advocate on behalf of the medical center to federal and state representatives. The program began in August 2006, and has grown to about 300 alumni, students and friends of UNMC, as well as faculty and staff. Anyone willing to advocate on behalf of UNMC is encouraged to become a delegate.

“We have a strong contingent of people who support UNMC and the work being done here in research, education and patient care,” said Mark Bowen, director of UNMC Government Relations.

“The Delegates’ support is vital to advancing our mission and the program serves as a vehicle for these people to stay informed and express their support to lawmakers and others who guide policy.”

The free program uses e-mail to communicate with delegates regarding issues of importance to UNMC. Delegates receive informational e-mails regarding congressional and state legislative developments and are called to action with informational e-mails regarding congressional and state legislative developments and are called to action. Delegates receive e-mail to communicate with lawmakers and others to stay informed and express their support.

Kathleen Newman of Ashland, Neb., is an advocate of the program.

Making a Difference

One day an elephant saw a hummingbird lying on its back with its tiny feet up in the air. “What are you doing?” asked the elephant.

The hummingbird replied, “I heard that the sky might fall today, and so I am ready to help hold it up, should it fall.”

The elephant laughed cruelly. “Do you really think,” he said, “that those tiny feet could help hold up the sky?”

The hummingbird kept his feet up in the air, intent on his purpose, as he replied, “Not alone. But each must do what he can. And this is what I can do.”

HOlDINg UP HALf THe SKy

A CHINESE F OLKTALE

When Myrna Newland, M.D., was a medical student, she was one of five women in the College of Medicine at UNMC. That was 1964.

“At that time, few women thought to enter medical school,” Dr. Newland said. “Those of us who did focused on getting high grades.”

Fast forward 40 years. As director of UNMC’s Equity Office, Dr. Newland has seen the number of women increase in medical school as a result of affirmative action programs.

A report from the American Association of Medical Colleges shows a steady increase in the number of women medical students. In 1964, graduating medical students who were women totaled 6.9 percent nationwide. By 2007, women were 49.1 percent of the medical school graduating classes nationwide.

However, a measure currently introduced in the Nebraska legislature would remove any programs that encouraged qualified women and minorities to seek higher education and other employment options.

State Sen. Mark Christensen recently introduced Legislative Resolution 233CA that would prohibit schools and other publicly funded entities from using gender, race, national origin and other factors in a variety of publicly-sponsored programs and activities, including initiatives that encourage students to pursue fields where they have traditionally been underrepresented, such as minorities in medicine and men in nursing.

Chancellor Harold M. Maurer, M.D., expressed concern that the legislation could impact the university’s ability to recruit top talent.

“We continuously seek to bring the best and the brightest to Nebraska to contribute to our world-class image,” Dr. Maurer said.

“This amendment could portray our state as unwelcoming of people with diverse thoughts, experiences and cultures.”

The troubling part of the legislation is that the language is misleading, said Bob Bartee, UNMC vice chancellor for external affairs.

“It appears to be civil rights friendly but it has a devastating hidden impact.”

Rubens Parnies, M.D., vice chancellor for academic affairs, said if passed the effects proposed by the legislation will be far reaching and disastrous.

“We are training health professionals to work in a global environment,” Dr. Parnies said. “It is critical to the future of health care that all of our students learn from a diverse faculty and from other students with varied perspectives.”

UNMC leaders express concern over affirmative action ban
by Jo Giles

These students from UNMC’s 2007 Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDeP) may be the last to participate in a nationwide program if LR 233CA passes. UNMC is one of 12 SMDeP sites across the United States that provides enhanced educational experiences for college freshmen and sophomores.

UNMC scholarships would be affected as several awards are based on donor criteria including preference for males, females and minorities.

“Scholarships and other affirmative action programs have made a significant difference in the UNMC community,” Dr. Newland said. “By opening the doors of opportunity to qualified students and staff, it has changed the lives of women, minorities and their families.”

If the legislative initiative is adopted, it could affect accreditation.

The Gender Equity committee, and annual reports on the number of women, minority students and faculty, began with a North Central Accreditation Report in 1987. The Board of Regents adopted gender equity goals and strategies in the early 1990s to increase the number of women and minorities on campus.

While women are now graduating from medical school at higher rates, they still lag behind their male counterparts in reaching the level of full professor. At UNMC, 82 percent of full professors are men; only 18 percent are women. The numbers are even smaller for members of underrepresented minority groups.

“What the civil rights legislation of the 1960s did was allow anyone with the qualifications to get an equal chance of being accepted,” Dr. Newland said. “It’s made all the difference.” (2007)
After graduating from UNMC, Jill Poole, M.D., left Nebraska to do her internal medicine residency at one of the country’s most prestigious medical schools – Washington University School of Medicine and Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis.

The inquisitive hazel-eyed blonde from Grand Island, Neb., the first Nebraskan to be named to USA Today’s All-USA College Academic Team, had known she wanted to be a doctor since fourth-grade.

She just didn’t know where.

Following her residency, she elected to do a fellowship in allergy, asthma and immunology at perhaps the leading program in the country in treating respiratory problems, the National Jewish Medical and Research Center/University of Colorado Health Sciences Center at Denver. At the end of her two-year fellowship, she decided to spend an additional year doing research.

But, when it came time to weigh job offers, she chose her alma mater, UNMC. It was the personal touch that made the difference.

Keeping the best and brightest students in Nebraska is no small feat. It’s equally difficult when it comes to recruiting new faculty, yet UNMC continues to boast success thanks to its unique programs, outstanding reputation among academicians, researchers and clinicians, and communication with students that begins as early as fourth grade.

Admission to the health care professions at UNMC is highly competitive, said Chancellor Harold M. Maurer, M.D. “Approximately 85 percent of our students are Nebraskans as we aim to provide the health professions workforce for Nebraska,” he said. “Recruiting the best and brightest students, faculty and staff assure Nebraskans a talented pool from which to draw.”

James O’Dell, M.D., likes the personal approach. “One of the ways we can and should prevent the ultimate brain drain – people leaving Nebraska and never coming back – is by keeping in touch with them,” said Dr. O’Dell, ’77, professor of internal medicine, chief of the section of rheumatology and immunology and internal medicine residency program director. “Working directly with students, coupled with our keen interest in their careers and close lifelong ties with them after graduation, provide a unique personal experience that helps attract and retain them in the state,” Dr. Maurer said. “The personal touch, plus the vision for world-class status of an upward-bound medical center, is apparent during their recruiting visit – and convincing.”

Hardly a day goes by that Mary McNamee, Ph.D., isn’t writing notes, sending e-mails or visiting with students – past, present or potential enrollees. “Connections are what relationships are all about,” said Dr. McNamee, assistant vice chancellor for academic affairs and director of the Office of Student Equity and Multicultural Affairs.

Those connections begin through a variety of UNMC programs, including rural outreach, campus tours and the Youth Learning Center, where more than 300 fourth- through 12th-graders visit each month to learn about the health sciences. The center’s Community Academy Exploration Program exposes middle and high school students to careers in the health sciences and has sparked health careers for many.
“I would not have wanted to come back if I hadn’t met the extraordinary physicians and had such a positive experience here.”

Jill Poole, M.D.

As Dr. Poole finished her third year in Denver, she decided she wanted to be an allergist. Even though this meant she wouldn’t be joining Dr. O’Dell’s team of rheumatologists, he wasn’t about to give up in recruiting Dr. Poole. He turned to Joe Sisson, M.D., professor of internal medicine and chief of the section of pulmonary, critical care, sleep and allergy medicine, who assured Dr. Poole they could find a faculty position for her in his section, even though it would mean creating a new position.

Dr. Poole was impressed that two of UNMC’s leading research physicians were working so hard to entice her back to Nebraska. In spite of a job offer from the University of Colorado, she elected to take the faculty position at UNMC, where she had earned her medical degree in 1999.

It’s proven to be a worthwhile investment. Dr. Poole already has earned a five-year young investigator’s grant for $780,000 from the National Institutes of Health. She’s studying organic dust and how it affects responses by the immune system, and her research has direct applications to the respiratory problems encountered by Nebraska farmers.

Tina Flores, M.D., also felt her home state pulling her back. Despite deep roots in Nebraska, Dr. Flores loved San Antonio and the cultural activities she found while doing her family medicine residency in the eighth-largest city in the United States.

The Omaha native attended North High School, the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the UNMC College of Medicine, before moving to San Antonio, where she became fluent among its Spanish-speaking patient population.

Although physicians tend to practice relatively close to where they complete their residency, Dr. Flores chose to practice 940 miles away in Omaha, where she has been recognized for her work to improve the health and well being of Latinos.

“It was a tough decision to leave,” said Dr. Flores, an assistant professor of family medicine in the UNMC College of Medicine, whose conversations with patients shift seamlessly between English and Spanish. “I had established a practice there and had a feel for the medical community.”

In the end, family considerations, including a then 1-year-old daughter and family support system in Omaha, pulled the 2001 UNMC alumnus and her husband back to Nebraska.

UNMC also connects with bright young minds through its summer research opportunities, high school and college visits, annual scholars day and fall luncheons that reunite high school principals with their former students who are newly admitted UNMC students.

“I’m the aunt to a whole lot of students here and their success is important to me personally,” Dr. McNamee said. “We develop strong relationships with students and the people we want to attract to our program. Everyone is getting enough junk mail, but it’s about being sincere and personal – sending a note saying ‘I was thinking of you and wondering how was last semester?’ or ‘I’m visiting your campus next month and hope to see you.’”

Through each program and contact, friendships are formed, benefiting UNMC. “Even if they choose to go elsewhere, they’re still going to have fond memories of Nebraska and speak highly of our programs,” Dr. McNamee said. “Many may say the turning point for them was the summer they spent here in the lab, the people they met there and the dedication they saw. They’ll speak well for us and get a lot more people familiar with Nebraska and UNMC. You can’t buy that kind of advertising.”

Some even return as faculty.

From the beginning, Dr. Poole was a star recruit. She compiled a perfect 4.0 grade point average at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, published a research paper in the Journal of Parasitology, a rare feat as an undergraduate, and excelled in medical school at UNMC.

UNMC faculty took notice.

“Jill is the whole package,” Dr. O’Dell said. “She’s good with people, very bright and a great scientist and clinician. It was obvious she was going places. We had to find a niche for her at UNMC.”

To make that happen, Dr. O’Dell would page or call Dr. Poole every six months during her residency to see how she was doing and make sure she knew that a faculty position would be waiting for her at UNMC when she made her ultimate career decision.

It’s a strategy he learned first hand from one of UNMC’s legendary physicians – Michael Sorrell, M.D., ’59, professor of internal medicine and the individual for whom the new UNMC education building is named.

Years ago, before Dr. O’Dell finished his residency training at UNMC and went to the University of Colorado, Dr. Sorrell took the UNMC graduate to dinner. He wished Dr. O’Dell well and then checked in periodically during his fellowship.

“It made an impression on me,” Dr. O’Dell said. “I’ve tried to do the same thing with a number of students and residents.”

Dr. Poole, too, was impressed.

“That personal connection played a huge role in my decision,” Dr. Poole said. “There’s a lot of trust that goes on when you take a new job, so having known many of the physicians and researchers here and knowing they were people who would keep their word gave me a lot of security when I was exploring my research options.”

Her education at UNMC also played a pivotal role, she said. “I would not have wanted to come back if I hadn’t met the extraordinary physicians and had such a positive experience here.”

Jill Poole, M.D., reflects on her 1994 selection to USA Today’s All-USA College Academic Team, which included a trip to the USA Today headquarters in Alexandria, Va. Dr. Poole’s memorable application prompted USA Today officials to ask: “Who’s the Worm Woman?” The nickname stemmed from her research on the unique regeneration capabilities of earthworms.

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Jill Poole, M.D.
Returning health professionals to rural areas

Whether you’re in Scottsbluff, Minden, Alton, Valentine or Nebraska City, there’s a good chance that your health professional has a UNMC connection. In fact, 70 percent of the health professionals practicing in Nebraska are UNMC graduates.

If you’re at the York Medical Clinic, due north of Interstate 80 in central Nebraska, several of the 11 health professionals have UNMC degrees. Family practitioner Heather Eberspacher, M.D., is among them.

The Cordova, Neb., native joined the York clinic after she completed a three-year family practice residency program in Grand Island in 2009. “I was interested in doing rural medicine and having that connection with the patients and knew there was a need I could fill here,” said the 1999 UNMC graduate.

Dr. Eberspacher credits UNMC’s Rural Health Opportunities Program (RHOP) for her return to rural Nebraska. RHOP, along with Chadron State College, established RHOP in 1989 to address the shortage of health professionals in rural Nebraska. One year later, Wayne State College joined the unique program, which enables UNMC to pre-admit a select number of students from rural communities upon enrollment in their undergraduate studies. Initially focused on medicine, RHOP now has grown to include such health professions as dentistry, pharmacy, physician assistant, physical therapy, clinical laboratory science, dental hygiene, radiography and nursing.

“RHOP gives students an incentive to stay in rural Nebraska,” Dr. Eberspacher said. “It provides students who are from a rural area opportunities they might not have otherwise for getting into health care careers. That’s one of the keys of its success. The state would miss out on a lot of good health care professionals if we didn’t have the program.”

Through RHOP, UNMC has developed a significant pipeline of health professionals for rural Nebraska. To date, 311 RHOP students have graduated from UNMC and 197 are attending Chadron State, Wayne State or UNMC. Of the UNMC graduates who have completed residencies and are practicing health professionals, 65.6 percent practice in rural Nebraska communities and one in four in rural Nebraska, seven of the 11 health professionals have UNMC degrees.

“Whether you’re in Scottsbluff to Plattsmouth and Valentine to Fairbury who reap the rewards when the best and brightest health care professionals take root in Nebraska,” Dr. Eberspacher said. “It provides students who are from a rural area opportunities they might not have otherwise for getting into health care careers. That’s one of the keys of its success. The state would miss out on a lot of good health care professionals if we didn’t have the program.”

“During the past 15 years, Harvard’s School of Dental Medicine held that distinction the four years we didn’t,” he said. More than 70 percent of the students in the College of Dentistry are Nebraska residents, said Curtis Kuster, D.D.S., director of admissions. Overall, 95 percent of the students are from Nebraska and the surrounding states without a dental college (South Dakota, Wyoming and Kansas), he said.

There’s no question it’s a competitive program and certainly Nebraska residents have highest priority, but the numbers show that those Nebraska students who apply and are accepted have done well academically, have been leaders and demonstrated strong interpersonal skills.”

Through 14 rural outreach clinics, MMI’s behavioral health program last year served more than 7,500 patients in 220 Nebraska communities for developmental, behavioral, emotional, social and academic problems.

As Smith explored his academic options, he was impressed by the College of Dentistry’s consistent top ranking in national board exam scores and licensure pass rates, as well as its well-rounded faculty and students. “They had been seeing great things come from the College of Dentistry for many decades, which told me it was an institution built on solid ground,” Smith said.

“It really was the people that made the difference,” said the third-year student, who plans to remain in Nebraska as a general practitioner.

In the end, it’s the state’s citizens from Scottsbluff to Plattsmouth and Valentine to Fairbury who reap the rewards when the best and brightest health care professionals take root in Nebraska.

In northwestern Nebraska, it’s not unusual for Catherine Jones-Hazledine, Ph.D. – “Dr. Cate” as her patients call her – to travel more than 200 miles on Highway 20 each week to help children and adolescents with behavioral issues.

A psychology faculty member with UNMC’s Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI), she staffs primary care clinics in Chadron, Crawford, Rushville and Gordon. “By the end of graduate school I knew I wanted to be a rural provider, but I wasn’t sure how that might happen or what it would look like,” said the Nebraska native who earned her undergraduate and master’s degrees from the University of Chicago.

That question was answered after she returned to Nebraska for her doctorate and met UNMC faculty members, Joe Evans, Ph.D., and José Polaha, Ph.D., while interviewing for her post-doctoral internship.

“The rural outreach program they started was exactly what I needed,” Dr. Jones-Hazledine said. “In addition to being able to train in real rural clinics, it provided solid mentoring during my internship. This helped me determine what my professional life as a rural provider would look like and how to make it happen.”

Through 14 rural outreach clinics, MMI’s behavioral health program last year served more than 7,500 patients in 220 Nebraska communities for developmental, behavioral, emotional, social and academic problems. “Before Munroe-Meyer established the clinics, child-oriented behavioral health services weren’t available in western Nebraska,” said Dr. Jones-Hazledine, who is an assistant professor of pediatrics at MMI. “Folks mostly didn’t have easy access to a behavioral health provider. Because Munroe-Meyer established the clinics, child-oriented behavioral health services weren’t available in western Nebraska,” Dr. Jones-Hazledine said. Dr. Jones-Hazledine exemplifies the program’s goal of attracting, recruiting, training, placing and retaining behavioral health professionals in rural Nebraska. “It has been a pretty amazing experience to come back to this area and establish these clinics,” the Rushville, Neb., native said. “The idea of training people who are native to rural communities increases the likelihood that they’ll stay. That’s really important in helping these communities to be better served in the future.”

Dr. Jones-Hazledine is grateful to the people and programs at UNMC. “Without that connection, I honestly don’t know if I would be out here doing what I’m doing,” she said. (08)
Breast cancer is exhausting, even before chemotherapy treatments begin. Just ask anyone with the disease.

That’s what Ann Berger, Ph.D., did and she found that in the days before their first chemotherapy treatment, women are most likely fatigued because of disrupted sleep and reduced activity.

“We found that women experiencing altered patterns of day activity, nighttime sleep and fatigue previously thought to be due to chemotherapy, are actually already exhausted before receiving treatment,” said Dr. Berger, MSN, Dorothy Hodges Olson Chair in Nursing, UNMC College of Nursing. “We found women are not going into chemotherapy in the best possible shape.

“It makes it that much more difficult to reduce the fatigue during treatment. If you start out with some chemotherapy in the best possible shape. I could continue to work and raise my two children without all the fatigue.”

Fatigue has long been accepted by health professionals and patients as a side effect of treatment. Between 70 percent to 95 percent of breast cancer patients experience fatigue while undergoing chemotherapy. By challenging the status quo, researchers are learning how to reduce fatigue.

Dr. Berger has been studying cancer-related fatigue for 15 years. In 2003, she and colleagues launched a $1.5 million study funded by the National Institutes of Health that now is complete. Results will be published this year.

She said recent findings provide an important benchmark to begin looking for interventions to reduce cancer-related fatigue. Some of those interventions may include a regular bedtime and a regular wake up time.

“If you’re fatigued during the day and want to take naps, limit them to 45 minutes. Stop napping about four hours before going to bed. And in that interim time period, be as active as you can.”

Cancer-related fatigue can have a profound impact on an individual’s life, with significant physical, emotional, social and economic consequences that may persist for months or even years after completing treatment.

Maria Perales, 38, was diagnosed in 2006 with breast cancer. She enrolled in the study to see if the fatigue she had before surgery and chemotherapy could be reduced. She followed the study’s healthy eating plan. “It helped a lot because I wasn’t spending so much time in bed. I could continue to work and raise my two children without all the fatigue.”

“University Hospital pioneered the transplantation of peripheral stem cells for lymphoma treatment and performed the first liver transplant in the state. Our partnership with the University of Nebraska Medical Center only makes us a better organization.”

Hospital mergers were popular in the early 1990s, but most have not been successful.

“We were unique to finish,” Fosdick said. “We often get asked, ‘Why did it work for us?’ We remained tenacious. We also valued one another’s strengths.”

“One of the Nebraska Medical Center’s patients is climbing nationally. The care provided by physicians, nurses and other health care practitioners and staff is of the highest quality.”

Also in 2005, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Julie Gerberding, M.D., joined physicians at UNMC and The Nebraska Medical Center for the opening of the Biocontainment Unit.

In the years following, The Nebraska Medical Center was the first in the region to use ‘camera in a pill’ for small intestine disorders, the first in the region to use the Navada radiation therapy system and the first in the region to use Odyssey 4-D Localization System for radiation therapy.

UNMC’s academic partnership with The Nebraska Medical Center strengthens its ability to offer cutting-edge treatments. “Patient care rises to a new level when patients have access to new therapies because of research and educational opportunities,” Dr. Maurer said. “Even though the hospital is located in Omaha, it has become a resource for the entire state.”

UNMC’s educational programs are responsible for training more health professionals practicing in Nebraska than any other institution.

“We have attracted the best and brightest students, residents and health care practitioners,” Dr. Maurer said.

Dr. Maurer predicts a bright future for the partnership. “The Nebraska Medical Center will become among the highest-ranked destination hospitals nationally and internationally in keeping with UNMC’s quest to become world-class,” he said.
Dr. Buehler retires from Munroe-Meyer Institute

Bruce Buehler, M.D., stepped down from his post on Oct. 1. Dr. Buehler also retired from his position as chairman of the pediatrics department, a title he held for 16 years.

During his tenure, Dr. Buehler earned multiple teaching awards at UNMC as well as the Outstanding Achievement Award from the College of Medicine in 1996. He continues to serve as editor of the Pediatric Annals journal and as a faculty member.

Michael Leibowitz, Ph.D., has been selected to serve as the interim director of MMI while a search for a permanent director is conducted. Effective Jan. 1, neonatologist John Sparks, M.D., took over as the chairman of the UNMC Pediatrics Department. Dr. Sparks comes from the University of Texas Medical School at Houston, where he held a variety of posts since 1991.

New geriatric center, student plaza announced

UNMC construction and expansion projects were recently approved by the University of Nebraska Board of Regents.

Thanks to a generous gift to the University of Nebraska Foundation by Paul and Lori Hogan, co-founders of Home Instead Senior Care, the Home Instead Center for Successful Aging will be built on the UNMC campus.

The 25,300-square-foot facility will be built at the intersection of Leavenworth Street and 38th Avenue, which now houses annex buildings on the east side of campus. Demolition of the annex buildings is slated to begin late this summer with construction of the new building to be completed by late summer or early fall of 2009.

The $10.2 million building will be funded entirely with private donations and will create physical space for both geriatric medicine and geriatric psychiatry.

Across campus, a student plaza will serve as the central outdoor area for student and campus activities and will be located directly north of the new Michael F. Sorrell Center for Health Science Education. The plaza will have a dual purpose as an ice rink in the winter months.

Frans left: Paul and Lori Hogan, co-founders of Home Instead Senior Care, with Jane Potter, M.D., and UNMC Chancellor Harold M. Maurer, M.D., pose with an artist’s rendering of the new UNMC geriatric center.

Currently, the Sorrell Center budget calls for the construction of a four-story, state-of-the-art education center. Additional funding from Omaha philanthropists Bill and Ruth Scott allowed for a budget increase of $5 million and thus a student plaza.

This latest project (student plaza) marks the fifth major gift the Scotts have made to the medical center in the past five years.

In 2003, their contribution to the Durham Research Center established the Ruth and Bill Scott Neuroscience Research Laboratories located on the third floor.

In 2006, they supported construction of the Sorrell Center by making the lead gift to the University of Nebraska Foundation. The Sorrell Center, which will serve as home to the UNMC College of Medicine, will be completed this summer, and students will start attending classes in the building this fall.

The Scotts also made a second major gift in 2006 to honor a legendary UNMC internist, Fred Pfaucet, M.D., and his wife, Mary Ann “Maisy.” The gift named the two primary amphitheaters in the Sorrell Center after the Pfaucets. In addition, one-half of a floor in the second research tower currently under construction at UNMC will be named after the Pfaucets.

The second research tower is expected to be completed in January 2009.

In 2007, the Scotts established the Nebraska Arthritis Outcomes Research Center located on the third floor of Pointer Hall. The center conducts a variety of studies designed to provide a better understanding of arthritis by analyzing the many determinants used to predict outcomes for arthritis sufferers.

UNMed Innovator Awards

Seventy-four scientists were recognized for their inventions, patents and licensed technology at the 2007 UNMed Research Innovation Awards in August. As the technology transfer partner of UNMC, UNMed works with researchers to evaluate, protect and license the innovative discoveries made on campus.

Five scientists were recognized for their outstanding contributions to science and world health:

UNMC researcher Janina Baranowska-Kortylewicz, Ph.D., developed a series of drugs that seek and kill ovarian cancer cells responsible for the recurrence of the deadly disease. Dr. Baranowska-Kortylewicz credits her award to the work of her UNMC team, including organic chemist and co-inventor Zbigniew Paul Kortylewicz, Ph.D., who designed the synthetic and analytical methods and prepared the new drugs. A professor at UNMC since July 1995, she also attributes her success to the support of Charles Erke, M.D., chairman of UNMC’s Radiation Oncology Department.

Sunder Batra, Ph.D., professor of biochemistry and molecular biology at UNMC, was chosen for his entrepreneurial research related to pancreatic cancer. Dr. Batra has had 11 New Invention Notifications (NINs) in the past 10 years, which have resulted in 13 U.S. and foreign patents and patent applications, six of which have matured into issued U.S. patents. Dr. Batra also was named one of UNMC’s Distinguished Scientists in 2006.

Dmitry Oleynikov, M.D., was selected for his active role in developing robotic surgery techniques, including co-designing a family of micro robots to assist in surgical procedures. Dr. Oleynikov and his fellow inventors, including University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s Shane Farritor, Ph.D., have produced 10 NINs in the past five years. The university has filed 15 U.S. and foreign patent and patent applications based on these NINs, of which two have matured into issued U.S. patents.

Kay-Uwe Wagner, Ph.D., developed a complex mouse model that, through a UNMed licensing agreement, is now assisting researchers worldwide in the study of genes that play a role in the development of cancer. The Jak2 model also is generating income to reinvest in Dr. Wagner’s research and development. Dr. Wagner, an associate professor in the Eppley Institute since 2000, was named a Distinguished Scientist at UNMC in 2006.

Dong Wang, Ph.D., assistant professor of pharmaceutical science in the UNMC College of Pharmacy, developed a novel delivery technology, which allows for agents to be delivered or released slowly over time, thus increasing the therapeutic index and overall performance, could be incorporated into oral rinses, toothpaste, chewing gum, breath mints and topical creams. Dr. Wang’s research team has four NINs that have resulted in the filing of three provisional patents and one international patent application.

Diversity specialists named

In keeping with the chancellor’s strategic plan and vision for UNMC to recruit and retain underrepresented, socio-economically disadvantaged populations and rural students and faculty, two diversity specialists were hired at UNMC. The diversity specialists will formulate departmental strategies for recruitment and retention as well as form relationships with area schools to encourage more students to consider health careers.

Linda Cunningham will be in charge of campus diversity and cultural competency efforts in the human resources department. In her new role, Cunningham will work with faculty and staff to examine the recruitment and hiring processes, retention, the value of diversity as a part of staffing within departments and employee satisfaction.

Anne Constantino will serve as the diversity specialist for both the College of Pharmacy and College of Dentistry at UNMC. As a diversity specialist, Constantino already has outlined strategic goals, as well as a method to measure achievement.

Medical student Zac Handler interns at CNN

Second year UNMC medical student Zac Handler spent the month of June working seven days a week as an intern for CNN’s medical unit.

Handler was often sent along on news stories to help explain things the medical correspondents didn’t understand. He also helped research, edit and write stories.

His mentor during the internship in Atlanta was neurosurgeon Sanjay Gupta, M.D., the famed doctor who appears daily on the national network.
Dr. Zucker named 2007 scientist laureate

Receiving the highest recognition given to a UNMC scientist, Irving Zucker, Ph.D., was recently named the second UNMC Scientist Laureate for his outstanding research into heart failure.

Dr. Zucker was honored along with 26 other researchers who recently were named UNMC Distinguished Scientist and New Investigator award winners for 2007.

Dr. Zucker will receive a $20,000 supplement for being named scientist laureate. UNMC will host an event on March 20 to publicly recognize each honoree’s research accomplishments.

Program designed to increase pediatric dentists practicing in rural Nebraska

The College of Dentistry is implementing a new telehealth and service learning program for its pediatric dentists residents with the goal of increasing the number of pediatric dentists practicing in rural areas.

Kimberly McFarland, D.D.S., assistant professor, and Timothy Durham, D.D.S., professor, College of Dentistry, recently received a three-year, $1 million grant from the Human Resources and Services Administration.

The grant will allow them to use technology to implement rural health rotations as part of the dental pediatric residency training process. During the course of the grant, the Pediatric Dental Residency Training Program will place 24 residents in three underserved areas of the state next year.

Children’s Hospital, UNMC College of Medicine, announce pediatrics affiliation agreement

An affiliation agreement between Children’s Hospital and the UNMC College of Medicine will help elevate Omaha’s world class status in the area of child health care.

Gary A. Perkins, president and CEO at Children’s Hospital, and John Golian, M.D., Ph.D., dean of the UNMC College of Medicine, said the institutional affiliation agreement brings together the pediatric expertise of UNMC and Children’s for the health of heartland children.

In addition to providing quality, cost effective health care for children, the affiliation will enrich academic experiences for pediatric residents, medical students and other health professionals, and greatly advance the clinical and basic science research opportunities for the prevention and treatment of childhood conditions and diseases. With the affiliation, Children’s Hospital and UNMC will jointly align resources to enrich education, research and clinical care opportunities.

“There is a tremendously exciting synergy that is possible by taking full advantage of the expertise both institutions bring to this relationship,” Perkins said. “This is an unprecedented opportunity to transform pediatric health care, education and research in the region.”

The affiliation agreement will enable the institutions to recruit the nation’s highest caliber pediatric specialists and scientists whose desire is to provide patient care in a children’s hospital setting while also being a catalyst for improving children’s health through teaching and research,” Dr. Golian said.

With the affiliation agreement, the UNMC Department of Pediatrics will be based primarily at Children’s Hospital. Certain specialty pediatric services already in place at The Nebraska Medical Center will remain there, such as neonatal intensive care and solid organ and bone marrow transplantation. (30)

Early milestones noted for College of Public Health

Nine new faculty members highlight developments at UNMC’s College of Public Health.

The college also received formal approval from the University of Nebraska Board of Regents to develop five departments, a new Ph.D. program and a new center.

Those departments include Biostatistics; Environmental, Agricultural and Occupational Health; Epidemiology; Health Services Research and Administration; and Health Promotion, Social, and Behavioral Health.

The new Ph.D. program is in environmental health, occupational health, and toxicology, and the new center is the Center for Environmental Health and Toxicology.

During the next two years, the College of Public Health will recruit 11 additional faculty members.

The college also has developed proposals for Ph.D. programs in health services research, health policy and health administration, and health promotion and disease prevention research.

The number one priority on UNMC’s capital plan is the construction of an on-campus building to house the college. A campus location for the building has been selected and preliminary construction plans have been drafted.

Early plans call for the building to provide space for 40 faculty, laboratories, conference and seminar rooms and distance education capabilities.

While Kathy and Roger Johnson have lived in Florida for more than 33 years, the couple shares a great fondness for a state nearly 1,500 miles away.

Born and raised in Nebraska, the Johnsons remain connected to their native state and to the state’s university where they both earned degrees. Over the years Kathleen and Roger have made numerous charitable gifts benefiting communities in Nebraska and their alma mater.

“Having been affiliated with the University of Nebraska for more than 47 years, it has been an honor to give back,” said Roger, who received a degree in pharmacy in 1960. “We feel so blessed, and this has been a way for us to say thank you.”

Roger also volunteers his time as a member of the College of Pharmacy Alumni Association board of directors.

Kathy, who grew up near Page, Neb., where her family first homesteaded in 1883, earned her bachelor of science degree in nursing from UNMC in 1960. She went on to live and represent a master’s degree in geriatric nursing and to “work in practically every field of nursing,” she quipped.

Later in her career Kathy served as director of the memory disorder clinic at the University of South Florida before retiring. She now volunteers as an ombudsman for the elderly.

Roger is a native of Nebraska City. Shortly after graduation from UNMC, he began working for Walgreens, where he remained for the duration of his career. He worked in Lincoln, Omaha, Fort Dodge, Iowa, and Sioux City, Iowa. In 1974, the Johnsons were transferred to Tampa, Fla. There, Roger worked as a district manager supervising store operations for the entire west coast of Florida until his retirement in 1995.

As UNMC alumni and donors, the Johnsons said they are pleased to be part of the medical center’s progress, growth and pride. Through their charitable giving and philanthropic plans, they have designated support for faculty in the College of Nursing and student scholarships in the College of Pharmacy.

Kathy, for example, has directed funds through her estate to create the Kathleen Walker Johnson Chair in Gerontological Nursing at UNMC. Virginia Tilden, D.N.Sc., dean of the UNMC College of Nursing, said the college is deeply grateful for the Johnson’s support and that endowed faculty positions, such as the Johnson Chair, “do many things.”

“They allow us to attract to UNMC the best minds nationally in nursing education, and they allow us to protect faculty time for research in a focused area such as gerontological nursing, which ultimately helps patients and inspires students,” Dr. Tilden said.

“Kathy Johnson has dedicated her career to helping older adults. This endowed chair in her name helps ensure that the UNMC College of Nursing will shine in gerontological nursing education.”

For the past several years the Johnsons also have funded scholarships for UNMC pharmacy students interested in retail or community pharmacy. These scholarships, combined with the Roger G. Johnson Walgreen’s Retail Pharmacy Scholarship, provide more than $69,000 in student support each year.

For Naziba Obaid, a second-year pharmacy student, financial assistance is just one of the benefits the scholarship offers.

“I am so grateful for the assistance the Johnsons give to students at UNMC,” she said. “And the relationship that Roger builds with us also is greatly appreciated. He is down to earth and relates to students well. And despite his busy schedule, he always takes the time each semester to meet with us.” (30)
Combined alumni reunion earns rave reviews

Nearly 500 alumni and friends came together last fall for the first ever Alumni Reunion Weekend, which included alumni from the colleges of medicine, pharmacy, nursing and the School of Allied Health Professions.

The halls were ringing with alumni Oct. 5-6 reminiscing about earlier days at UNMC, laughing and sharing their experiences since graduation.

The theme of the reunion, One Class - World Class, exemplified the spirit of the event as alumni were excited to connect with their peers from other UNMC colleges. Many of these alumni are married to each other and worked together earlier in their careers.

“We were thrilled with the response we heard from alumni. They were excited to be back on campus and see all the impressive changes that have occurred,” said Kim Cuda, director of alumni affairs. “For some, it had been nearly 50 years since they were on campus. It was a great opportunity for them to see old classmates, to reminisce and catch up.”

“We think we set the bar for future reunions at UNMC. Now that we have the template for the combined exchange stories, we will strive to make it bigger and better in UNMC. Now that we have the template for the combined alumni reunion opportunity for them to see old classmates, to reminisce and nearly 50 years since they were on campus. It was a great all the impressive changes that have occurred,” said Kim

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“This was an outstanding job of pulling this together,” Dr. Strauss said. “I see a bright future for this event. All the disciplines enjoyed it. It was great seeing old friends. There was a good variety of events. The hospitality and dinner were exceptional. Everyone really enjoyed the video in which alumni reminisced about their days at UNMC.”

Dr. Strauss along with Joyce Black, Ph.D., ’99, president of the UNMC College of Nursing Alumni Association, and Elizabeth Hermann, Pharm.D., ’03, president of the UNMC College of Pharmacy Alumni Association, served as emcees for the Oct. 6 dinner at the Hilton Omaha Hotel.

Ten UNMC alumni provided reflections on their careers and student days at UNMC on video. Representing their colleges and class years were, from the College of Medicine - Sam Principe, ’82, Theresa Saltanek, ’82, and Tom Waring, ’57, College of Nursing - Shirley Bradsby, ’57, Anita Evers, ’72, Joy Osterberg, ’57, and Louise Schleich, ’57, College of Pharmacy - Kelley Amteen Anderson, ’82, and Jim Amteen, ’57, and physical therapy - Wayne Stuberg, ’77.

The weekend activities included tours of the College of Nursing History Museum, a reception at the Joslyn Art Museum, a riverboat cruise down the Missouri River and tours of the burgeoning UNMC campus.

The kickoff event featured a breakfast in the Private Dining Rooms of University Tower.

Deans from five UNMC academic units provided alumni with an overview of their colleges and programs.

Bob Bartee, vice chancellor for external affairs, thanked alumni for their support of UNMC and invited everyone to capture the excitement during the weekend.

Cuda said the 2008 UNMC Alumni Reunion Weekend is slated for Sept. 19-20.

Five receive awards at alumni reunion

The UNMC alumni associations presented awards to many deserving alumni and friends during Alumni Weekend on Oct. 5-6.

The College of Medicine Alumni Association awarded the UNMC College of Medicine Alumni Association Distinguished Alumnus Award to Robert Volz, M.D., ’57, of Jackson, Wyo.

A native of Lincoln, Neb., Dr. Volz served as chairman of the department of orthopaedic surgery at the University of Arizona Health Sciences Center, where he designed some of the earliest artificial joints in the United States, including the first artificial wrist, elbow and knee. The artificial knee he designed has been used in more than 40 countries. He was co-founder of the Arizona Arthritis Center, a nationally recognized endowed research and teaching center.

Since retiring in 1992, Dr. Volz and his wife, Ann, have volunteered in several foreign countries, including Vietnam, Bhutan, Nepal, Malaysia, Philippines and South Africa. The couple splits their time between Jackson, Wyo., and Tucson, Ariz. They have four children and seven grandchildren.

The College of Nursing Alumni Association awarded the UNMC College of Nursing Alumni Association Distinguished Alumnus Award to Susan Hassmiller, Ph.D., ’83, of East Windsor, N.J.

A nationally recognized nursing leader, Dr. Hassmiller is senior director of the National Board of Governors for the American Red Cross, serving as chairwoman of the Disaster and Chapter Services Committee.

Prior to going to RWJF, Dr. Hassmiller was with the Health Resources and Services Administration, where she was executive director of the National Center for Health Workforce Analysis and Assessment.

Robert Volz, M.D., center, with John Gollan M.D., Ph.D., dean of the College of Medicine, left, and Dennis Strauss, M.D. Dr. Volz was honored with the 2007 College of Medicine Alumni Association’s Distinguished Alumnus Award. Dr. Strauss and his wife, Tripti Agarwal-Burt, M.D., right, wore the College of Medicine Alumni Association’s Distinguished Alumnus Award.

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director of the U.S. Public Health Service Primary Care Policy Fellowship. She also has taught public health nursing at UNMC and George Mason University and is a fellow in the American Academy of Nursing. Dr. Hasimoller and her husband, Robert, live in East Windsor, N.J., and have two adult children.

The UNMC College of Nursing Alumni Association Honorary Alumni Award was presented to Judith Billings, Ph.D., of Kearney, Neb.

Dr. Billings retired as assistant dean of the UNMC College of Nursing Kearney Division in 2005, having spent 40 years in nursing and teaching. In 1974, she earned her bachelor’s degree in nursing from Fort Hays State University in Kansas, and in 1982, she received her master’s degree in public health from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. She also earned her doctorate in educational administration at the University of Minnesota.

Dr. Billings returned to Nebraska when she was hired as the first chairman for Kearney State College's Department of Nursing in 1976. She started the bachelor’s degree in nursing program in Kearney.

In recognition of her nursing leadership, she has received numerous awards, including the Outstanding Nurse Educator Award from the Nebraska Nurses Association in 2002. Dr. Billings and her husband, Jemmy, are enjoying retirement and continue to live in Kearney.

The College of Pharmacy Alumni Association awarded the UNMC College of Pharmacy Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award to Scott Swigart, Pharm.D., ‘82, of Victor, N.Y.

With 16 years of academic pharmacy experience, Dr. Swigart has served the past eight years as dean and professor in two schools of pharmacy. He is currently the founding dean of the Wegmans School of Pharmacy at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, N.Y.

In recognition of his nursing leadership, she has received numerous awards, including the Outstanding Nurse Educator Award from the Nebraska Nurses Association in 2002. Dr. Billings and her husband, Jemmy, are enjoying retirement and continue to live in Kearney.

Dr. Swigart is president of the Clearwater Group and lead clinical consultant for the Medicine Information Institute, Inc. He is also host of a medical Web site—www.medicinenews.com. In his varied career, he provides medical research communication, professional and consumer education, drug information services and clinical programs to health care professionals, consumers, employers and insurance companies.

He co-authored "The Essential Guide to Prescription Drugs," for five years before assuming full authorship with the 2006 edition. He is the original host, writer and producer of the nationally syndicated radio program, "The Pharmacist Minute" and "The Boyer Aspirin Report" with Dr. Jim Rybacki and is often interviewed in the national media.

Dr. Rybacki helped develop national kid's guide and guideline-driven practices for the American Heart Association's Compliance Action Program. He served as a medical adviser for the National Advisory Council of Mended Hearts and helped develop a book for hospitalized heart patients. He is frequently asked to speak on heart disease, diabetes, adverse drug reactions, women's health, HIV/AIDS and osteoporosis.

As a founding dean, he has been responsible for all aspects of starting a new college, including navigating the accreditation process, developing curricula, raising funds, recruiting faculty and students, creating policies and procedures, establishing practice departments and building facilities.

A 1979 graduate of Wayne State College in Wayne, Neb., Dr. Swigart also has held administrative positions at Nova Southeastern University College of Pharmacy in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and at Ferris State University College of Pharmacy in Big Rapids, Mich.

In addition to Dr. Swigart's extensive leadership, teaching and practice experience, he has been active in several professional pharmacy and medical organizations and serves as a volunteer with several community service organizations. His wife, Cindy, and his parents, Janice and Russell Swigart, joined him at the UNMC Alumni Celebration Dinner.

The UNMC College of Pharmacy Alumni Association Early Career Achievement Award was presented to James Rybacki, Pharm.D., ‘87, of Easton, Md.

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KATHERINE A. BLIESE M’67
Grand Island, Neb., is medical director of Employers Health Care in Grand Island. In recognition of the many years she spent working in Nigeria and Bangladesh, she received the 2006 Humanitarian Award from the American Academy of Family Physicians. She is also a member of the Nebraska Academy of Family Physicians. Medical Mission Grant to provide scholarships to medical students who incorporate medical mission trips into their training.

G. RICHARD KEIDEL F ’67
Wayne, Neb., retired and enjoys traveling to Maine to see his daughter and family and spends his winters in Arizona.

CONNIE L. MILLIKEN N’67
Shalitite, N.C., retired after working for 39 years, the majority of which was spent in nursing education.

DANIEL W. HUGHES P ’68
Tucson, Ariz., retired working 31 years with Roche Vitamins/GSM Nutritional Products. He recently relocated to Tucson from Southern California.

ROGER MEYER M’64
Utica, Neb., practices family medicine at the Utica Community Care Center and has been an active member of the community, as well as with the Nebraska Academy of Family Practice. He and his wife have created an endowed scholarship with the Nebraska Medical Association, which will provide scholarships to medical students who plan to practice in communities with a population of less than 10,000.

JAMES R. MOUGER M’64
Phoenix, Ariz., was named associate clinical professor at Creighton University and acts as a liaison between Creighton in Omaha and St. Joseph’s Hospital in Phoenix.

CARL W. WHITE M’64
Bloomington, Minn., retired in 2006.

RANDOM D. VARNEY P ’65
Broken Bow, Neb., was elected to the Custer County Board of Supervisors.

DAVID R. DYKE M’66
Lincoln, Neb., practices gastroenterology in a single specialty group with eight other doctors.

STEPHEN L. HANSEN M’66
San Luis Obispo, Calif., has two daughters and two grandchildren.

RICHARD A. ANSTRAND M’67
Wichita, Kan., is the senior partner practicing diagnostic radiology with Wichita Radiology Group, P.A. He also is an assistant clinical professor of radiology at the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita. He is married with three children and nine grandchildren.

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BONNIE A. BLACK N’71
Wichita, Kan., received the Vivien Thomas Award for Clinical Research awarded by the Office of Research at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She has worked at Vanderbilt in the Autonomic Dysfunction Center since 1994.

JACK ROY P FE’71
Sterling, Colo., is president of Volunteer Travelers of the Sterling. He is president of the State of Colorado Board of Pharmacy and treasurer of the Colorado Pharmacal Society.

RICHARD M. FRUEHLING M’71
Grand Island, Neb., served as the 2007 president of the Nebraska Academy of Family Physicians.

DENNIS F. KOZOL M’71
North, Va., retired after 30 years of practicing emergency medicine. He and his wife, Jane, moved to the country where they enjoy sailing, family and friends.

REBECCA A. WETENKAMP N’71
Plattsburg, Neb., was named 2007 Nebraska School Nurse of the Year. She has worked 1.4 years in the Plattsburg School District and is membership chair for the Nebraska School Nurse Association.

GEORGE M. ADAM M’72
Hastings, Neb., is proud of his son, Tyler Adam, M’07, a first-year obstetrics/gynecology resident at UNMC.

ERNEST K. BUSINGER N’72
Scottsbluff, Neb., practices gynecology, though no longer practicing obstetrics. He also participates in medical mission trips to Haiti.

GEAN A. SHUET M’73
Manila, Philippines, is regional advisor for Health Systems Development with the Western Pacific Regional Office of the World Health Organization.

LARRY F. WILSON M’73
Excelsior Springs, Mo., was appointed as FAA Central Region Flight Surgeon, covering Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri. He continues to serve as the State Aviation Medical Officer for the Oklahoma Army National Guard.

MELVIN A. CAMPBELL M’74
Ankarsdorf, Neb., was surprised with a feature story written by his son, Ethan Campbell, that received first-place in a writing contest sponsored by the University of Nebraska Alumni Association’s Nebraska Magazine. Dr. Campbell practices at Ankerdorf Family Clinic.

SANDRA J. KINSELLA N’74
Omaha, Neb., retired from nursing. She and her husband, Mike, have three children and five grandchildren.

LOUIS L. MUONZ M’74
Plano, Texas, was elected president of the American College of Radiation Oncology. He is medical director of the division of radiation oncology and chairman of the radiation research committee for Texas Oncology, a member of the United States Oncology Network. His sub-specialty is pediatric and adult radiation oncology.

GARY D. PENNER M’74
Dallas, Va., was assigned as regional medical officer for the U.S. Embassy in Vienna, Austria, providing medical care to U.S. State Department employees and their families in seven surrounding “green” countries. He previously served a year with the American Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq, where he worked in a medical unit and at the “CASH” support hospital in the Green Zone. He and his wife, Carol, have been married 38 years and have two children and one grandchild.

PAUL M. PAULMAN M’77
Lincoln, Neb., was practicing at Lincoln Nephrology and Hypertension and also sees patients at Johnson County Hospital Outpatient Clinic.

LINDA S. HEAD M’75
Papillion, Neb., is a radiologist at the Shenandoah Valley Medical Center in Shenandoah, Iowa.

RODNEY D. KOEHLER N’77
Omaha, Utah, was awarded the 2007 Nurse Excellence Award from Midwest One Hospital Center. Utah North Region in Ogden. He assisted in the development of the newly formed ICU and establishment of the Neonatal Life Flight Team.

FRED G. STONE M’77
Lincoln, Neb., is chief of staff at Bryan/lincoln County Hospital.

DENTLE L. APEK M’76
Milligan, Neb., is proud of her son, Kenel, and his wife, Tracy, both third-year medical students at UNMC.

PAUL M. PAULMAN M’77
Omaha, Neb., named assistant dean for clinical skills and quality at the UNMC College of Medicine. He served as coeditor of two textbooks, that were published in 2006, “Practicing Medical Residents in the Office” and “Taylor’s 10-Minute Diagnosis Manual.”

NANCY L. SNYDERMAN M’77
Princeton, N.J., is the chief medical officer for the NCI News and an assistant professor of otolaryngology at the University of Pennsylvania.

ELIS E. SPYR M’77
Lincoln, Neb., was practicing at Lincoln Nephrology and Hypertension and also sees patients at Johnson County Hospital Outpatient Clinic.

HUGH M. FOY M’78
Seattle, Wash., is working as a general surgeon at Harborview Medical Center and at the University of Washington School of Medicine in their “collaborative” program. He continues to work with his patients in his activities and working for a more equitable approach to health care delivery.

JEFFREY A. GRUBBE M’78
Lincoln, Neb., after 25 years in internal medicine practice, left to become the medical director of Aultland Financial/Lincoln Benefit Life.

GORDON W. TAZO M’78
Manila, Philippines, is regional adviser for the American Academy of Family Physicians and the 2006 Nebraska Academy of Family Physicians’ Family Physician of the Year. (Editors note: Dr. Demuth died just one week after being honored by AAFP in Chicago.)

LINDA S. HEAD M’75
Papillion, Neb., is a radiologist at the Shenandoah Valley Medical Center in Shenandoah, Iowa.

Robert Belliveau, Ph.D., professor in the Department of practice, cell biology and anatomy, left, and curriculum committee chair for the Nebraska Medical Center. He is one of the first faculty members of the College of Medicine. He is currently professor of anatomy and associate dean for medical affairs.
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altitude illness at Mayo/Duke meeting in Vail, Fairway, Kan., has spent 20 years with Northland. Her husband, Jack, have two sons.

VANCE R. JERNSTROM M’81 Omaha, Neb., moved his otolaryngology practice to Omaha, after practicing in the Kansas City area for 12 years. He is board certified and a member of the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.

SUSAN J. BOUST M’85 Omaha, Neb., was named 2006 District 2 Nurse of the Year by the Nebraska Nurses Association.

DENISE M. GRAHAM P’84 Orange Park, Fla., is director of clinical support services at Naval Hospital in Jacksonville, where she oversees pharmacy, laboratory and radiology services. After 20 years of service, she was made a captain in the U.S. Navy.

BRUCE S. KUHN M’86 Elkhorn, Neb., is an associate professor at UNMC and the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial and Facial Plastic Surgeons in Omaha. He was recognized for his service as a volunteer faculty member with the oral maxillofacial surgery residency program.

JARAHAN PANVAY P’86 Minneapolis, Minn., recently accepted a position in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of Minnesota.

Dale F. SUTHERLAND M’88 Lewes, Del., is a cardiac anesthesiologist and has joined the Beebe Medical Center Medical Staff in Lewes. He is a member of Delaware Anesthesia Associates.

JAY J. HINKHOUSE M’89 Ames, Iowa, works part-time as a pediatric hospice in Mason City, Iowa, and works part-time at Children’s Urgent Care in Omaha. He also conducts all the physicals for Iowa State troopers.

MICHAEL D. HURT M’85 Pleasant Hill, Calif., is a board certified orthopedic surgeon and a fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine. He practices at J&J Physical Therapy.

JILL R. REIL M’89 Arlington, Neb., is a philanthropist at Boys Town. She serves on the Project Harmony Board and is a member of the Nebraska Nurses Association.

Kathleen Archer N’94, ’88 Gretna, Neb., joined Gretna Family Health as a registered practical nurse. She and her husband, Jeremy, have three sons.

Lisa K. Gerdes M’94 Worthington, Minn., was named 2007 Physician of the Year at Worthington Regional Hospital.

Rommie J. Hughes M’94 Scottsbluff, Neb., practices with Western Surgical Group in Scottsbluff. She also completed an endovascular fellowship at the Arizona Heart Institute.

Rebecca L. Krumm P’94 Vero Beach, Fla., recently moved to Florida and is working per diem at Sebastian River Medical Center in the outpatient, inpatient and home health departments.

Jen D. Salado N’94, ’06 Omaha, Neb., obtained her MSN, APRN, in women’s health and joined the faculty at the UNMC College of Nursing. She and her husband, Tony, have three children.

Jay R. Allison M’95 O’Neill, Neb., received the 2007 Theodore H. and Margaret J. Kowert Jr., M.O., Outstanding in Rural Family Medicine Award. The award recognizes an individual who has made an outstanding contribution in rural practice.

Julie A. Spencer M’92 Lincoln, Neb., is a director of nursing at St. Elizabeth’s Community Hospital in Red Bluff and practices general practice surgery in the northern California region. He enjoys ranching and riding cutting horses. He and his wife, Jennifer, have five children.

Cheryl A. Munsinger N’92 Kearney, Neb., after a battle with breast cancer in 2005-2006, returned to work at Good Samaritan Health Systems in Kearney working part-time in home care. Previously, she had worked in Colorado and held several nurse management positions in Kearney.

Stephanie Kramer M’90 Mesa, Ariz., is owner of East Valley Women’s Medical Group and director/board member of Women’s Center at Mountain Vista Hospital.

Deborah J. Nonn M’83, ’90 Omaha, Neb., began a fellowship in anesthesiology at the University of New Mexico in 2007.

Kimberly A. Aeker M’91 Omaha, Neb., is a fellow at the University of New Mexico. She and her husband, Dave, have five children.

Robert M. Taylor M’91 Red Bluff, Calif., is chief of staff at St. Elizabeth’s Community Hospital in Red Bluff and practices general practice surgery in the northern California region. He enjoys ranching and riding cutting horses. He and his wife, Jennifer, have five children.

Michael J. Stoltzenberg M’80 Denver, Colo., was promoted to professor of medicine at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center. He is also a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology.

Donald D. Fraunhoffer M’85 South San Francisco, Calif., is a board certified anesthesiologist and is an associate professor at the University of California, San Francisco. He is a member of the Department of Anesthesia and Perioperative Medicine.

Karen M. Gumerman M’94, ‘03 Lincoln, Neb., began her career as a nurse in 1995 and has spent the past 12 years as a nurse practitioner. She is the coordinator for the UNMC College of Nursing. She and her husband, Greg, have two sons.

Lisa K. Gerdes M’94 Worthington, Minn., was named 2007 Physician of the Year at Worthington Regional Hospital.

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**alumni class notes (continued)**

**MICHAEL CLARE M’96**
Tampa, Fla., is an orthopaedic surgeon with the Florida Orthopaedic Institute in Tampa.

**SUZANNE G. BIJEU M’97**
Orange Park, Fla., was awarded the Outstanding Pediatric Attending of the Year from the University of Florida, Jacksonville Pediatric Residence Program.

**DAWN M. MURRAY M’97 AND CHAD S. MURRAY M’98**
 Kearney, Neb., both are practicing family medicine at the Kearney Clinic. They have five children, four sons and one daughter.

**CYNTHIA H. SHULZ N’97, ’07**
Gibson, Neb., joined Ravenna Medical Clinic as a nurse practitioner. She previously worked at Good Samaritan Hospital’s Healthy Living Therapy Alumni Chapter.

**JOHN D. HAIN M’01**
Elkhorn, Neb., completed a neurosurgery residency at the Medical College of Georgia and was awarded the C-17 Globemaster. He recently met fellow alum in training.

**KRISTEN R. OLSEN-GIBBS M’98**
Madison, Wis., she is an assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, working at Tolosa OB/GYN, P.C., in Council Bluffs.

**KIM R. OLSEN-GIBBS M’98**
Mesa, Ariz., practices family medicine in Scottsdale, specializing in eating disorders.

**ARMAN K. PANNAG M’98**
Lahista, Neb., practices internal medicine at Alegent Health Clinic in Bellevue.

**ERIC R. FRIEHLING M’99**
Grand Island, Neb., has joined Nebraska Heart Institute and will be seeing patients in the Grand Island office, focusing on the diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular disease.

**GRAND ISLAND OFFICE**

**Peter C. Iwen G’01**
Omaha, Neb., was named a Diplomat of the American Board of Medical Microbiology. He is an associate professor of pathology and microbiology and the biosafety officer at UNMC.

**Matthew R. Johnson M’03**
Sioux City, Iowa, joined the physicians of CNOS, PC. He completed a neurological residency at UNMC. His area of expertise is movement disorder surgery, angiography and spine.

**JUSTIN J. WENBURG M’01**
Hastings, Neb., is practicing internal medicine in Hastings. He and his wife, Kili, have a son and daughter.

**KARI L. GALVEN M’02 AND JAMES R. GALVEN M’03**
Scottsdale, specializing in eating disorders. Mesa, Ariz., practices family medicine in

**MEDICAL RESIDENTS**

**AARON C. WENBURG PT’02**
LaCrosse, Wis., is in a post-graduate physical therapy residency at Gundemer Lutheran Hospital and the University of Wisconsin in LaCrosse. He is certified in strength and conditioning specialist.

**CHRISTINA L. ARENT N’03**
Winner, S.D., has worked as a traveling nurse since 2005 and in a NICU in Yuma, Ariz., since 2006.

**MARK D. CARLSON M’03**
Omaha, Neb., completed a residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Weasty Medical Center in Wichita, Kan. He was inducted into the Danal K. Roberts Society during the graduation ceremony. He is now working at Methodist Health Systems Health Care West in Omaha.

**RODNEY GORMAN N’03**
Fort Defiance, Ariz., is a 1st Lt. in U.S. Air Force and a flight nurse. He is a reservist at March Air Force Base in California and is an ICU nurse at Fort Defiance Indian Hospital in Arizona. He cares for patients on the C-17 Globemaster. He recently met fellow alum MATTHEW RIST N’02 in training.

**SARAH M. HURD M’03**
Plattsburgh, Neb., practices family medicine and obstetrics at Alegent Health Clinic in Papillon, Neb.

**MOLLY A. JOHNSON M’03**
Grand Island, Neb., has joined the Grand Island Clinic. Her practice will focus on adolescent and adult female health care. She is Grand Island’s only female gynecologist.

**JAYANTH PANYAM P’03**
Minneapolis, Minn., is an assistant professor in the department of pharmaceutics at the University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy.

**EMILY L. SEXSON P’05**
Omaha, Neb., after completing a primary care residency at the William S. Middleton VA in Madison, Wis., she is an assistant professor at Creighton University School of Pharmacy and a clinical pharmacist at the Omaha VA.

**SAM S. DODDS M’04**
Albion, Neb., joined the Boone County Health Center, where she practices family medicine and will be seeing patients in Albion, Fullerton and Neenan Grove.

**JESSICA J. FARNSWORTH M’04**
Holdings, Neb., joined the staff at Family Medical Specialties in Holdrege.

**JOSEPH J. KEEREM M’04**
Holdings, Neb., completed a fellowship year in which he specialized in cesarean sections, colposcopies and other clinical procedures. He now practices family medicine at High Plains Clinic in Holdrege. He and his wife, Kelly, have a son.

**AMY L. FORD N’05**
Council Bluffs, Iowa, is a nurse practitioner and working at Tulsa OB/GYN, P.C., in Council Bluffs.

**HEATHER A. HENNIN G’04**
Omaha, Neb., married Jeff Patora on Aug. 25, 2007. The couple resides in Omaha.

**JAMES H. STEVENS M’90**
Delton, Fla., and wife, Ruth Ann, welcomed son, Gabriel on May 27, 2005.

**WENDY J. SALAD N’94 O’06**
Omaha, Neb., and husband, Tony, welcomed son, Jared Joseph, in July 2005. He joins two sisters.

**AMY BLEACH KENNEDY P’97**
Carson City, Nev., and her husband welcomed daughter, Grace Elizabeth, on June 16, 2006. She joins brother Gabriel.

**JULIE CHASE BECKMAN P’99**
Brooklyn Park, Minn., and husband, Scott, welcomed a son, Daniel Chase Beckman, on May 30, 2007.

**BETH A. LUNDSTROM M’01**

**JULIE A. BRAUER N’07**
Elskom, Neb., graduated with a master’s degree in the nurse practitioner program, she is practicing at Carthay West Hospital District and Medical Clinics, with an emphasis in women’s health.

**MELISSA A. HAGEMANN PT’07**
Yutan, Neb., has joined Crossroads Physical Therapy in Lincoln, Neb.
CHEEKY LIBRARIAN
BLOGS HER CANCER EXPERIENCE

By Elizabeth Hartman

Teresa Hartman has a definite sense of purpose and a quirky sense of humor. In the spring of 2006, when she was diagnosed with a rare cancer in her left cheek, she reacted in typical librarian fashion, except one with an attitude. Associate professor and head of education at UNMC’s McCuegan Library of Medicine, Hartman treated her adenoid cystic carcinoma as any other resource she came across – an educational tool for medical students and the public.

“Something good had to come out of this. I had to leave a trail,” she said.

First, she made sure that students from every discipline were involved in her care.

“When will they have an opportunity to see this rare cancer again? I’d rather have an impact on student learning,” she said.

Next, she turned to the Consumer Health Information Resource Service (CHIRS), a free library resource that she has been utilizing since 2000. Since that time, she has used CHIRS to gather unbiased information.

“Teresa Hartman has a definite sense of purpose and a quirky sense of humor.”

In Remembrance...

In anticipation of radiation eliminating her sense of taste, Hartman blogged her feelings as well, describing “meltdowns” and treatment that physicians don’t always tell their patients.

It was through that information she learned details of her disease and treatment that physicians don’t always tell their patients. She learned that saliva has a protective quality for the teeth that she would lose after surgery and treatment, so her dentist provided fluoride trays, which she used twice a day to strengthen her teeth.

“I didn’t know spit had so many good uses,” Hartman quipped in the blog on Aug. 2, 2006.

Hartman blogged her feelings as well, describing “meltdowns” and what she did to counteract the psychological toll of cancer.

It’s not a rant or a pity party. It’s practical and realistic, just like the author, and full of useful information.

“I don’t give recommendations about anything. I share what’s happening to me, provide links to valid resources and give people the opportunity for feedback,” Hartman said.

Check out Hartman’s blog at: http://cheekylibrarian.blogspot.com

CHIRS: www.unmc.edu/library/consumer or call toll free 866-800-5209.
The Michael F. Sorrell Center for Health Science Education, set for completion this summer, will provide state-of-the-art educational resources for all UNMC students. Some of the features of the building include technologically enhanced classrooms, patient-focused clinical skills laboratories, a multi-purpose conference space for continuing education and important student interaction space that will provide enhanced interdisciplinary educational opportunities.

The Sorrell Center also will be home to the UNMC College of Medicine, which will host the largest class in 30 years this fall. The 8 percent increase will boost UNMC’s first-year class from 120 to 130 students.

Omahans Bill and Ruth Scott provided the largest donation to the University of Nebraska Foundation for the $52.7 million building, and named the building in honor of Dr. Sorrell, a legendary physician and administrator at UNMC for the past 35 years. Other founding benefactors, major contributors and nearly 1,000 College of Medicine alumni contributed to the 134,183-square-foot Sorrell Center.

A number of events are scheduled to commemorate the opening of the Sorrell Center.

Thursday, June 26 - Campus Dedication and Ribbon Cutting
Sunday, June 29 - Public Open House and Tours
Saturday, July 26 - Alumni Celebration
To be announced - Student Reception