

Dean's Message

ONE OF MY FIRST OFFICIAL DUTIES as interim dean for the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences was to preside over graduation ceremonies on May 12th and 20th. I can think of no better way to begin my new role than to join our students, their families, friends and teachers in celebration of this remarkable transition in their lives. Graduation day gives us an opportunity to recognize the intellectual, emotional and social growth our students have had to undergo to attain their degrees. It is also a time for us to look forward to the success of their careers. Collectively, they will do more good for more patients in more communities than the faculty they leave behind.

Clearly, our graduates are our school's legacy, and it is with this awareness that I move forward to address the many pressing challenges that must be met today in order to assure that this legacy continues well into the future. Recently, I have focused on preparing a three-year plan for the school in conjunction with a new strategic planning initiative instituted by President John Simpson, called UB 2020. This plan seeks to identify the university's strengths and areas of potential strength as foundations upon which to build academic excellence at UB over the next 15 years. It is not possible for the university as a whole to advance academically without the medical school being a leader in that advance. Our strategy over the next three years is to identify and develop these programs which have the best potential to reach the top quarter of their peer programs at U. S. medical schools. These programs can be the ladders subsequent programs climb to reach the top echelon as well.

How do we find the resources to solve our problems and move forward? When I became chief of neonatology at Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo and then chair of the UB Department of Pediatrics, and, more recently, interim dean, I was convinced there was a big pot of money that would come along with each of these positions. Instead, what I have discovered is that such a pot does not exist. However, having been a faculty member and chair at UB for 19 years, I am convinced that the real key to our success, in the long term, is our ability to recruit, reward and retain the best and the brightest faculty and students. In the end, solutions to all our challenges will come from them, and whatever achievements we can claim will come as a result of their toil, creativity and energy.

In closing, I would like to welcome David Dunn, MD, PhD, as UB's new vice president for health sciences. As you will read on pages 34-35, Dr. Dunn has superlative qualifications to lead UB's five health sciences schools, and I look forward to working with him to identify and realize his office's overarching goals as they pertain to the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.



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