

DEAR FACULTY, STAFF, ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,

The students who took part in this year's commencement ceremonies were members of the 164th class of physicians and scientists to graduate from our school and, fittingly, were addressed by two of our nation's most exemplary leaders in medicine and science.

The honored speaker for the medical school's commencement was the Surgeon General of the United States, Regina M. Benjamin, MD, MBA, founder of the Bayou La Batre Rural Health Clinic in Alabama and former associate dean for Rural Health at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine. Dr. Benjamin gained national prominence for her leadership and perseverance in response to Hurricane Katrina.

The honored speaker for the biomedical sciences' commencement was Susan Amara, PhD, Thomas P. Detre Professor and Chair of Neurobiology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. Dr. Amara is a renowned neuroscientist whose research has helped us understand how antidepressants and narcotics affect the brain at a molecular level.

I am pleased to report that as the academic year came to a close, we learned that four of our medical students were accepted into prestigious, nationally competitive research training programs. As you can read about on page 36 in this issue, two have been named fellows in the Clinical Research Training Program at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and two have won scholarships from the Sarnoff Cardiovascular Research Foundation to conduct intensive work in a biomedical research laboratory in the United States.

In order to help assure that our students continue to have a robust teaching and research environment in which to prepare themselves for the future, I have focused my efforts this summer on three primary objectives: (1) guiding chair searches for several of our clinical and basic sciences departments; (2) advancing our school's goals as they pertain to UB 2020, the university's long-term strategic plan; and (3) overseeing preparations for a visit by the Liaison



Committee on Medical Education in October as part of our school's eight-year accreditation cycle.

Currently, active chair searches are underway for the departments of neurology, obstetrics and gynecology, dermatology, pathology and anatomical sciences and microbiology and immunology.

We recently concluded three highly successful leadership searches, as follows:

TERESA QUATTRIN, MD, professor of pediatrics at UB and an internationally known physician-scientist with expertise in childhood diabetes and obesity, has been appointed A. Conger Goodyear Professor and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics.

ANNE B. CURTIS, MD, professor of medicine at the University of South Florida, chief of the university's Division of Cardiology and director of Cardiovascular Services, has been appointed the inaugural Mary and Charles Bauer Professor and Chair of the Department of Medicine.

LAWRENCE WRABETZ, MD, professor of neurology at the Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele, in Milan, Italy, an internationally recognized expert in the biology of myelin, has been appointed director of the Hunter James Kelly Research Institute, a partnership between UB and the Hunter's Hope Foundation.

Dr. Wrabetz' wife, Maria Feltri, MD, research assistant professor in the Department of Neurology at San Raffaele Hospital, University of Milan, and head of the NeuroGlia Unit at the San Raffaele Scientific Institute, also will be joining our faculty.

Hunter's Hope was established in 1997 by former Buffalo Bills quarterback Jim Kelly and his wife, Jill, after their infant son,

Hunter, was diagnosed with Krabbe leukodystrophy, an inherited fatal nervous system disease. The Hunter James Kelly Research Institute is located downtown in UB's New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences, part of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.

All Hunter's Hope research is coordinated through the institute, which is dedicated to studying remyelination techniques and the biology and pathophysiology of Krabbe disease and other demyelinating disorders.

To read more about these appointments, turn to the Pathways section of this issue.

On July 13, leaders from UB and Kaleida Health gathered for a brief ceremony that marked placement of the last sequence of steel at the construction site of the combined Global Vascular Institute/Clinical Translational Research Center, located on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus next to Buffalo General Hospital. This \$291 million facility, scheduled to be completed in November 2011, will bring together physicians and researchers in a collaborative effort to deliver state-of-the-art clinical care, investigate the causes and treatment of vascular disease, and spin off new biotechnology businesses.

This new building helps advance the vision of UB 2020 in that it lays the foundation for our school's migration to the Buffalo Niagara Medical campus, followed by UB's four other health sciences schools. It also provides a new home for programs and facilities that will better position our school to compete for a Clinical Translational Science Award (CTSA) from the NIH.

As part of the NIH's Roadmap for Medical Research, the CTSA program, when fully implemented in 2012, will form a consortium of 60 institutions, 55 of which have already been designated. These institutions will be linked with one another to foster collaborations that shorten the interval of time between fundamental discoveries and their practical application to human health.

Our school's efforts to submit a CTSA application are being led by Timothy Murphy, MD, UB Distinguished Professor and senior associate dean for clinical and translational research.

One of the goals of the national CTSA consortium is to stimulate alliances in medical research and research training by identifying opportunities for collaboration among CTSA members and private-sector organizations.

In order to align with this goal, our region has formed the Buffalo Translational Consortium, which includes the following member institutions:

- University at Buffalo Academic Health Center
 - School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences
 - School of Dental Medicine
 - School of Nursing
 - School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
 - School of Public Health and Health Professions
- Roswell Park Cancer Institute
- Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute
- UB Research Institute on Addictions
- UB's New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences
- Great Lakes Health System of Western New York
- UBMD (UB School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences' practice plan)

Community Partners for the CTSA grant application include:

- The P2 (Pursuing Perfection) Collaborative of Western New York
- Upstate New York Practice-based Research Network (UNYNET)
- New York State Area Health Education System (AHEC)
- HEALTHeLINK

In future issues of *Buffalo Physician*, I will continue to update you on progress being made on the construction of the Global Vascular Institute/Clinical Translational Research Center and our application for a CTSA grant—synergistic efforts that share the goal of transforming the environment for clinical and translational science in Western New York.

MICHAEL E. CAIN, MD

Dean, School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences