



“Becoming the School’s fifteenth dean is a wonderful honor, one that I will always cherish.”



Dear Alumni/ae and Friends:

It is a pleasure to write to you as the newly installed dean of the Medical School. Becoming the School’s 15th dean is a wonderful honor, one that I will always cherish.

Even though I was a student here and have spent the past 15 years on the faculty, I was astounded to learn of the depth, breadth, and size of the Medical School. Our overall budget this coming academic year will be \$560 million. About \$200 million is sponsored research and \$220 million represents practice income. A total of \$60 million comes to us from various University accounts including tuition and indirect cost return on our grants. A critical component, about \$30 million, comes to us from voluntary support including philanthropy and grant support from foundations and volunteer organizations such as the American Cancer Society or the Muscular Dystrophy Association. The remaining \$50 million is made up of income generated by service to other University units, interest on our endowments, and vital support that we receive from the University Hospitals and Health Centers.

These funds are all used to support the three missions of our School: education, research, and patient care. These missions are carried out by the six basic science and 16 clinical departments, along with the Department of Medical Education and the Unit for Laboratory Animal Medicine. The full time faculty number over 1,400 with an additional 400 volunteer and adjunct faculty assisting us. We teach a total of 680 medical students (170 per class), 850 house officers, 300 graduate students and 400 post-doctoral research fellows. This past year our faculty managed over 37,000 admissions to the University’s hospitals and saw over 1.3 million outpatient visits. Supporting the faculty and trainees is a dedicated staff of over 1,800 in the Medical School as well as 8,500 employees in the hospitals and health centers.

Being part of the leadership of the School is a thrilling challenge, but it is made easier with the help of outstanding colleagues, some of whom you will read about in this issue of *Medicine at Michigan*. The creation of the newest academic department in the Medical School, Emergency Medicine, is an important step that will enable us to better serve our patients, develop impor-

tant research and train our students in caring for the critically ill. I think you’ll enjoy learning about how Jeff Chamberlain is bringing his groundbreaking research discoveries in muscular dystrophy to important clinical trials. His work and that of his colleagues should have a significant impact on the emerging field of gene therapy. You’ll also want to read the article that explains how we continue to work to expose our students to the latest technology in order to prepare them for the new ways we are practicing medicine and serving our patients.

By any measure, we continue to be regarded as one of the nation’s top medical institutions. Our hospital was recently ranked in the top ten in the country. The Medical School ranks tenth as a school in National Institutes of Health funding and the University ranks seventh. We successfully compete for the best students and faculty with all the major private and public medical schools. But as accomplished as we are, we could be better and we are always striving to improve. The schools ranked above us are not standing still and those right behind us would like nothing better than to pass us. To give you an idea of how keen the competition is “at the top”, in 1987 we were awarded a total of \$65 million in National Institutes of Health grants. This earned us the rank of ninth on the National Institutes of Health’s list of medical schools. By 1998 we had more than doubled our National Institutes of Health funding to a total of \$140 million. But this dropped us one spot in the rankings to tenth. While National Institutes of Health funding is only one of many measures of a medical school’s excellence, it is an important factor and we monitor this and other key indicators closely.

In order to stay competitive with our peer institutions and to improve our stature and level of accomplishment, we have embarked upon a bold plan for the future with new buildings planned for both clinical care and basic research. The Life Sciences Initiative is an important part of that expansion. It will help tie the research faculties of the Medical School and the Central Campus more closely together as we tackle the key problems in biomedical research in the 21st century. This critical initiative is discussed by Gil Omenn in his letter in this issue of *Medicine at Michigan*. We are confident that these investments in our future will go a long way to keeping the University of Michigan Medical School in the forefront of the world’s great medical institutions.

Allen S. Lichter, M.D.
Dean