

# Message from the Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs



It is indeed good to be home.

My assessment of the University of Michigan Health System has always been very positive, and it is even more positive now that I have returned. Many brilliant minds working together form the intellectual core of this amazing place, and our patients, students, house officers and fields of research have never been in better hands at a better time. I am excited to once again be working with President Coleman, and I look forward to working with Dean Lichter and the leadership of the hospitals, clinics and health centers, as well M-CARE, to make this the top health system in the country.

We have a lot of work to do. The incredible pace of knowledge and discovery in the early 21st century opens profound opportunities for advancing medicine and health care, but it likewise presents us with new and daunting challenges. Technology and facilities must keep pace; so must systems and methods of information management and analysis. New knowledge and understanding of biomedical science, society and diversity must be incorporated into the curriculum, as the Medical School has done with the new curriculum implemented just this fall. The rising cost of health care is an extraordinary pressure on all hospitals, clinics and managed care programs, and it's a pressure that affects each of us as patients as well.

We face these challenges, however, as a health system that is strong and vibrant, with a proud history of great success behind it. We face these challenges as collaborators in an integrated effort across traditional boundaries to find solutions, and to continue to provide the best possible health care, train the finest future physicians, and extend our research programs to the very edge of biomedical science. We do this every day, and we cannot miss a beat.

In addition to the powerhouses of intellect and innovation at work within our health system, we can claim another resource, one that has continued the Michigan mission and taken it far and wide: those who have trained here, as students, interns,

residents and fellows, form pillars of strength and stature matched by few academic health centers in the U.S. Our alumni, who go forth from Ann Arbor into Michigan and far beyond, ensure that medicine at Michigan is everywhere our graduates live and practice. As ambassadors, as healers, as researchers, teachers and clinicians, alumni do so very much to preserve and portray the values and ideals of the University and its commitment to the future of medical care, research and education.

We owe a vast debt of gratitude to those who have left the halls of University Hospital and the laboratories and classrooms of the medical science buildings and taken their skills into the world for the good of humankind. Each of you makes an important contribution. Each of you is vital to the well being of the world, and each of you is likewise vital to the future of your alma mater. As an alumnus of Michigan, I know the feeling of community and proud heritage firsthand, and I will remain forever grateful for what Michigan has done for me, as well as to each of you for all you have done — and continue to do — for Michigan.

As the Life Sciences Institute opens and the girders of the Biomedical Science Research Building rise from the ground, as excavation and foundation work for the new Cardiovascular Center progresses and plans for the Depression Center's northeast Ann Arbor building proceed, one senses in the air an extraordinary excitement over the activity and times that lie ahead. I am very pleased to be at this place at this time, working together with all of you toward the goal of an even better, more integrated, more efficient health system for future generations. It is our tradition; it is our legacy. Together, we can make sure that Michigan's best years lie yet ahead.

As an alumnus of Michigan, I know that feeling of community and proud heritage firsthand, and I will remain forever grateful for what Michigan has done for me.

Robert P. Kelch (M.D. 1967, Residency 1970)  
U-M Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs  
and CEO, U-M Health System