



Dear Alumni and Friends:



The University of Michigan Medical School has much to be proud of. The past year has seen us once again ranked within the top 10 research-oriented medical schools in the nation. We have passed the stewardship of three of our key departments to dynamic new leaders: Sally Camper, Ph.D., in Human Genetics; Karin Muraszko, M.D., in Neurosurgery; and Jay Hess, M.D., Ph.D., in Pathology. And we have continued to meet the challenges of creat-

ing facilities which foster collaboration among teams of researchers and clinicians across disciplines, as well as the demands of ever-changing biomedical technology: the Cardiovascular Center, whose imposing structure rises on the site of Old Main Hospital and will be completed in late 2006; the Rachel Upjohn Building, which will house the U-M Depression Center, also scheduled for completion late in 2006, near the East Ann Arbor Health Center; the expansion of Kellogg Eye Center, which will also house the William K. and Dolores S. Brehm Center for Type 1 Diabetes Research. Plans are moving forward to construct a new C.S. Mott Children's and Women's Hospital.

A top institution must provide the best facilities possible in which clinicians and scientists can practice leading health care and conduct breakthrough biomedical research. A key part of that goal will become operational in February, when the Biomedical Science Research Building opens its doors and labs to researchers directly across Huron Street from the University's Life Sciences Institute. These research facilities are designed with science in mind that didn't exist 15 or even 10 years ago, such as the burgeoning study of the human genome, the intricate mysteries of proteomics, the ultra-small world of nanomedicine — new frontiers, each with seemingly limitless potential for new knowledge. It is the scientists who work within these buildings, coming from a variety of disciplines but sharing common goals, who will keep biomedical research at Michigan at the very edges of these new frontiers.

As biomedical science changes, so does patient care. Gone is the "one size fits all" approach, for we now know enough about the differences among us — differences in culture, beliefs, lifestyle, social and economic status, race, gender — all

of which come directly to bear on how we deliver, and how patients accept, medical care.

We know that humans are, genetically speaking, 99.9 percent identical. But the differences inherent within that remaining one-tenth of a percent speak to an array of differences that comprise today's approach to treating the whole patient, inclusive of environmental, cultural and circumstantial aspects that distinguish each patient from every other. We are moving toward an exciting era of personalized medicine in which treatments will be chosen to match the patient's individual pattern of gene expression.

In this issue of *Medicine at Michigan*, we take a delightful and fascinating look at the Japanese Family Health Program within the Department of Family Medicine, a program that illustrates wonderfully how beliefs and boundaries between different cultures and traditions can be bridged to deliver the most effective and sensitive health care to patients — in this case, to members of the sizeable Japanese population in southeastern Michigan. Culturally competent health care acknowledges uniqueness, transcends boundaries, and actively incorporates human differences in the assessment and treatment of patients.

The common thread that runs throughout everything we do, in new facilities and established ones — in the hospitals, centers and clinics, and in the classrooms, lecture halls and research laboratories — is the talent, dedication and collegiality of the people who make medicine at Michigan a

reality. I want to thank and congratulate our faculty, residents and students, our physicians and researchers, the staff who enable our efforts and the donors whose philanthropy supports them, our alumni whose loyalty makes the Michigan family what it is, and our patients whose trust makes it all worthwhile. We can all take pride and find a fundamental gratification in what we accomplish, a gratification that lasts not just through a change in calendar years that prompts our reflection, but indeed every moment of every day, throughout the year and the accumulation of years that make up our long heritage and illustrious history.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Allen S. Lichter".

Allen S. Lichter (M.D. 1972)
Dean

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