

FROM THE DEAN

The changing seasons, the return of students to Ann Arbor each fall, graduations — we have only to look around us to see that transitions are a normal part of our lives, our work, our school, the patient care we deliver and how we deliver it, and how we train the physicians and researchers who will discover and define the future of health care, medical science and medical education.

I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as interim dean of the University of Michigan Medical School as former Dean Allen Lichter takes on a personal transition of his own: that of leading the American Society of Clinical Oncology as executive vice president and chief executive officer. We wish him every success as we continue to build upon the work he and the 14 deans who came before him accomplished. One of his contributions was leading the effort to provide scholarship support to our medical students. The U-M Medical School now awards \$8 million annually in scholarship support to our students, more than any other public medical school in the nation. This helps, but far from solves, the pressing problem of rising student debt. We will continue to make scholarship support a top priority, with the goal of one day having a fully endowed medical school able to pay the tuition of all of its students.

The theme of transitions can be seen even in this issue's feature articles. Our cover story on the fast-growing trend of inpatient care provided by hospitalists — a term still unfamiliar to many — represents a major shift in health care delivery. The long and often arduous residency years — that professional transition from medical student to practicing physician — are well represented by a day in the life of Meredith Adams, a fourth-year otolaryngology resident who graduated with the U-M Medical School Class of 2003. And the translation of discoveries from basic science to clinical applications, from animal trials to human medicine — a sensitive topic to some that brings immeasurable benefit to all — is foundational to medical scientific inquiry, without which much of what we know and practice today would have been impossible.

Transitions are defined as passages from one form or style to another; they are the great agent of change. We, each of us, has a particular place and a valuable part in stewarding that change, and helping chart its bold new directions. Michigan's place always will be in the lead, so long as we continue to steward it responsibly, with reason and purpose, and with respect for what each of us brings to the task.

Sincerely,



James O. Woolliscroft, M.D. (Residency 1980)
Interim Dean, U-M Medical School

Photo: Martin Voet

