



Dear Alumni/ae and Friends:



Earlier this year, the University of Michigan Medical School tied for ninth place in the prestigious *U.S. News and World Report* ranking of the best medical schools in the nation, up from a tie for 12th the previous year. In Fiscal Year 2000, the School received \$177 million in

NIH research funding, making us 10th in the nation. And just this summer, the U-M Health System was ranked seventh among academic medical centers by *U.S. News and World Report*, compared with 12th last year. These impressive rankings reflect well on the skill, determination and dedicated effort of the many men and women who work daily not just to steward a great institution but to move toward ever greater levels of achievement.

While no ranking system is a perfect measure of excellence, rankings nonetheless signify something important.

They represent, in large part, recognition by our peers, perhaps the most exacting group that exists. Recognition creates reputation,

and reputation draws the very best faculty and researchers to prepare the very best students for careers in medical science and practice. One reason our peer institutions like Hopkins, Harvard and Duke consistently rank in the top five is that such a ranking itself helps attract some of the brightest faculty and students to their doors. But it is an unrelenting commitment to the highest possible standards of medical science and education that places schools in the forefront to begin with, and it is that same commitment that keeps them there, year after year.

This is an undeniably dynamic place with a long, distinguished history. We continue to excel in many remarkable ways, but our best days still lie ahead. Our vision is to be widely acknowledged as one of the top five medical schools in the United States by 2010. I believe, as I'm sure you do, that the University of Michigan Medical School has the capability. Improving our reputation will put us in a

position to have an even greater impact on medical education, research and clinical care.

None of us should underestimate the enormous challenge such a goal entails. It will take phenomenal effort on the part of faculty, administration and staff. Private giving will be one of the keys to our success, for we need to double our number of endowed professorships, perhaps the most powerful faculty recruitment tool there is; to build new research facilities capable of housing medical science in the 21st century; and to significantly increase scholarship support to ease the daunting burden of debt that medical education has come to represent for many of today's students.

Our most important sustainable advantage is our ability to change, and the timing is right for change at U-M. Over the next five years, we will, because of faculty retirement, find ourselves needing to replace nearly half of our department chairs. We are

investing in the new Life Sciences Institute, the Basic Sciences Research Building, new clinical facilities and an extensive renovations program.

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This is the perfect time to take stock in our accomplishments as one of the country's premier medical schools and to commit to moving toward a level of accomplishment that is even greater in the years ahead.

If we are to advance our stature and reputation relative to our peers, the time to do so is now. Achieving top five status by 2010 will require clarity of vision, a singular focus on that vision, and an unrelenting quest by all faculty, staff and friends to attain our goals. Our potential is unlimited. Together, we can move the School forward into a new era of medicine — at Michigan, and around the world.

Sincerely,

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

Allen S. Lichter, M.D.
Dean