



### ERRANT WINGS

The editors should be informed that the cover image of the summer 2009 issue is incorrect. The symbol of medicine is a single rough staff and a single serpent; the dual serpent has never been the proper symbol of medicine and the healing arts.

*Richard Alan Lewis (M.D. 1969, M.S. and Residency 1974)  
Houston, Texas*

### CELEBRATING MICHIGAN, THEN AND NOW

"The Journey Begun" (summer 2009) impressed and amazed me. Those four fantastic individuals absolutely blew me away: what they have already done, what they are doing now as students, and their incredible potential as physicians. I greatly admire and respect them! This article, which so vividly demonstrates the passage of time and the changes over the years, caused me to dust off an essay I wrote several years ago for a memoir class. Because my experience was so radically different from these modern participants in medicine, I thought my essay might have merit from an historical viewpoint. It is a celebration of the 22 women medical students in the class of 1948. It is also a celebration of the University of Michigan, as I owe so much of what my life has been to my eight years in its care and instruction. Thank you for your publication, which contributes to

## A Confusion of Symbols

### WE HEARD FROM A NUMBER OF YOU ABOUT THE SUMMER

issue's cover image being an incorrect symbol for medicine; of course, all of you are absolutely right. We were somewhat consoled to learn just how pervasive the confusion is; nevertheless, we should not have got it wrong.

The historical and correct symbol of medicine is the rod of Asclepius. Asclepius was a Greco-Roman god of medicine and son of Apollo, the god of healing and truth. His simple staff with a single coiled serpent has endured as the traditional symbol of medicine for millennia.



Rod of Asclepius

*Rick Krupinski  
Editor*

my life by bringing all these new, fantastic and awesome changes in medicine to my attention.

*Barbara Carnaban Smith Fry  
(M.D. 1948)*

*Friday Harbor, Washington*

*Note: Dr. Fry's essay is posted as a Web Exclusive in the online version of this issue.*

### INNOVATING MEDICINE AT MICHIGAN

I am highly impressed with the perseverance and innovation in research currently going on at the University of Michigan ("From Mind to Market," summer 2009). Dr. Geiger and team: keep up the good work!

*Kofi Boakye-Denkwa*

Many thanks for the summer issue that includes the article on the development of fiber optic instruments, which have indeed revolutionized the practice of medicine ("Light at the End of the Fiber"). The article was well-constructed and demonstrated a thorough understanding of the subject. It was a

pleasure to read, and I thank you most sincerely for the effort.

*Basil Hirschowitz, M.D.  
Birmingham, Alabama*

### IT TAKES A TEAM

Thank you for the great article in the summer issue that highlights the care provided to head and neck cancer patients ("Form and Function"). As a speech pathologist employed at the U-M Health System for the past 21 years, I've had the distinct honor and privilege to work with this patient group — Drs. Bradford, Chepeha, Wolf and Eisbruch, as well as the many other members of the multidisciplinary head and neck cancer treatment team. The individuals involved in the management of this difficult disease bring a tremendous amount of compassion and commitment to their patients. In every aspect, they truly represent the "Michigan difference" in patient care.

*Marc Haxer  
Tecumseh, Michigan*