



DEAN'S MESSAGE: What's On My Mind



What's on my mind as we close out 2015 is the success of the 20th State of the School Address and the many accomplishments it highlighted.

Although the complete recording of the State of the School Address may be found on the School of Medicine Web site, this special issue of the SOMnews focuses on some of the highlights.

As I said in my opening remarks of the Address, I know that the School of Medicine is an undaunted enterprise that continues to improve its trajectory, even in the face of inevitable challenges. Many of us may wonder why we host a State of the School meeting each year. I firmly believe that it is vital to recognize our collective achievements, and to applaud those successes as an entire organization. Many of us may wonder why the Address is so comprehensive. In actuality, the State of the School Address could last for days, were we to recount every success story. The examples shared are only a small sampling of the collective progress we have made over the course of this past year, but it's important to remember that every contribution made by every member of our academic community is vital to advancing our mission.

This year, I began the Address with a data slide showing the number of people who comprise our School—over 7,400 people. I followed this slide with a summary of the goals of our **Shared Vision 2020 for UM Medicine**. I chose to open in this manner to demonstrate that we have a vibrant community of faculty, staff, students and trainees who are attracted to the School of Medicine because of our bold, strategic roadmap for success. **Vision 2020** sets a very high bar in each of our mission areas:

Research Vision:

- An accelerated pace of scientific discoveries and innovations that impact human health
- Increased funding, as well as the number of faculty engaged in federally funded research

Clinical Care Vision:

- Service excellence and patient-friendly, patient-centered, high-quality, safe care
- Recognition as Maryland and the Region's premier clinical healthcare system

Education Vision:

- A new teaching philosophy and educational "products" focused on training innovators and discoverers
- Strengthened internal mentorship programs

Global & Local Community Outreach Vision:

- Improve health and wellbeing of all citizens
- Study and combat diseases in local and global "hot spots"

We can all be extraordinarily proud of our accomplishments over the past year. However, there is much more to be done as we strive toward the goals of our **Vision 2020**. Therefore, I closed this year's Address with a charge to the SOM academic community, encouraging each of us do our part to achieve these shared aspirations.

My charge included six essential elements:

1. We must strengthen the analytical skills of our students, and expose them, increasingly, to the diversity of opportunities awaiting them, including clinical medicine, biomedical research and entrepreneurial initiatives.
2. We must further expand our destination clinical programs, and rededicate ourselves to excellence in patient care, patient safety and service excellence.
3. We must redouble our efforts to sustain and expand our NIH funding, across all departments, programs, centers and institutes.
4. We must increase the number of NIH-funded faculty, AND the overall funding per full-time faculty.
5. We must be aggressive in the recruitment and cultivation of well-funded NIH investigators through our Special Trans-Disciplinary Recruitment Award Program (STRAP) initiative. This will allow us to populate our new Research Building with well-funded, trans-disciplinary and collaborative scientists.
6. We must promote a culture of professionalism and sensitivity for students as well as patients.

It is because we are undaunted in our purpose and resilient in our execution that I am optimistic and confident. Each year we soar higher than the year before. There are no limits to our imaginations, our wonder and discovery, and thus our celebrated story is one that continues.

In the relentless pursuit of excellence, I am
Sincerely yours,

E. Albert Reece, MD, PhD, MBA
Vice President for Medical Affairs, University of Maryland
John Z. and Akiko K. Bowers Distinguished Professor and Dean, University of Maryland School of Medicine



Point of Pride

Dr. Leonard T. Kurland, Class of 1945, began research in Guam in 1953 on the people of the island, who had startlingly high rates of neurodegenerative diseases. His work led to the identification of the three major forms of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)

also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.



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White Coat Ceremony

DEAN REECE PRESENTS THE

State of the School



“Undaunted in Purpose,
Resilient in Execution”

On October 28, E. Albert Reece, MD, PhD, MBA, Vice President for Medical Affairs, University of Maryland, and the John Z. and Akiko K. Bowers Distinguished Professor and Dean, University of Maryland School of Medicine, delivered his annual State of the School speech to a standing-room-only crowd.



Address OCTOBER 28, 2015 2015

The theme of this year's State of the School address was *Undaunted in Purpose, Resilient in Execution*. "I know that I stand before an undaunted community this afternoon," said Dean Reece. "I sometimes marvel at our resilience in face of inevitable challenges. Each day, we improve the trajectory of progress in science and medicine. For this reason, it is important that we set aside time each year to collectively celebrate our successes. This Address includes just a small sample of the collective progress that we have made over the past year. These examples illustrate what happens when we set our sights on valiant outcomes, and not on temporary obstacles."

Resilience has been necessary over the last few years, with sequestration and flat NIH funding adding to the already challenging task of securing grant funding. Yet UM SOM continues to grow in this area, earning \$402.4 million in Research Grants and Contracts in FY15, a nine percent increase. Contributing to this were numerous multi-million dollar grants, both from the National Institutes for Health (NIH) and from non-NIH funding sources such as the CDC, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and GlaxoSmithKline, with whom UM SOM researchers worked in testing a potential vaccine against the Ebola virus.

Also adding to the funding success were the collaborations that came out investments in research such as the Dean's Challenge Award and the Joint Seed Grant Program with the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP). Both these initiatives encouraged senior and junior researchers to collaborate on "Big Science" projects, those that require broad collaboration across a variety of disciplines and departments. In its first year, the Dean's Challenge Award awarded seed money to four of the 19 UM SOM teams who submitted proposals. The Joint Seed Program continues to grow and will have a new track this year, one that will fund some teams for two years rather than just one.

Research was only one of five areas of focus that Dean Reece discussed in his speech, with clinical care, education, global outreach and community impact also being highlighted.

UM SOM's clinical practices continue to expand. Our faculty physicians provided care to 1,245,411 patients in FY15, 3.2 percent more than in FY14.

Clinical revenue increased 5.2 percent, to \$292.2 million. The Maryland Proton Treatment Center is preparing to treat its first patients. UM Faculty Physicians at Waterloo Crossing in Columbia is now open. The medical center has a new state-of-the-art Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), named for generous benefactors Drs. Rouben and Violet Jiji. And our Executive Health Program is attracting business, community and government leaders, as well as international patients, to our institution.

The number of students applying to medical school has been rising across the country, including at UM SOM, where 5,240 applicants competed for the 159 spots available in the Class of 2019. These students, ranging in age from 21 to 38 years, came from 67 different colleges and universities, and had GPAs and MCAT scores above the national average. Students in our Graduate

Program in Life Sciences (GPILS) have been finding great success even before graduation, securing grants and publishing papers, many as first author, while still working on their degrees.

Greatly propelling forward UM SOM's efforts to improve global health was the establishment of the Institute for Global Health (IGH). The Institute houses the reconfigured Center for Vaccine Development, now directed by **Kathleen Neuzil, MD, MPH**, and the newly formed Division of Malaria Research, directed by **Christopher Plowe, MD, MPH**. Dr. Plowe is

the Director of IGH, and Dr. Neuzil is Deputy Director.

Community outreach has become ever more important as Baltimore recovers from the unrest that took place in April and tries to find ways to prevent such violence from happening again. UM SOM students serve as mentors in programs for students who are interested in science and medicine. Faculty and staff are also volunteering to serve as mentors for the recently launched UMB CURE (Continuing Umbrella of Research Experiences) Scholars program, a partnership between the University of Maryland, Baltimore and the University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Cancer Center that aims to establish a science pipeline that will put middle school students in West Baltimore on the road to rewarding research and healthcare careers.

"Each year I look forward with great anticipation to this address," said Dean Reece. "I am particularly excited this year, as I am soon to mark my 10th anniversary as Dean of this School of Medicine. We have much to reflect on, but still have much more to accomplish, and, of course, exciting times ahead."



White Coat Ceremony Celebration



Medical Family Day was held on November 5, 2015 at the Hilton in downtown Baltimore. This special event, which was sponsored by the Whiting-Turner Contracting Company, gives family members of first-year students a glimpse into what medical school is really like for the students. "Though

our students have traveled different paths to this destination, we know that they have not traveled alone," proclaimed E. Albert Reece, MD, PhD, MBA, Vice President for Medical Affairs, University of Maryland, and the John Z. and Akiko K. Bowers Distinguished Professor and Dean, University of Maryland School of Medicine. "Nor, will they complete this next portion of their journey without your continued support, encouragement, understanding, and compassion. Very late at night you may receive phone calls that seek your listening ears, and I anticipate that your strong shoulders will be wept upon once or twice. Encourage and console them. Remind them of the honorable hopes and dreams that brought them to this doorstep."

Medical Family Day ends with a ceremony welcoming the students to the field of medicine by presenting them with their first white coat. "The White Coat Ceremony is a rite of passage, which symbolizes the beginning of your transition into the noble and privileged profession of medicine," said Dean Reece. "It is, however, so much more than a mere ritual. To whom this great honor and privilege is given, your service, compassion, and high ethical standards are expected in return."

Edgar Petras, President of the Class of 2016, spoke about what the white coat means to a student. "Getting a white coat is a fantastic symbol of what you have achieved and also where you're headed," he said. "It's the first step toward your life-long dream." Edgar confessed his white coat also sometimes makes him uncomfortable, and not

just physically. "When you put on that coat, people expect things from you. Professors expect you to know the answers, attendings expect you to have a plan for caring for your patients, even your family might be expecting some medical advice."

Dean Reece had great expectations for the faculty members in the room. "I, like you, have had the distinct privilege of wearing a white coat for many years." He said. "This has symbolized our commitment to the moral and ethical standards of the healing art. Today, I am charging you to rededicate yourself with a renewed vigor and freshness of spirit to the ideals that we hold true—honor, integrity and selflessness. Model them, each day, for these students who will look to you as the personification of these ideals. In doing so, you will have marked their paths well, leaving virtuous imprints for them to follow."

Many students are looking to follow in the footsteps of Milford Foxwell, MD, Associate Dean of Admissions, who was honored to be chosen as the faculty speaker for the event. "This coat that is being given to you will inspire trust," Dr. Foxwell said. "You're going to have to uphold the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct."

The White Coat ceremony, which started at the School of Medicine in 1997, formally presents first-year students with their white coats, long the symbol of physicians and scientists, after they have completed their first course in medical school—Structure and Development (aka Anatomy). The coats are put on by School of Medicine faculty, to welcome their junior colleagues to the profession of medicine.

Once they received their coats, students recited an oath acknowledging their acceptance of the obligations of the medical profession. They also added their signatures to the school's honor registry, a leather-bound book provided by the Medical Alumni Association that is signed by all our medical students in their first year, in which they pledge to maintain integrity throughout their years in medicine.



This COAT that is being given to you will INSPIRE TRUST. You're going to have to uphold the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct.

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