

Our Primary Care is the Commonwealth

Celebrating the Legacy of our Past

In each of our lives, there are moments that mark significant milestones: the thrill of a new baby being born; the trials and tribulations of adolescence; the celebrations around education and job success; the happiness of relationships and the sadness of the passing of a loved one.

This is true in the life of the academy as well. Each year we experience important milestones: new students arrive during the summer; just after a class departs each spring. There is the joy of success in the accomplishments of our graduates and faculty. So, too, are there times when we take a moment to remember those whose legacy has made a major impact on our institution.

This is particularly true this year as we pause to recognize the sadness we feel in the loss of my predecessor and our dear colleague, Aaron Lazare.

Dr. Lazare served this institution mightily, for more than seventeen years, as its leader. Throughout a distinguished career in psychiatry and then through his nearly two decades of service as chancellor and dean, Dr. Lazare was an educator, mentor, steward, colleague, author, confidante and friend. His recent passing, following a period of declining health, leaves a void in our community but prompts happy memories, as it does sadness in our hearts.

Dr. Lazare led, from the head of the table, together with academic chairs and university leaders; inspired, at “his” table, all who joined together with him and members of our community; and beamed at their family’s table, exuding pride with his beloved, Louise, when together with their eight adopted children. His was a life of exemplary example!

In the latter years of his career, he became well known for his study of and book, *On Apology*. The thoughtful manner in which he captured our attention about the importance of apology is best explained in his own words:

“I have often wondered what has sustained my interest in studying and teaching about apologies throughout the past decade. I believe it is more than a detached intellectual interest or an attempt to restore the broken relationships that launched my study of apology. It is a passion that derives from the excitement of developing and applying an old idea—apologizing for wrongs done—in order to make a positive difference in the lives of others as well as in the lives of those apologizing. It is also the deep satisfaction of interactive communication with the audiences who attend my lectures, as well as with friends and colleagues with whom I have discussed these ideas. Their newly awakened interests in the subject as well as the ideas they generate have been a gift to me.” (Aaron Lazare, *On apology*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, 21)

Our community is grateful, indeed, for the positive difference that he made in our lives and the deep satisfaction we experienced in the interactions and communication we had with him. We

are most grateful for the gift and example he was to all of us. Forever we shall remember the warmth of his embrace when we sit in the lecture hall or building that bear his name. Aaron was a good and grateful servant. His legacy shall endure. May he rest in peace.

Celebrating our Bright Future

Good Afternoon!

What a privilege it remains to serve as Chancellor of this great university and to extend to all of you a very warm welcome to our annual Convocation ceremonies. Following in the footsteps of Dr. Lazare and those who came before him brings pleasure to every day.

I want to add a special welcome to those who have been so generous to our institution, as well as to the leadership and our colleagues of UMass Memorial Health Care, our academic health sciences center partner. All of your support and encouragement convey a great source of confidence to me and brighten our campus' future.

As we open the new academic year, our attention is drawn to and must focus on that ambitious future. Recently, we welcomed a colleague, Martin Meehan, to the university system's presidency. Well known to many in the commonwealth, President Meehan has lived a life of public service to the commonwealth; he is perhaps best known for his leadership in the halls of Congress and, most recently, for his stewardship of UMass Lowell, which he so ably led as Chancellor for the past eight years. Our new president comes to his new responsibilities with unbridled energy and enthusiasm. He knows our university well and respects, with great admiration, our medical school. As a graduate of the university, he believes in UMass and its bright future. As a colleague and collaborator, President Meehan will be a guiding force for our university system. He will be a presence on our campus and we shall welcome his enthusiasm, leadership and commitment, as we partner to make our academic health sciences center even greater.

As we focus on our future, we cannot help but pause for a moment to celebrate the many accomplishments of this past year. As we began to implement our strategic plan that focuses on and positions us to realize our 2020 aspirations, we worked diligently to prepare for an increase in class size of 25 students in the School of Medicine and soon, to welcome 25 students who shall be admitted from outside of Massachusetts. To maintain fidelity to our founding mission, we have been careful to assure that we do not decrease the number of seats available to Massachusetts residents. That said, with these actions we shall increase diversity of thought, experience and background as we recruit the finest medical students to our campus.

In order to accommodate those students in their clinical years, we are proud to have negotiated two new clinical affiliations. We shall establish our first regional campus at Baystate Health in Springfield, as we attract 25 students who shall be admitted to the medical school with a desire and commitment to focus on primary care in rural and urban settings. In partnership with UMass Amherst, together with Baystate we shall collaborate on research initiatives focused on population health and health care disparities as we redouble the university's commitment to

greater Springfield. Further, we have established a clinical affiliation with Cape Cod Healthcare and this January, students will begin clinical rotations in Hyannis. Our medical school's reach now extends from the Cape to the Berkshires; and with the emphasis on basic science, research and clinical care in Worcester, truly we are the commonwealth's medical school.

Our schools continue to advance their leadership position as we operationalize a foundational committee for the creation of more inter-professional curricular offerings.

Since last we convened, our faculty have received heightened acclaim: Dr. Victor Ambros received a Breakthrough Prize; Dr. Michael Green was elected to the National Academy of Sciences; Dr. Job Dekker was named an investigator of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute; Dr. Kate Fitzgerald received The Science Foundation of Ireland St. Patrick's Day Medal for her contributions to the research ecosystem in Ireland; Dr. Neil Aronin was awarded the 2015 Research Award by the Huntington's Disease Society of America; Dr. Robert Matthews was honored with the Carl Branden Award that recognizes an outstanding protein scientist who has made exceptional contributions in the areas of education and/or service to the field; and Dr. Deborah Harmon Hines was named the recipient of the 2015 Bruce Alberts Award for Excellence in Science Education, the highest honor given by The American Society for Cell Biology.

In research, we have enjoyed success with an increase in our awards, this year to more than \$249 million. We have enhanced our efforts to advance our entrepreneurial spirit and innovation commitment as we welcomed Brendan O'Leary as our Executive Vice Chancellor of Innovation and Business Development. Our campus' outreach to industry and venture partners has met a hearty welcome. These efforts shall stand us in good stead as we search for new streams of revenue and as we strive to generate a greater impact in the development of new products and medicines to serve those in need of our ingenuity and care.

I was particularly pleased to see the enhanced focus on our commitment to find cures for cancer as we created a new Department of Molecular, Cell and Cancer Biology and appointed one of our most distinguished colleagues, Dr. Michael Green, as chair of the department and as Cancer Center Director.

All of us were proud of our colleagues who were awarded a major grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation and expended heroic and extraordinary energies to assist the people and the country of Liberia as it faced and overcame the Ebola epidemic.

At MassBiologics, our colleagues have worked diligently to diversify their products and services as they increased tetanus and diphtheria production and distribution; established the Next One Hundred Million Dose Pilot Program; and this past year, became responsible for the SouthCoast enterprise where they have created GMP conditions in a facility that shall undertake commercial vector manufacturing, having already attracted its first major client. Here again, the medical school's footprint has expanded as we established a presence as a scientific and economic engine in the SouthCoast region of our state.

Commonwealth Medicine had another banner year as it continues its long and ambitious track record of serving those most in need; ensuring the appropriate use of public resources in services to patients and in partnership with state entities. In FY 2015, Massachusetts spent about \$15.6 billion on MassHealth. In partnership with state government, Commonwealth Medicine has been instrumental in cost avoiding for MassHealth over \$3.5 billion in additional expenses by ensuring that other liable parties appropriately paid their share of expenses. Furthermore, Commonwealth Medicine works year to year to ensure that all eligible state spending captures all available federal and private party funds for health care services. In FY 2015, its efforts to do so identified and recovered revenues of over \$1.5 billion for the State. Thus, for the first time in the 17-year partnership between the medical school and the Executive Office of Health and Human Service and its many agencies, Commonwealth Medicine's overall annual revenue and cost savings performance for our state government exceeded \$5 billion.

We expended considerable efforts, in partnership with our health system and university system colleagues to renew successfully our CTSA grant. With great appreciation to Dr. Eric Dickson and his colleagues, Dr. Katherine Luzuriaga became the *UMass Memorial Professor of Biomedical Research*, a newly endowed chair we shall celebrate later in our Investiture ceremony. This commitment of resources proffered an important statement to those who evaluate the value of our participation in the most impressive national cohort of institutions that the CTSA network comprises.

In the area of development, we had a banner year! Efforts from throughout the campus resulted in an impressive \$47 million being raised at our academic health sciences center. We celebrated the establishment of four new endowed chairs, three new term chairs, the naming of the Horae Gene Therapy Center and the establishment of the Remillard Fund for Community Service. These are extraordinary accomplishments that are due to the collaboration and efforts of our faculty and development team. We welcomed John Hayes as the new vice chancellor for advancement and Prescott Stewart, who shall soon join our team from Harvard Business School, as he assumes the responsibility for leading our capital campaign and securing principal gifts.

Most importantly, as the fall approached, we have matriculated three wonderful new classes of students to our campus. These students' accomplishments, idealism and intellect shall greatly enhance the academic life of our campus and upon graduation, they shall serve throughout our Commonwealth with an intense commitment that will perdure for decades to come.

Faculty Recognition

As we begin this academic year, I would like to celebrate the many accomplishments of our faculty. The heart and mind of a great university lie within its faculty. This university is privileged to have in its midst a dedicated and committed faculty. Our students are the beneficiaries of their intellect and wisdom. The broader world sees great benefits from their scholarly works and innovative discoveries.

On our campus, collegiality and collaboration abound. For our world, the good works of our faculty are without boundary.

Over this past year, we have had the good fortune to recruit 129 outstanding faculty to our campus community. The academic and clinical accomplishments that these new faculty bring to our campus will serve us well into the future. It is a delight to welcome all who are new to our faculty.

Faculty Tenured in Academic Year 2014-2015

I am especially pleased to recognize those on our faculty who have been our colleagues and who, this academic year, have received confirmation from our university that we wish them to spend their academic careers with us.

When our university awards tenure to a faculty member, it chooses to establish a life-long academic relationship with that committed scholar. The rigorous tenure decisions, reached after much scrutiny and a most thorough process, acknowledge outstanding accomplishment in teaching, scholarship and service to our campus and the wider academic community. It is a privilege to recognize those members of our faculty who were awarded tenure this past year.

Faculty Promoted to Full Professor or Professor Emeritus in Academic Year 2014-2015

As an academic community, we are most fortunate to benefit from the commitment and wisdom of our full professors and professors *emeriti*. These scholars serve as the leaders and mentors of our younger colleagues and as role models for our students. It is wonderful to recognize those members of the faculty who have been recently promoted to full professor or received the distinction of professor *emeritus*.

The Establishment of Term Chairs

Due to the creativity of those involved in designing the University's Life Sciences Strategic Plan, we have established an ingenious new approach to support promising scientists early in their careers. Through the generosity of The George F. and Sybil H. Fuller Foundation and The Glass Charitable Foundation, we have established five-year term chairs for three junior faculty in diabetes research. These investigators will each receive \$300,000 over five years to support their scientific work. We are creating innovative tools to retain our top young talent. The prestige and recognition associated with being appointed to these term chairs positions the recipients well for future external funding opportunities.

I am delighted to recognize the recipients of these new term chairs:

Laura Alonso, MD, associate professor of medicine, who was named the George F. and Sybil H. Fuller Foundation Term Chair in Diabetes.

Michael Brehm, PhD, associate professor of molecular medicine, who was named The Robert and Sandra Glass Term Chair in Diabetes.

Rene Maehr, PhD, assistant professor of molecular medicine, who was named The Glass Charitable Foundation Term Chair in Diabetes.

Chancellor's Medals

This is the sixth year at Convocation that I have the privilege to present the Chancellor's Medals. It is wonderful that recognition of our faculty has become a welcomed and celebrated event as we begin each academic year.

I would like to thank Provost Flotte for his continued stewardship of this process. Further, I want to recognize the work of the four committees that were established for consideration of the nominees in teaching, scholarship, clinical care and service. I had the opportunity to meet with the chairs of each of these committees so that they could bring alive for me the thoughts, advice and counsel of their committees. For this service, I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Susan Gagliardi, chair of the Committee for Distinguished Teaching; Dr. David Harlan, chair of the Committee for Distinguished Scholarship; Dr. Robert Brown, chair of the Committee for Distinguished Clinical Excellence; and Dr. Judith Ockene, chair of the Committee for Distinguished Service.

In all of the conversations that I had with the committee chairs, they spoke with high praise about each of the faculty members brought to their attention and commented on the considerable contributions that each of these members of the faculty have made to our institution. It has become increasingly difficult for the committees, which have been charged by the provost to consider the many nominations forwarded to them, to select those members of the faculty who shall be forwarded as finalists.

It is a terrific privilege to review the dossiers of each of the faculty members who are advanced, as finalists, for my consideration. I am most encouraged by the letters I receive from colleagues, literally from around the world, who take the time to participate in our process as they support members of our faculty who have been nominated.

We have outstanding faculty on our campus and it is most difficult to make selections among those who have given so much to our institution. As the number of nominees has increased considerably, it is not possible to recognize each one. Please know that all members of the faculty who were nominated have my sincere appreciation for all that they have done to make our institution among the finest in academic medicine.

Chancellor's Medal for Distinguished Teaching

As education remains the fulfilled promise of a great university and teaching its foundation, I shall, again this year, begin our medal presentations with the Medal for Distinguished Teaching.

It is a wonderful privilege to recognize a passionate and preeminent teacher; a thoughtful and dedicated leader who is a nationally recognized innovator in education; and an educator and mentor who is beloved by colleagues and learners alike: Professor Julie Jonassen.

Dr. Jonassen, you have been described as “one of the most influential and dedicated teaching faculty” at our institution. The influence of your teaching spans three decades, embraces students in all of our schools and “seamlessly integrates” the basic and clinical sciences. Your commitment exudes a “remarkable consistency, an exceptional quality and an enduring impact.”

In your personal Teaching Statement, you have reflected that “teaching is a team sport;” that “teaching and research go hand-in-hand;” and that “teaching fosters a passion for service.” You have commented that as “the heart and soul of [your] professional life ...teaching represents a crucial link between the past and the future: it is the process by which we perpetuate what we know, and how we know it, from one generation of scientists and clinicians to the next.” You recognize that teaching is a privilege and note how you have been inspired by your colleagues and learners.

Many have commented that you make the good teaching of others possible. In fact, you have been referred to as the “glue” that unites educational development, assessment and curricular innovation on our campus.

Your teaching has been widely and repeatedly recognized on this campus. Your influence is appreciated across our curriculum and indeed, across American medical education. You have maintained “an active and successful scholarly life in both medical education and basic science research” and while so doing, you have demonstrated your commitment to both!

Our learners have described you as “amazing.” “hugely helpful.” “incredibly respectful,” and as “engaging and thorough!” For your career long commitment to our institution, we are grateful.

Julie, in recognition of your outstanding commitment to the education of so many who have been your students, it is my privilege to invite you to present this year’s campus wide Last Lecture, a celebration of education that we have established to recognize the importance of teaching in all that we do. It will be a privilege for all of us on campus to benefit from your generosity and intellect as all of us become your learners.

Please accept my congratulations as this year’s recipient of the Chancellor’s Medal for Distinguished Teaching!

Chancellor’s Medal for Distinguished Scholarship

Scholarship brings special distinction to our campus. The scholarly works of our faculty are held in high esteem as they represent important and influential contributions to science. There is an extraordinary spirit that exists on this campus that allows so many members of our faculty to succeed at scientific discovery and translational research. Our community of scholars is uniquely collaborative and collegial and this leads to productivity and innovation that is the envy of the academy.

Throughout a distinguished career, the most accomplished of scientific investigators make seminal contributions to their field of inquiry. The stature they attain is arrived at through the intensity of their curiosity and the integrity and rigor of their science. Aware of the many contributions that one scientist can bring to our institution while being internationally recognized and respected, it is a privilege to recognize this year's recipient of the Chancellor's Medal for Distinguished Scholarship: Dr. Phillip Zamore.

Dr. Zamore, you are "a pioneer in the study of RNA silencing in eukaryotes." Those who know well the many contributions that you have made to the exploration of gene regulation by small RNAs have commented that you "literally invented the study of the molecular mechanisms of RNA interference when you and your colleagues developed, in 1999, the first cell-free system that recapitulated RNAi in a test tube. This breakthrough inaugurated the biochemical study of RNAi and other RNA silencing pathways." In the years since these discoveries, through your "creative spark," you have "continued to develop new tools that advance the biochemical study of RNA silencing, as well as the application of RNA silencing to [the treatment] of human disease." As a contributor to nearly every key advance in the field of RNAi, your "work has transcended the RNAi field [and has impacted] investigators in many other areas of biology."

Many recognize the extraordinary contributions that you have made to the knowledge and impact of small silencing RNAs. You became known as a "uniter" of the RNAi and microRNA worlds when you "discovered that microRNAs are made by Dicer, the same enzyme that produces siRNAs."

You are amongst the most well cited scientists in the world. Your accomplishments are many as is the widespread recognition of your work by the Keck Foundation; Schering-Plough; the NIH; the Howard Hughes Medical Institute; and the National Academy of Inventors. That said, it is your commitment to collaboration with your colleagues that has gained you their highest respect and admiration.

But your students would state that your greatest contributions have resulted from the seriousness of purpose that you bring to mentoring them in their careers. It is well recognized "that the student who accepts the challenge and good fortune [of joining your lab] will derive ample intellectual award from the experience."

Phil, it is a great privilege to invite you to present the keynote address at this year's Research Retreat, a fitting recognition for the recipient of this honor.

Please accept my congratulations as this year's recipient of the Chancellor's Medal for Distinguished Scholarship!

Chancellor's Medal for Distinguished Clinical Excellence

The medal for distinguished clinical excellence recognizes a commitment to extraordinary clinical care during the period of the recipient's association with our institution. Candidates for this medal should have a substantial record of clinical practice during their faculty careers, be it in medicine or nursing, and serve as role models for peers, residents, and students in their provision of quality clinical care and in their interactions with all members of the health care

team. Nominees should take a scholarly approach to clinical care, and through their activities should have made a demonstrable, substantial and long-lasting contribution to improvements in clinical care in the candidate's discipline.

This year's recipient of the Chancellor's Medal for Clinical Excellence is a renowned exemplary of clinical excellence; a humanitarian who is a devoted and passionate clinician; a remarkable role model with a reputation for clinical and educational service to patients and learners alike, the medical profession, and our institution: Dr. John Zawacki.

Dr. Zawacki, you have been described by your patients as "genuine," "frank," "optimistic," "caring" and "iconic." Always, you are present to them while leaving them with "a sense of calm," "knowing that you understood their suffering and, at times, humiliation." Your demeanor is that of a "gentle spirituality" with a "sweetness that is as strong as iron."

As a child, you were inspired by the example of your father, a psychiatrist who cared for the vulnerable in our society. He told you, "Johnny, everyone needs a caring listener some time during their lives." Throughout your career, you became the embodiment of your father's words and example. In your own words, you have stated, "Self-interest, self-importance, [and] self-centeredness dampens caring and compassion. Respect, caring, listening, informing and most importantly, taking the time and making the effort to journey with patients during their time of illness is ...how best to be a physician."

Throughout your career as a founding pillar of clinical care at our institution, generous acclaim has followed you. You have received numerous teaching awards and you have been recognized as a compassionate care giver by the Schwartz Center. But it is not such acclaim that has been your principal motivation. Rather, your devotion to your patients, your genuine compassion and generous human nature, when blended with superior clinical acumen, have been the hallmark of your successful clinical career and the greatest of gifts to those for whom you have had the privilege to care.

John, it is indeed a privilege to invite you to address our first year students and their families next year at their White Coat Ceremony. This is a fitting recognition for one who has worn the white coat with dignity, while recognizing the privilege in doing so.

Please accept my congratulations as this year's recipient of the Chancellor's Medal for Distinguished Clinical Excellence!

Chancellor's Medal for Distinguished Service

Making demonstrable, substantial and long-lasting contributions to our campus community and beyond is a wonderful commitment made by so many of our faculty. It is fitting then, that we recognize a career-long example of service when we celebrate the legacy of our faculty and in this instance, one faculty member who has received the acclaim of others through their commitment to such a high ideal.

This year it is a distinct privilege to recognize a devoted, loyal, committed, trusted leader whose exemplary service to our institution is unique in its breadth, reach and long-lasting impact. Please

join me in recognizing this year's recipient of the Chancellor's Medal for Distinguished Service: Dr. Thoru Pederson.

Dr. Pederson you are ambitious, judicious, loquacious, solicitous, vivacious and voracious when it comes to science, ethics and your love of this campus.

For over three decades, you have served this institution with grace and aplomb, all the while, recognizing that selfless dedication and outstanding service can define one's passion. Through your many years of contributions as president of the Worcester Foundation for Biomedical Research and as a vibrant devotee and enthusiast of the Hudson Hoagland Society, you have been an articulate advocate for the richness of the scientific colloquy that exists in our environs.

The big picture has always painted the tapestry of your vision. You have encouraged and cultivated donors to maintain their commitments to our campus; you have brought thoughtful enthusiasm to our efforts to attract greater support for the science and innovation that exists in our midst; you have assured that the cultivation of scientific inquiry and the nurturing of our next generation of scientists continues, through your support of young investigators and our annual research retreat; and all the while, you have been amongst those entrusted with the responsibility to assure the integrity of our science and the avoidance of conflicts of interest.

Thoru, it is my privilege to invite you to carry the mace at formal university functions throughout the academic year. At the conclusion of today's ceremony, I shall ask you to begin your service by leading our recessional. As the standard bearer for our faculty, this position of prominence is well deserved for one who has given such outstanding service to our university throughout a distinguished career.

Please accept my congratulations as this year's recipient of the Chancellor's Medal for Distinguished Service!

Partnership with UMass Memorial Health Care

In the implementation of our new strategic plan, in partnership with UMass Memorial Health Care, we have committed to making major investments in IT and Cancer. We have made important decisions this year that shall help us to succeed well into the future.

Under Dr. Dickson's leadership, the health care system has decided to make a major investment to improve and enhance its IT platform. The investment in Epic shall require considerable resources, but this decision is most responsive to the needs that were identified by all the constituencies of the health care system, so that we can better serve our patients. While implementation undoubtedly shall have its challenges, as we begin this academic year, we are at a much better place due to the decisions that have been made and the plans that are being implemented.

At the medical school, we have increased our investments in IT as we realize the unique opportunity that we possess to be one of the finest ecosystems for clinical informatics. It is our intention to maximize the availability of usable clinical data from our clinical partners, collaborating health systems and our research database. As we do so, we will be developing the

tools to increase patient engagement in research and perfect decision support tools to translate research findings into clinical care. To further this commitment, recently we opened a new space adjacent to the library that shall become the leading edge, faculty-centric locus for research and academic computing.

I am encouraged by the partnership of the IT groups at both the health system and the school. They are modeling the collaborative and collegial relationship that was contemplated in the tenets of the strategic plan.

So too, we have made important strides to coordinate our research on and care of cancer-related diseases. Michael Green's appointment and leadership as Cancer Center Director shall position us well as we formulate and implement our plans to enable research and improve patient care.

There is much to do. We have begun. These actions represent important accomplishments.

The Medical School as a Resource for the Commonwealth

There is an ebb and flow to life in a university. As we start this academic year, there is certainly much more flow than ebb!

Throughout the Commonwealth, the impact of our medical school is apparent to many. In fact, President Meehan has commented that he believes that investment in the medical school deserves increased attention; especially in the legislature, from prospective donors and beyond.

Given the leadership, experience and knowledge of our new Governor, Charlie Baker, the commitment of legislative leaders from across the state, particularly Senate President Rosenberg and Senate Majority Leader Chandler, and Speaker DeLeo and his House colleagues, we are fortunate that the leaders of government and our university understand the importance and vitality of the medical school.

Frankly, this medical school is recognized broadly as a jewel in the crown of the University of Massachusetts. The teaching and research reputation of our faculty captures the imagination of funding agencies, foundations and corporations. Even though NIH funding lines have become more restrictive, our faculty have successfully competed for and secured impressive research awards. That said, our faculty now spend an inordinately increased amount of their time writing and rewriting their next grant and submitting proposal after proposal in order to maintain and grow their funding. As the median age of new investigators pushes into the forties, we risk losing an entire generation of promising scientists if we do not increase the investment our nation, our commonwealth and those with philanthropic means make in science.

While there is some hope that the Congress, in a bipartisan effort, may consider increasing the amount our nation invests in medical research, we cannot sit idly by and wait for others to act. Our federal advocacy efforts remain strong and Representative Jim McGovern, the Massachusetts Congressional delegation, and our two senators, Warren and Markey, remain champions for our cause; our local legislators remain committed; and now, we must redouble our efforts to encourage increased investments in science, education, the university system and this campus.

In a recent *New York Times* editorial (The Editorial Board, “The Battle for Biomedical Supremacy,” *New York Times*, August 29, 2015), we learned that “a consortium of all 16 medical schools [in New York] is urging Gov. Andrew Cuomo and the Legislature to invest \$100 million a year for the next decade to recruit outstanding scientists from other states and retain top scientists who are already [in New York] but might be wooed from other states.” We are not invulnerable to this “frenzy” as the Times reports that “states from coast to coast are using public funds to help their medical schools recruit scientific stars from other states or to prevent their own stars from being lured away by lucrative offers.”

Given the constraint in resources all institutions face, of necessity, we have had to temper our recruitment of faculty and retention has become increasingly challenging. Into the future, investments in recruitments and retention will be directly related to the sufficiency of resources that we can identify and upon which we can rely. The impact of these investments could change profoundly the course of our institution and indeed, the history of disease. We must not let complacency define our determination to bring additional resources in support of our mission.

As we follow President Meehan’s lead, we shall embark this year on a coordinated and strategic effort to communicate the medical school’s extensive impact throughout the commonwealth. It is important for the citizens of our great state to recognize what this medical school has become and to dream with us, and then to invest in the promise of what we could be.

We must bring the fruits of our labor into the mindset of legislative and business leaders; innovators and inventors; colleagues in the university; and collaborators beyond the walls of the institution.

Let me caution that our efforts to attract additional resources should not be grounded in a competition for the resources invested in the other campuses of the university. In the university’s parlance, we are “Here for a Reason!” It is time that we do more to make our case and stake our claim.

We have more than 3,000 alumni of our School of Medicine and thousands more from the Graduate School of Nursing and the Graduate School of Biomedical Science. There is hardly a community in the commonwealth that does not benefit from the services of our graduates.

While most of the attention given to the medical school reinforces the impact we make in the greater Worcester community, our colleagues at Commonwealth Medicine work in over 200 communities, so that those most in need can receive the care they deserve. Through the efforts of MassBiologics, we have made major investments in the workforce of Mattapan and now, with our new facility in Fall River, we wield an important presence in the SouthCoast region.

As I mentioned earlier, our clinical affiliations span from the shores of Hyannis to the hills of the Berkshires. With our new regional campus in Springfield, we shall have the opportunity to partner with our flagship campus in Amherst and develop a major presence to the urban and rural populations of the Pioneer Valley.

With our new innovation and entrepreneurship efforts, the reach of the medical school will extend into the companies of our commonwealth and beyond. As the impact of our life science ecosystem is global, so shall be the influence of the partnerships we are establishing.

The medical school exerts a major impact on the health and the economy of the state. Yet, we receive only a modest amount of our total funding from the university's State appropriation. As reported in a 2014 Donahue Institute study (UMass Donahue Institute, "University of Massachusetts Economic Contribution Analysis FY 2013," May, 2014), "State investment in the UMass Medical School leverages significantly greater economic activity. The state's \$41 million investment in the medical school helped leverage and support \$1.7 billion in economic activity in Massachusetts, an amount 42 times greater than the state's investment in FY 2013."

Greater investment in the medical school is proper and sound policy. We will continue to provide an impressive and meaningful "return" as what this campus can accomplish and deliver is exceptional. Unlike other investments, in our case, past performance is indicative of what the future might bring!

Throughout this year, we shall make the case for greater state and university investment in the medical school and work to attract additional stakeholders and philanthropists to join us in the important work that we undertake. Together, we can identify the resources that we need, so that we can recruit those we wish to attract to our campus; retain those who are making remarkable contributions with their scholarship; keep the cost of our educational offerings as reasonable as possible; and limit the debt that our students must incur in order to fulfill their educational requirements as they begin careers of life-long service to others.

Ours is a high calling, impactful in action; worthy of investment; and essential to well-being both at home and abroad.

Our Primary Care is the Commonwealth

Two years ago, as I concluded my Convocation speech, I told the story of Zach, a 9-year-old boy from our community who had leukemia. Sick for a few weeks with what everyone thought was a viral illness, I had the privilege to assist Zach and his family when they were presented with his diagnosis. He experienced a very difficult year as he underwent treatment and eventually, received a bone marrow transplant.

Zach was a great little baseball player before he got sick. He never complained a bit about his disease; but did he miss baseball! We were able to bring him some cheer while he was in the hospital and happily, he made some special visits to Fenway Park. When he was discharged from the hospital, his room looked like a sports shrine. But, he was glad to be going home.

I have kept in touch with Zach's progress. He regained his strength and eventually returned to school, skiing and baseball. This season, he pitched with a renewed vigor and commitment. In fact, with his summer team, he got to pitch while playing on one of the fields at Cooperstown. This was a field in his dreams. No longer dreaming, there he was, the picture of health, pitching from a Hall of Fame mound!

Recently, he met the young woman who donated the marrow that saved his life. When they met, all his parents could say was, "What an amazing girl. She saved our son's life. Just speechless!"

Throughout this commonwealth and beyond, each and every day, this medical school educates those who will save lives. We benefit from the efforts of our faculty and staff who, through their commitment to education, research and clinical care, are working to find cures; develop a biologic or device; or elucidate a disease mechanism that can preserve health or ameliorate illness. In our health care system and throughout our many affiliates, our faculty are on the front lines of providing lifesaving treatment as they care for those entrusted to them.

Like Julie Jonassen, our devoted educators impact teaching that inspires and informs generations of learners.

Like Phil Zamore, our committed scientists influence entire disciplines through their scholarship.

Like John Zawacki, our thoughtful caregivers bring their humanity to the lives of their patients.

Like Thoru Pederson, our impactful leaders serve with distinction and, in so doing, promote science and integrity.

Ours is a very special place! With our founding commitment to primary care, our long-standing commitment to groundbreaking discovery and our complete commitment to quality and integrity in all our mission areas, we are a commonwealth resource that is here for a reason.

Join me this year as we work together to make the case that our medical school has earned and needs the support of the commonwealth and those who join with us as philanthropists and supporters of our great institution.

Remember with each encounter, as we make the “pitch,” the privilege it is to care for and about all the Zachs with whom we come in contact. In doing so, I am confident that our message will resonate, our research will benefit and our students and patients will be the beneficiaries for decades to come.

For you see, our primary care is the commonwealth!