What an honor and a pleasure to have now served two years as dean of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM). Outlined below are a summary of our accomplishments and a preview of where we will focus our efforts in the coming year.

We have faced some significant economic challenges at the campus and state level. Over the last 2 years, the school has experienced a 25% reduction in state support. Much of this reduction has occurred in the last academic year. Thanks to the excellent fiscal progress made by our faculty practice plans and vigilant cost containment efforts by departments throughout the medical school, we are still moving forward on several fronts.

Strategic Planning

We further developed our strategic plan, creating a new vision and mission for JABSOM. Our school’s new service-based vision, “attain lasting optimal health for all” (ALOHA) represents a significant departure from our previous recognition-based vision. The service-based vision permits greater alignment of the school with our allied and public health programs and our community partners. It also emphasizes the need to train health professionals who are focused more on attaining and maintaining health for their patients than on treating disease and injury.

Leadership

Dr. Richard Kasuya was named our new Associate Dean for Medical Education earlier this year. Replacing him as the Director of the Office of Medical Education is Dr. Damon Sakai. In his new position, Dr. Kasuya has begun to enhance the longitudinal and vertical integration of JABSOM's educational programs. Dr. Kasuya has also helped JABSOM formalize teaching opportunities on the neighbor islands and with Tripler Army Medical Center.

Although fiscal constraints have prevented JABSOM from recruiting an Associate Dean for Research in the near term, we are pleased to have recruited Eric Holmes, PhD, as our new Director of Research Operations. He is already addressing some of our research infrastructure needs.

Dr. Michele Carbone, the former chair of pathology at JABSOM, has been named Director of the Cancer Research Center of Hawai‘i (CRCH). JABSOM looks forward to collaborating closely with the CRCH as it develops its new Kaka‘ako facilities and develops a translational research program through enhanced partnerships with our community hospitals and clinical faculty members. Joint faculty recruitments offer a promising opportunity for JABSOM and CRCH.

Workforce Development & Medical Education

Over the past few months, we’ve had the opportunity to brief state lawmakers on Hawai‘i’s current and growing physician shortage. The preliminary findings from a study being conducted at JABSOM by Dr. Kelley Withy and colleagues demonstrate that Hawai‘i is already short at least 500 physicians, given its population size and distribution. This shortage may double or triple over the next decade if nothing more is done.

As a result, we are taking some immediate steps at the medical school. This summer, we will increase the size of the incoming medical school class to 64 from 62. We hope to further increase the class size, given support for more faculty. In addition, we are increasing the size of our Imi Ho‘ola Post Baccalaureate Program for aspiring MDs from disadvantaged backgrounds, by admitting up to 12 students. Those who successfully complete the program will enter medical school in 2011.

Through a partnership with The Queen’s Medical Center, two cardiology fellows begin post-residency specialty training this July. We are also working closely with our community partners to identify ways to address Hawai‘i’s physician shortage. On June 29th, we will help convene a Physician Workforce Development Summit in Honolulu to jumpstart our collective efforts.

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Research

Research grant monies have consistently grown in recent years to more than $40 million annually. Advancing our research mission continues to be challenging, however, with limited state support for new tenure-track positions. A proposal to limit the institutional tenure commitment, while at the same time extending the number of tenure track positions available, has been supported by the majority of JABSOM faculty members, chairs and directors. The proposal is now under review by the Chancellor’s office.

In March 2010, the JABSOM RMATRIX grant, focusing on health disparities research, was re-submitted to the NIH and received a promising score. If funded, the award will provide additional research infrastructure support to JABSOM and its research partners. JABSOM also helped to secure a new 3 year, $3.0 million/year IdeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) grant to promote the development, coordination and sharing of research resources at UH and other academic institutions in Hawaii.

Efforts to build our biostatistical core for JABSOM continue. Using ARRA funds, we have recruited a temporary lead biostatistician. If we are successful in creating a new tenure track model, recruitment for this position will be significantly enhanced.

After holding a community-wide neuroscience retreat at the medical school last year, we are making progress toward our goal of creating a neuroscience center of excellence. The neuroscience PhD program was launched with new graduate student positions and two faculty co-directors. We have begun recruitment for a neuropsychology faculty member as another key component.

Clinical Affairs

During the past year, we continued to focus on aligning our mission and strategic initiatives with our teaching hospital partners and on building stronger working relationships with our affiliated practice plans: University Clinical, Education, & Research Associates (UCERA) and Kapi`olani Medical Specialists (KMS). At the last UH Board of Regents meeting in May, the affiliation agreement between UCERA and UHM JABSOM was approved, opening new doors for clinical departments and faculty members.

Dr. Junedale Nishiyama and Dr. Lucy Bucci at the Hawai’i Island Family Health Center in Hilo.

The Hawai‘i Island Family Health Center was launched in the spring of 2009 in Hilo and has now recruited 3 physician providers. The community remains enthused about the center. This teaching health center is a partnership between JABSOM and the Hilo Medical Center, UH Mānoa and UH Hilo Schools of Nursing, and UH Hilo School of Pharmacy. Additional efforts are underway to grow the clinical operation and permit final development of a family medicine residency program.

Philanthropy

Former JABSOM Dean, Dr. Edwin C. Cadman, retired at the end of October and has since moved back to Oregon to be near his family. To recognize his visionary leadership, JABSOM organized a community-wide recognition event and secured new gifts totaling more than $300,000 for the Edwin C. Cadman Endowed Fund for the Study of Neurodegenerative Disorders. Faculty and staff also supported this effort through our JABSOM Internal Giving Campaign. The endowment now totals over $580,000, and will be renamed as a distinguished professorship in Dr. Cadman’s honor.

Mark and Claire Litchman at the gift agreement signing for the new Litchman Family Endowment for the Study of Neurodegenerative Disorders and Mental Illness in May, 2010.

A new $150,000 endowment for neuroscience research was created by Mark and Claire Litchman of Honolulu: The Litchman Family Endowment for the Study of Neurodegenerative Disorders and Mental Illness. The family has also funded the expansion of a research project by Dr. Christina Bell, of Geriatric Medicine, entitled “Changes in Independence of Patients with Alzheimer’s Disease.”

Three new four-year scholarships have been created for incoming medical students thanks to the generosity of the Gerard and Colette Robinson Family Foundation and Elizabeth and Richard Grossman. These scholarships will provide more than $350,000 in funding for these three students, who all intend to practice in Hawai‘i upon completion of their training. In addition, the JABSOM Alumni Scholarship Fund was created this past year, and the first three scholarships will be awarded shortly.

For post-graduate training, a two-year Addictions Medicine Fellowship was created in the Department of Psychiatry, thanks to the generosity of one of our donors.

Countdown to our 50th Anniversary

2010 represents the 45th anniversary of JABSOM’s founding. Over the next five-years, we will be working closely with our faculty, students, staff, alumni, hospital and health partners, and the community at large to celebrate key milestones in our history and set the stage for our upcoming 50th Anniversary. I invite you to join us in these preparations and look forward to your involvement as we strengthen our school for the next half-century.

OUR MISSION

John A. Burns School of Medicine, as part of the fabric of Hawaii, is a diverse learning community committed to excellence and leadership in:

• Educating current and future healthcare professionals and leaders
• Delivering high-quality healthcare
• Conducting research and translating discoveries into practice
• Establishing community partnerships and fostering multidisciplinary collaboration
• Pursuing alliances unique to Hawaii and the Asia-Pacific region
• Acting with forethought regarding right relationships, respect, and moral action. Pono