Dear Colleague,

More years ago than even I can remember, Julius Caesar was assassinated on this day, murmuring “Et tu Brute?” as he collapsed to the floor. I can’t say that I remember enough world history to know why, but I do remember the date: today is the Ides of March.

Last week, the Regents met to set tuition rates for the University. They decided not to vote to make it official – delaying the decision for another two weeks, until after the March state revenue figures are out. Then they will have another special meeting to decide finally. What one reads in the paper with regard to the percent increase is the average increase for the University System as a whole. Each school and/or campus may have different rates. We have submitted increases of 6.5 percent for the MD program, 4 percent for the CHA/PA program and 1.5 percent increase for the DPT program. We have tried to keep these rates lower than what we were authorized to do because of our concern about the debt load our students face. This decision will result in tighter budgets for our office, the school and its programs in the coming year. I will be discussing some of our proposals with the Executive Committee tomorrow. All this is subject to change.

When the faculty designed the new curriculum in 2003-2004, several things changed significantly. One was the requirement that students have mentored scholarly activity throughout all four years. This was such a huge task that for the first class (2009) to go through the curriculum it was “suggested, but not required.” It is required for the class of 2010 and last Thursday those students presented their posters in the Library for their grade. Wandering around, viewing the diversity of the topics and the pride and excitement of the students and the faculty who supported them, was really a wonderful experience. It was truly a “capstone” to the curriculum. Congratulations not only to all of the students, but to the faculty who guided this effort: including Dick Byyny, Bob Sclafani, Allan Prochazka, Jackie Glover, Gretchen Heinrichs, Mark Earnest and, in memoriam, Jim Ruttenber.

We take note this week of two sad farewells. Elisabeth Pauline Pickett, a 1944 School of Medicine graduate who died last month, was a trailblazer. She was the first female general surgeon to complete a fellowship in urological oncology (in 1955). In 1962, she became the first board-certified female urologist in the United States. In the 1970s she went to Afghanistan for seven months to treat patients and train doctors. For fun, she climbed mountains, including most of the Alps. Her pioneering efforts live on through the Elisabeth Pickett Research Award, created by The Society of Women in Urology. In an interview, she summed things up this way: “I enjoyed every bit of my life. It was exciting and crazy.” Here is her obituary in the Boulder Daily Camera.

We also will miss Caroline Corkey Bollinger, PhD, a clinical social worker and admissions committee member since 2005, who died last month. “She was an amazing lady,” SOM psychiatrist Michael Weissberg, MD, said in The Denver Post’s obituary about her. “She was the
most sensible, calm person — kind, thoughtful and respectful to patients.” A faculty member at the medical school, she was one of many volunteers who help us all by serving as admissions committee volunteers. Among the medical students she mentored was Jamie Solis, who told us in a note, “She was an absolutely wonderful woman, teacher, and mentor.”

Have a great week.

With warm regards,

Richard D. Krugman, MD  
Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs and  
Dean, School of Medicine

"What’s Going On Here" is an email news bulletin from Richard Krugman, MD, Dean of the CU School of Medicine, that is distributed to inform University of Colorado School of Medicine faculty members about issues pertaining to the School’s mission of education, research, clinical care and community service. If you would like to receive these emails directly, please contact Cheryl.Welch@ucdenver.edu.

Click on this link to view the UCH-Insider: http://www.uch.edu/for-employees/uch-insider-archives.aspx