Dear Colleagues,

I am very pleased to announce that Dan Theodorescu, MD, PhD, Paul Mellon Professor of Urology and Professor of Molecular Physiology and Biomolecular Physics, and Director of the Paul Mellon Urological Cancer Institute at the University of Virginia, has accepted our offer to be the next Director of the University of Colorado Cancer Center. Dan will join us full time July 1, 2010, but will be here periodically over the next several months to begin the transition. I want to thank Bruce Schroffel for his major contributions to this effort, Tim Byers, for his work as Interim Director, Chip Ridgway and the members of the search committee and Paul Bunn for his efforts to assure that we have a successor for the Cancer Center he spent more than 20 years building.

Last week I mentioned that John King of CNN was here filming a segment for his Sunday morning news show. The story he did appears on their web site and the broadcast aired early yesterday. I am always intrigued by which one or two 30-second sound bites editors will pick out of a 20-minute conversation. Both the web site and the broadcast interview pulled out a phrase I used when I said: “Most faculty at schools of medicine and most faculty any where are probably looking to make their students into graven images of themselves. That’s how you get rewarded: if 40 percent of the class goes into the specialty and you were their teacher, that’s pretty rewarding.” The website used the word “craven” – which I think has a different connotation – (like Wes Craven) but the casual listener might misinterpret “graven images” as being a derogatory statement. I did not mean it that way at all. Among the points I made that are on the cutting room floor in Atlanta are:

1) We are looking ahead to significant physician shortages of all kinds: primary care and specialty and academic physicians as we look to the future;
2) While debt may drive early choice of specialty, most students, residents, fellows and faculty choose a career because we enjoy the work and the colleagues we find in the field of our choice.
3) Many if not most of us have three to five different phases to our career.
4) This current shortage is not a new phenomenon – I came to this faculty in 1973 to work on the shortages of physicians and other health professionals because there was a crisis that had been identified by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in 1968.

Here is the link:

It was a somewhat quieter week – perhaps because the temperature rarely got above freezing. And because it was one of those weeks that I had meetings at UCH, TCH, Leprino, ED2, and UPI, it became challenging to get from place to place without getting frostbite. I have compiled a list of routes around campus that can get you from place to
place with the minimum amount of time exposing one’s skin to the elements (or the 30 mph winds in the wind tunnel in the Research Quad). I suspect that by 2050, the campus will be connected with sky bridges or buildings that will make it more comfortable to get around.

We have initiated the search process for a new Department of Medicine chair. The executive search firm Korn/Ferry International has been contracted to team with our internal SOM search committee and search chair, Chip Dodd, MD. Faculty may send potential candidate recommendations to: Warren.ross@kornferry.com or to Gerald.Dodd@ucdenver.edu

When the ACCME reviewed our School of Medicine Continuing Medical Education program last week, they upgraded its status to “Accreditation With Commendation.” Our term of accreditation will not expire until July 31, 2015. Ron Gibbs, MD, Associate Dean for CME reports we are in the company of Duke, Albert Einstein, Memorial Sloan-Kettering, UVA and just 5 other CME providers that have been awarded this status under the new (2006) ACCME criteria.

The School of Medicine is partnering with the University of Colorado Denver's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to create a program that will bring talented and diverse high school students to the SOM. We’re creating a combined bachelor of arts/bachelor of science-doctor of medicine program. A first of its kind at UC Denver and in Colorado, the program will reach out to eight to 10 high school students who are committed to serving the health care needs of Colorado. The students must have proven their academic excellence in the classroom as well as demonstrated exemplary characteristics in their communities. They’ll enroll in a bachelor’s degree program and complete the required premedical course work. If they meet all the requirements, the students will enter the School of Medicine. The deadline to apply is tomorrow so if you know of any likely candidates …

I attended two holiday celebrations last week. One was the nice annual breakfast for the Administrators in the School of Medicine. I thanked them for their really outstanding service to the School and the Departments and Programs they support. Compared to other schools our size, our administrative core is small (a direct consequence of our paucity of state funding), but they really do a great job. Then, Friday afternoon, we had a get together for our Dean’s office administrative staff which was a lot of fun. There have been years when I have tried to get to every holiday party I was invited to (some 45 of them). This year, I decided to take a year off. I am grateful to all of you who have invited me and I appreciate your understanding when I didn’t come by. Maybe next year.

The first-year medical students have a clinical immersion experience this week before their vacation, and the third year students are back together for an Intersession week. One of the nice things about the new curriculum is these intercession weeks. Previously, once the class had its last lecture in the second year, they were never together as a group until match day. The opportunity to get together and hear how everyone else has been
doing as they floated through the various blocks throughout the State has been very positive.

Have a good week.

With warm regards,

[Signature]

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