We Are Grateful for Your Support

We are pleased to share the 2011 annual report of Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. Within these pages, you will get a glimpse at how the University is growing and changing in response to an evolving health care environment. You also will meet some of our alumni, faculty and students, whose stories demonstrate the vital role RFUMS plays as a leader in 21st century health care education.

Our commitment to excellence is firm, but can only be sustained with the strong support of our friends. Thank you for your past generosity, which has assisted us in providing scholarships, funding new facilities and fulfilling our commitment to community service — all of which help us attract remarkable students and faculty like those featured in this report.

We greatly value your continued support. Your gifts allow Rosalind Franklin University a future of continued vitality and impact.

On the Cover: Working at a clinic for underserved people is one of the many volunteer activities embraced by Danielle Erkoboni-Wilbur, a third-year student at Chicago Medical School.

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Gina Pryma, Editor and Writer
Lynn Granstrom, Art Director and Designer
The word itself conveys strength, influence, results. At Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, the evidence of impact is all around us.

As a health care university, our primary role is that of teacher, and we are mindful that the scope of our potential influence is broad and ever-changing. We embrace that responsibility, continually working to enhance academic opportunities, respond to the evolving environment our students will face and improve the health of our community...

- In the classrooms, where talented teachers educate, inspire and cultivate productive futures.
- In our labs and clinics, where committed researchers and clinicians explore the origins of disease, transforming those insights into innovative treatments that improve patient care.
- In our students, who, while they are with us use their energies to make a difference in the community.

We are proud to share a few examples.
Making a Difference Today and Tomorrow
In the vanguard, responding to new challenges

Our efforts must be considered in the context of social relevance. Today, that poses an important question: How does Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science respond to changes in our health care system? The answer is clear. We are guided by a commitment to, and expertise in, interprofessional education. The impact of our commitment to this model is increasingly evident. In the near future, in a setting where 35 million previously uninsured Americans may enter the system, the challenge of providing care will have added urgency, and health care delivery in teams is recognized as essential to meeting these needs. Importantly, this is not a new concept for RFUMS graduates. They enter the work force having learned from, with and about each other and are unencumbered by professional tensions that often can stand in the way of the collaborative care needed to serve greater numbers of patients, enhance quality and ensure safety.

Pioneering partnerships

We are privileged to work closely with a number of excellent medical centers throughout the region, which, because of their size and scope, along with the spectrum of services each must provide its patients, afford our students and faculty avenues through which they can improve care and play a role in developing and implementing new treatments and procedures. Through collaboration with the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center, Rosalind Franklin University is privileged to help develop, test and implement therapies that may have eventual benefit to patients on a global scale. Many 20th and 21st century medical advances have emerged through the needs of people on the frontlines. Trauma services, treatment of tropical diseases, care for amputees and those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder are just a few examples of the impact of “military medicine.”

Focus on costs

We aim to help address our students’ tuition cost burden by instituting joint enrollment partnerships with undergraduate programs. Our College of Pharmacy has laid a good foundation for this, already having established a program that allows qualified students admission after three years of undergraduate study. Going forward, we hope to apply this model to medical school students, too. By working closely with undergraduate schools, we plan to create joint enrollment partnerships that lead to three-year, pre-med programs, thereby eliminating a full year of undergraduate tuition costs and bringing professionals into the earning workforce a year or more earlier.

An economic engine

There’s no question that RFUMS has made an impact on the economic health of our community. Rosalind Franklin University is a major employer in North Chicago and our surrounding towns. Notable, too, is our commitment to hire local workers for capital improvement projects, including our new Morningstar Interprofessional Education Center. But there are additional opportunities on the horizon. For example, our new College of Pharmacy has opened the door to exciting collaborations with local pharmaceutical companies and major community pharmacy organizations with a large presence throughout Illinois and Wisconsin. A number of these businesses are already partnering with us to provide clinical experience and internship opportunities for our College of Pharmacy students. With pharmacists emerging as vital members of the health care team, having an educational partner such as Rosalind Franklin University will surely enhance Lake County’s emergence as one of the Midwest’s major pharmaceutical centers. This means more opportunities for our students and faculty and, importantly, new job opportunities for the people in our community.

These examples, along with others highlighted in the pages that follow, demonstrate how we can make an impact in myriad ways. We do this by uniting around a common goal — to prepare the health care practitioners and leaders of tomorrow. Together, we embrace every opportunity, look at each potential innovation and keep a sharp focus on the demands, challenges and opportunities of the future.

Ruth M. Rothstein
Chair, Board of Trustees

K. Michael Welch, MB, ChB, FRCP
President and CEO
The William J. and Elizabeth L. Morningstar Interprofessional Education Center (IPEC) has taken its place on the Rosalind Franklin University campus, rising up on schedule just one year following its celebratory ground-breaking in 2010. The three-story addition includes learning space, clinical simulation suites, a case demonstration amphitheatre and educational facilities. The new building also houses the latest addition to Rosalind Franklin University — the College of Pharmacy. Its new home includes a state-of-the-art laboratory space, conference room and faculty offices. Timing was perfect, with the opening ceremonies held just one month before the College’s inaugural class of 70 students began their studies.
The addition is named in recognition of a $4.4 million gift from the estate of George W. Morningstar, MD, a family medicine physician from Buffalo, New York and alumnus of the University. In making this gift, Dr. Morningstar wished to honor his parents for their support throughout his career. At the ribbon-cutting ceremony in July 2011, Ruth Rothstein, Chair of the Rosalind Franklin University Board of Trustees, remarked, “I am inspired by the far-reaching significance of today’s event in service to our students and the nation’s challenging health care needs. It will have a resounding impact for many years ahead.”

The College of Pharmacy expands Rosalind Franklin University’s academic health sciences program, adding to the depth of experience for students across all disciplines and enhancing the University’s commitment to interprofessional education. Pharmacy students join their counterparts in medicine, podiatric medicine and a spectrum of health care professions, learning from, with and about each other’s profession in a model that approximates how medical teams are expected to function in the future.

“This is a proud moment for us as students,” said Zubin Wala, Executive Student Council President and a second-year student at Chicago Medical School. “The introduction of this new college to our campus deepens our degree of collaboration and our community impact. We don’t have to wait until we are in the hospitals and clinics to experience interprofessionalism in providing patient-centered care.

“The Morningstar IPEC and College of Pharmacy are a testament to the dedication and faith that the Rosalind Franklin University administration and faculty have in us. On behalf of the student body, I want to express my thanks.”

– Zubin Wala, Executive Student Council President
FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

New Chicago Medical School
Dean Ready to Lead

He’s taken the reins of a U.S. medical school at a pivotal time. “Our future physicians will be faced with a much different health care landscape than the one I found when I finished my residency,” says Russell Robertson, MD, Vice President of Medical Affairs and Dean of the Chicago Medical School. “That was barely three decades ago, and yet so much has changed.”
Dr. Robertson says he embraces the challenge. “I believe Chicago Medical School is uniquely poised to be a difference-maker in responding to America’s evolving health care system and the new demands it brings.”

This optimistic spirit has guided Dr. Robertson’s career. “I began as an elementary school teacher,” he explains. “But after about four years I decided to make a career change and pursue medicine, receiving my MD degree from Wayne State University in Detroit. When it came time to choose a specialty, family medicine seemed the ideal choice. I love working with people. What better specialty than one where I could develop relationships with whole families, from newborns to grandparents?”

His career brought him to the Milwaukee area, where he practiced family medicine and held teaching and administrative positions at the Medical College of Wisconsin. He later joined Northwestern University, where he served as Professor and Chair of the medical school’s Department of Family and Community Medicine. Dr. Robertson currently serves as Chair of the Council on Graduate Medical Education, a national committee that reports to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and makes recommendations with regard to the U.S. physician workforce.

Dr. Robertson says he welcomed the opportunity to come to CMS. “One of the things that appealed to me most about this position was the fact that, in focusing on interprofessional education, Rosalind Franklin University does more than play lip service to an idea — it acts on its commitment. It’s one of the few institutions in the U.S. that cultivates a team-based approach to care from the start, with medical and health sciences students training side-by-side.”

He adds that in helping respond to the needs of patients, medical schools need to focus attention on the diminishing numbers of primary care physicians. “With millions more people potentially entering our system, and with chronic conditions accounting for a huge percentage of our health care costs, we need primary care physicians more than ever,” he says. “Family medicine and internal medicine — these are the specialties that can help make a difference — but they are declining in popularity as a choice for graduating medical school students. Addressing this situation at Chicago Medical School will be a continued priority.”

But, he says, there are positive signs. “As a family medicine physician, I am pleased that the number of our students pursuing primary care has increased slightly in recent years, with graduates matching in some of the country’s most prestigious programs. That will be a continued focus for us. At the same time, I am also a Dean for all of our students and will do everything within my abilities to help each student realize his or her dreams of being the kind of physician they desire to be.”

In reflecting on the challenges and opportunities ahead, Dr. Robertson notes another distinctive strength of Chicago Medical School. “I am proud of our school’s history of welcoming second-career students and providing them with the support they need to succeed. For a former teacher — a second-career physician myself — that commitment is very meaningful.”
North Chicago, Illinois may seem an unlikely destination for the world’s physicians and scientists. But they come, in steady numbers and from great distances, to learn about the advances in podiatric medicine made at the Center for Lower Extremity Ambulatory Research (CLEAR).
“We go on the road, too,” says Stephanie Wu, DPM, who assumed the role of Director of CLEAR in 2011. “Our podiatric physicians and scientists are frequently asked to share their expertise and report on the progress of our research. Our work is now well recognized in the scientific community. Increasing numbers of our studies are published in top-tier journals, and many federal and private funding organizations are taking note of our preeminence in podiatric medicine research, teaching and practice.”

Dr. Wu says CLEAR is deserving of the visibility and accolades it receives. “This Center is just seven years old, but was established with a razor-sharp focus on applying what we learn in improving care for patients.” She says that objective is increasingly vital. “The United States Centers for Disease Control predicts that by 2050, as many as one in three U.S. adults could have diabetes,” she says. “With the high prevalence of potentially serious foot problems that occur with this disease, our impact will increase dramatically. CLEAR, which has made diabetic complications, biomechanics, motor learning, balance, wound healing, infection and surgery the primary areas of clinical and translational research, can play a pivotal role in improving prevention and ensuring great care.”

Research conducted through CLEAR includes a number of studies aimed at improving diabetic wound healing. “We want to know why some wounds don’t heal, and find ways to address this,” Dr. Wu says. “Stem cell research is a promising avenue, and is the basis for several pilot studies currently underway.”

The chance to be part of CLEAR brought Dr. Wu to Scholl in 2004, following her podiatric surgical residency. “Like many Rosalind Franklin University students, I had another career before pursuing medicine,” she says. “I had a degree in mathematics and had worked in the telecommunications business. But medicine beckoned and I am glad it did. When I was offered the chance to come to Scholl and pursue my interests in being a clinician, a research scientist and a teacher, I enthusiastically accepted.”

Dr. Wu says one of the things that attracted her to CLEAR was the opportunity to encourage student research. “CLEAR has created an environment that encourages the spirit of discovery,” she says. “We want students to continually ask questions, to wonder, to think ‘outside the box’ and find new and better ways to help our patients.” She notes that Scholl students interested in research are encouraged and supported. “Many have undertaken challenging studies and have represented Scholl and CLEAR on national and international stages.” Dr. Wu says that at the 2011 American Podiatric Medical Association national meeting, students from Scholl swept all the awards in the student/residency category. “Their dedication and achievements reveal a lot about the environment we have cultivated at Scholl and CLEAR,” she says. “That makes me very proud.”
They’re everywhere.

College of Health Professions graduates representing a spectrum of specialties have settled in just about every corner of the country. And, wherever they are, they bring with them the skills, commitment and focus on quality that was fostered in the College’s classrooms and clinical settings. They also bring valuable experience as members of a team.

That’s a source of pride for Wendy Rheault, PT, PhD, Dean of the College of Health Professions and Vice President of Academic Affairs for Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. “Our graduates are outstanding ambassadors for their respective clinical specialties and for the values we cultivate at Rosalind Franklin University,” she says. “Chief among these is...
our commitment to interprofessional education. Our graduates, along with their fellow graduates from Chicago Medical School, the Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine, the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, and now our new College of Pharmacy, leave our campus with a distinct advantage. The collaboration and spirit of teamwork needed to meet the evolving needs of our patients is a hallmark of a Rosalind Franklin education.”

Dr. Rheault brings practical experience, along with visionary administrative leadership, to this role. A native of Canada, she studied physical therapy at Queen’s University and practiced in Toronto and at the Veterans Administration in North Chicago, later receiving a Master of Arts in curriculum and instruction and a PhD in educational measurement and statistics from the University of Chicago.

“By keeping our focus on the needs of patients, and then investing in educating health care practitioners who share that passion, we can continue to prepare the leaders of tomorrow.”

Dr. Rheault emphasizes that CHP plays a major role in executing the University’s commitment to interprofessional education and in sustaining its reputation as a national leader. Interprofessional Healthcare Studies, one of CHP’s programs, offers masters and doctorate programs in biomedical science, healthcare administration and management, health profession education and interprofessional studies. Judith Stoecker, PT, PhD, Vice Dean of the College of Health Professions, coordinated the development and implementation of this program. She also serves as co-director of HMTD 500, the interprofessional education course required by all RFUMS first-year students. In this course, groups of approximately 16 students representing each RFUMS school learn about each other, participate in group case conferences and collaborate on a community service project. Currently, Dr. Stoecker and her colleagues are piloting a second-year interprofessional course that will include students working together in a series of case studies.

That’s a priority that also guides the direction of the College of Health Professions, which has enjoyed tremendous growth — enrollment has increased from 557 to 830 students over the past five years. “Our story continues to be written,” Dr. Rheault says. “The scope of programs offered by the College must be responsive to the needs of patients and the emergence of ‘new’ specialties. Just as interprofessional education is central to our university culture, so is our responsibility to embrace emerging health care professions and provide the educational resources students need,” she says. “Our pathologists’ assistant program is a good example of a new specialty that can play a role in providing expert, expedient diagnosis and treatment. Recognizing the importance of this specialty, recruiting an outstanding faculty and providing needed resources, we are now home to one of the country’s premier programs.”

She added, “By keeping our focus on the needs of patients, and then investing in educating health care practitioners who share that passion, we can continue to prepare the leaders of tomorrow.”
CRITICAL FOCUS

Dr. Raúl J. Gazmuri
Leads Efforts to Save Lives

In the laboratory. In the classroom. At the bedside of his patients. Wherever he is, Dr. Raúl J. Gazmuri brings with him an abiding dedication to critical care medicine.

This commitment began early in his career. A native of Chile, Dr. Gazmuri first came to Chicago Medical School in 1986 to study with Max H. Weil, MD, PhD, a pioneer in the development of critical care medicine and a key figure in the introduction and widespread use of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). “As a physician interested in saving lives, I couldn’t think of a better place to be,” Dr. Gazmuri recalls. “When Dr. Weil relocated to California, I stayed on to continue my work.”

His efforts include the creation of Rosalind Franklin University’s Resuscitation Institute, which is committed to improving outcomes in people suffering a cardiac arrest — a medical emergency in which the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating, interrupting blood flow to the brain and other vital organs. The Resuscitation Institute uses a multifaceted approach that includes education, advocacy, community involvement and research.
Dr. Gazmuri, who is a Professor of Medicine and a Professor of Physiology and Biophysics, Chicago Medical School, and Director of the Resuscitation Institute, emphasizes that much of the Institute’s work centers on the importance of implementing the “chain of survival.” “The chain of survival is a concept universally embraced as the way to improve survival of patients who suffer a cardiac arrest,” he says. The chain includes five links:

- Recognition of warning signs indicating a possible cardiac arrest or prompt recognition of the episode itself, followed by early activation of emergency medical services (EMS) through a call to 911
- Initiation of quality CPR, started and maintained until EMS arrive
- Early use of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) to re-start the heart in a person with ventricular fibrillation, which is a life-threatening abnormal heart rhythm
- Early advanced care, provided by EMS personnel
- Transport to a center capable of providing emergency coronary interventions and continued critical care

In advocating for increased implementation of the chain of survival, Dr. Gazmuri has worked with Lake County local government and community organizations to promote CPR awareness and training and to increase the availability of AEDs in schools and other public places. “So-called ‘bystander’ CPR, performed by a person who has been properly trained, can greatly improve the chances of saving a person’s life,” Dr. Gazmuri says. “That’s why our continued work to train people in our community to perform CPR correctly is essential. The use of AEDs, too, is extremely important, and is credited with saving many lives.”

Dr. Gazmuri emphasizes the need to improve long-term survival with minimal injury to vital organs. “We are doing a better job of re-establishing cardiac activity right after cardiac arrest, but a large percentage of these patients die before reaching a hospital. And, once admitted, many more die before hospital discharge as a result of damage to their heart or other organs.”

This challenge is the focus of his research. Currently, Dr. Gazmuri and his international colleagues are working to identify a drug that can be used in the important seconds after a cardiac event. “We don’t want to save a life, only to have the patient die soon after, or suffer life-altering complications caused by lack of oxygen to the brain. Today, among the most promising research efforts is a study of erythropoietin, a glycoprotein hormone that controls red blood cell production. It has been used with some success to treat patients after CPR. Our research is exploring whether earlier administration of this drug, at the beginning of CPR, could improve long-term outcomes.”

Dr. Gazmuri also serves as Section Chief of Critical Care at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center. “In my role there, I supervise and provide hands-on care for patients with a range of conditions and needs,” he explains. His stature as an expert in critical care medicine has also made him a valued member of the CMS faculty. He regularly teaches a 12-session elective in critical care to second-year medical students. “It combines lecture with bedside experience, and seems to be a popular choice among our students, which makes me proud,” he says. “Regardless of their eventual medical specialties, all of them benefit from exposure to real-life critical care situations. I also hope that some of my students might one day share my commitment to this important specialty,” he adds. “I am privileged to serve this University as a physician, scientist and teacher.”
FAMILY TIES

CMS Graduate
Inspired by Her Father

In more ways than one, Dr. Wand Gan has chosen to join the “family” business.

The 2011 graduate of Chicago Medical School is currently a first-year resident in the family medicine program at MacNeal Hospital in Berwyn, Illinois. But her inclination toward this specialty began years ago. “My father was a family physician in Seattle, and as a little girl I would often join him in his office,” Dr. Gan says. “Seeing him build good relationships with his patients, I decided early on that I too would become a family physician.

Dr. Gan says this tendency for nurturing made her career choice easy. “This part of my personality, along with my desire to follow my father’s example, led to my decision to become a family physician. I look forward to developing bonds with my patients that can span generations, as they move from one stage of life to another. I want to grow with them, as they will with me.”

She says that when it came time to explore residency opportunities, MacNeal Hospital was at the top of her list. “It’s one of the nation’s oldest and most prestigious family medicine programs,” she explains. “And, I felt that, building on the outstanding education and experience I got at Chicago Medical School, this was the place for me.”

Dr. Gan reports that the first few months of residency training have reinforced her decision to choose family medicine. “I came out of medical school very well prepared to meet the challenges of residency,” she says. “I am working in an environment where the benefits of family medicine are valued, where my colleagues share my enthusiasm for the important role we can play in helping to keep patients healthy. Already, in just the first few months, I have been privileged to care for patients of all ages and with a spectrum of medical conditions and needs.

“I always wanted to take care of people,” she recalls. “My memories go as far back as preschool, where one of my classmates was a painfully shy girl who would huddle in the corner and cry every day after her mother dropped her off. One day, she squeezed into the space between the classroom’s upright piano and the wall, planted herself there and refused to come out. The teacher reported that I had boldly crawled in after her and urged her to come out. I remember my mother telling me, ‘You were the only one who could make her feel better.’”

“The scholar in me continues to absorb as much as there is within the realm of family medicine,” she continues. “Whether it be the newest preventive medicine guidelines or a complex procedure, I want to master it. I have graduated from being the little girl who could ‘cure’ separation anxiety in my preschool classroom. Family medicine is now my way of taking care of people, and I hope that I can be the ‘cure’ for much more.”
TWO-WAY STREET

Giving Back a Priority for Scholl Alumni

Birds of a feather, Steve Schmid and Naomi DeStaffany each came to the Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine with high hopes, a solid work ethic and an eagerness to participate. It seemed inevitable that they would meet early in their first year, fall in love and, eventually, marry.
Steve, who grew up in the Chicago area, received his undergraduate degree from the University of Iowa with a plan to pursue a medical career. “My mom is a nurse, so I was raised with an appreciation for the health care professions,” he says. He explored his options, spending time shadowing physicians from a variety of disciplines. “I was seeking a profession where there would be work-life balance as well as great challenge and fulfillment,” he recalls. “Podiatric medicine seemed like it might be the right choice. When my mom wholeheartedly agreed, I knew it was a fit.”

Naomi, a Montana native, received her Bachelor of Science degree from Boston College and then spent two years as an AmeriCorps volunteer at a residential home for pregnant and parenting teenagers. Like Steve, medicine had always interested her and when she explored podiatric medicine something clicked. “I was attracted by the fact that podiatric medicine offers one-on-one patient care, surgery and research,” she says. In just their first year, Naomi and Steve exceeded even their own expectations. Both excelled academically and quickly took on leadership roles both at Scholl and in podiatric student organizations. “I joined a number of clubs and organizations right away, eager to immerse myself in the life of the school,” Steve recalls. He was president of his first-year class and later was Scholl student body president. His leadership skills and dedication to the profession also led to his role as the Scholl student representative to the American Podiatric Medicine Association (APMA). Naomi served as the school’s representative at the Illinois Podiatric Medicine Association. She also co-chaired the school’s annual Arthritis Walk and chaired the Ambassadors, a student group that participates in interviewing prospective students and in helping them learn about Scholl.

“We both just wanted to maximize our experience,” Naomi says. “This desire began and then grew from our appreciation of the school, especially to its remarkable faculty and administration, for all it gave us right from the start.”

“The school also helped us both financially,” Steve says. Each received scholarship assistance every year. The awards, presented in recognition of their academic achievements as well as their leadership, totaled more than $50,000 for Naomi over four years. Steve received scholarships through Scholl totaling more than $15,000. Both also received assistance from other sources, including scholarships from the American Podiatric Medical Student Association and, for Naomi, from the AmeriCorps program.

“The Schmids are now in their second year of residency. “We were lucky to find residency positions in excellent programs in the same city,” Naomi says. Steve is a resident at the Detroit Medical Center; Naomi is at Providence Hospital in Southfield, Michigan, a Detroit suburb.

They both say their residency experiences have reinforced their appreciation for the education they received at Scholl. “We came here so well prepared,” Steve says. “We realized early on how much our level of training, our rotations and our exposure to interprofessional experiences put us leaps and bounds ahead of students from other schools.”

Naomi says this has further inspired their desire to give back to Scholl. “Right now, we are not in a position to aid the school financially, but we hope that someday we will have that opportunity. For now, we like to think that we are still ‘ambassadors’ for Scholl, building on the outstanding education we received to make a difference in the lives of our patients for many years to come.”
STUDENT TO STUDENT

STEP UP Reaches Out to North Chicago Teens
Stanley Fang was born in Taiwan, went to high school in China and attended college in California. Having traveled the globe, he now finds himself in the Midwest, where his future aspirations are firmly rooted at Chicago Medical School.

“This is where I want to be right now,” says Stanley, a second-year student. “I attended University of California Davis, with a double major in biological sciences and Chinese literature,” he explains. “Following graduation, I worked in property management, considering a career in the business world. But in the end I chose medicine, and once I decided to pursue this dream I sought a university where I could make a successful transition.” He says Chicago Medical School was a great choice, despite its distance from his home and family.

“I confess it’s a challenge,” he says. “My wife, who is studying to be an optometrist, lives in California with our two young children. I don’t get to see them as often as I would like, but the upside is the education I am getting.”

He shared, “I was immediately struck by the open door that greeted me here. The faculty and administration are so supportive and accessible. Being part of such an outstanding institution, I knew right way that I wanted to do more than study, that I wanted to participate in the life of the university and its community.”

Stanley’s commitment led to his involvement with STEP UP, a student organization that partners with North Chicago High School to provide support, encouragement and role-modeling to students considering careers in health care. “We go on campus to the high school regularly during the school year, helping 12 to 15 students cultivate good study habits, talking about their hopes and dreams and serving as their mentors as they work to finish high school and continue their education.” Stanley says most North Chicago students who join STEP UP do so because they are interested in health care and want to know more. “They realize that there is a renowned university in their backyard, but many of them don’t understand the scope of studies available here, or the kinds of health care careers that might be possible for them.”

Stanley emphasizes that his work with STEP UP continues the objectives of its founders, fellow CMS students Janice Camino, Jason Song, and John Won. The organization is supported by Rosalind Franklin University, and has also received support from Alpha Omega Alpha, the national medical school honor society. “My fellow student, John Won, has also received the prestigious Schweitzer Fellowship, a community service fellowship which he will use to help support the goals of STEP UP,” he says.

Looking ahead, Stanley acknowledges that the next few years will be even busier, as he completes medical school and moves on to residency. “Being a long-distance husband and father and busy student won’t change my interest in being part of the community I live in,” he says. “Right now, that includes a commitment to STEP UP. But wherever I am, I plan to give back in any way I can.”
A CARING VOICE

CHP Alumna Dr. Sylvestra Ramirez Shares Commitment to Physical Therapy with Her Community
“Yo soy doctora de terapia física.”

With these words, Sylvestra Ramirez, DPT, introduces herself to the Spanish-speaking community in her hometown of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Dr. Ramirez, a 2010 graduate of the College of Health Professions, says these words, which translate to “I am a physical therapist,” to reflect her pride and passion.

“I grew up in a Spanish-speaking household in Milwaukee,” she says. “I was attracted to the health care profession, and always thought I would become a doctor or a nurse. But when I was 16 I suffered a knee injury, a dislocated knee cap, and required intensive physical therapy to help me learn to walk properly again. This experience was life-changing. I was affected by the incredible skill and empathy that my physical therapists brought to their work. I remember saying to myself, ‘I can do this.’”

Following her undergraduate studies, Dr. Ramirez served as an AmeriCorps volunteer in Milwaukee, where she further explored the profession, serving as an assistant and Spanish language translator for physical therapists. “It was there that I first realized the importance of physical therapy was relatively unknown and unappreciated in the Hispanic community,” she explains. “I knew then that my work would have to include a strong focus on teaching.”

Dr. Ramirez says her College of Health Professions education prepared her well for the challenges and rewards of physical therapy. “This is a wonderful school,” she says. “In addition to outstanding classroom education, I had the opportunity to complete internships all over the country, serving patients in diverse settings and with a wide range of conditions. For example, in one of my internships I worked with patients who had traumatic brain injuries. In another, I practiced in a poor rural area where I had to work hard to earn the trust of my patients. I learned to understand that cultural differences must be acknowledged and respected in order to provide patients the care they deserve.”

Today, Dr. Ramirez builds on her education and experience in a Milwaukee-area outpatient practice. She cares for patients of all ages and with a spectrum of physical therapy needs. She has also made good on her resolve to be a voice for physical therapy in the Hispanic community. She has hosted radio shows on a Spanish-language radio station, taking questions from callers and discussing a range of health care topics. She regularly writes health topics articles for Spanish-language publications and is a sought-after speaker in Milwaukee’s Hispanic community, giving talks about the important role physical therapy can play both in maintaining good health and in recovering from an illness or injury. “My background, education and experience have prepared me well for the work I do,” she says. “I believe I am making a difference.”
Motivation, along with her academic success and career ambitions, eventually led Jessica to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where she received her bachelor of science degree from Southern University. She then went to the DeBakey Institute at Texas A&M University in College Station, where she conducted graduate biomedical engineering research on the Pallid bat wing. “I got a taste of research, which I liked, and firmed up my resolve to pursue health care.”

Her objectives next took Jessica to the University of Memphis, where she received a masters in health administration. “While in Memphis, I also shadowed and assisted some physicians in the hopes of solidifying my plans to go to medical school. It was in this environment that I decided that podiatric medicine was the best fit.”

Jessica adds that in her first year at Scholl, she embraced the chance to be involved in the community. “Volunteering at events including the Kids 1st Health Fair, Chicago Marathon, Avon Breast Cancer Walk and Midwest Podiatry Conference deepened my passion for my chosen profession,” she says.

The commitment and hard work that has fueled Jessica’s educational path earned her the Geppner-Turnbow Minority Scholarship, an award given to a student who reflects the values and ideals of the Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine. “The financial support helps, and the award reminds me of the goals I have set for myself once I complete my education,” she says. “I hope to one day work in a hospital setting, using all of my experience and education to improve care for patients.”

Jessica also understands the influence she may have. “I am proud of the choices I have made and hope to give back, to inspire others like myself to set a goal and work hard to reach it. Maybe someday a child will look at Dr. Jessica Richason and think, ‘That could be me.’”

Jessica Richason’s parents always stressed the importance of faith, hard work and service. “They were also great motivators,” she says. Now a third-year student at the Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine, Jessica recalls how her parents thought successful role models were important. “My dad used to drive me by the home of a well-respected African-American surgeon and say, ‘See, Jessica, that could be you someday.’”
COMMUNITY FIRST

Physician Assistant Wants to Improve Access to Care

A dedication to serving others led to Charles Mininger’s first career. A deepened commitment to help people inspired the second.

Charles, a 2011 graduate of Rosalind Franklin’s College of Health Professions (CHP), began as a social worker, receiving his MSW degree and pursuing a PhD. “I loved my job,” he says. “I worked as a social worker at a charter high school on Chicago’s west side, helping guide students in their efforts to succeed, graduate and even go on to college.” But Charles says working on the west side also sharpened his awareness of community health issues. “I had students whose parents passed away from potentially treatable conditions — such as asthma, high blood pressure and diabetes — at very young ages. I saw that there were troubling health disparities in this community, and I decided to help address this situation in a way in which I could be a ‘doer’ — playing an active part in helping provide people with the care they need and deserve.”

In exploring his options, Charles decided that becoming a physician assistant could help him achieve his goals. After bolstering his science background with community college courses, Charles was admitted to CHP. There, his education was aided by scholarship support from the Healthcare Foundation of Northern Lake County, an organization whose mission — to improve the health status of uninsured, underinsured and medically underserved residents of the community — echoes Charles’ own vision.

Charles now combines full-time work at a local hospital with a number of volunteer community health activities. These include his participation in Rosalind Franklin’s Healthy Families clinic in Waukegan and the Kids 1st Health Fair. In addition, since summer of 2011, Charles has helped coordinate the Community Care Connection, a mobile health unit that provides health screenings and education to Lake County residents, along with learning experiences for the University’s students. Community Care Connection adds to the services provided by the Rosalind Franklin University Health System (RFUHS), which also provides care at the Scholl Foot & Ankle Center in North Chicago and the Behavioral Health Center and the Reproductive Medicine Center in Vernon Hills, Illinois. Each year, RFUHS provides care to approximately 7,500 patients, about 40 percent of whom are either uninsured or underinsured.

“I enjoy being out in the community, bringing basic health care and education to people who have limited resources,” he says. “Going forward, I hope that my education and training as a physician assistant, added to my background as a social worker, will help me continue to make a difference in improving access to good health care in disadvantaged communities. That’s the path I sought when I came to Rosalind Franklin. It’s one I will continue to follow.”
Najeeah Ahmad: A Member of the College of Pharmacy’s First Class

Her choice of a pharmacy career grew from a desire to be part of a health care team. Najeeah Ahmad, a member of the inaugural class of Rosalind Franklin University’s College of Pharmacy, says her love of science and interest in helping people made this a logical choice. “I first considered nursing,” she admits. “But I kept coming back to pharmacy as a good fit.”

She tried it out, too. While a student at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Najeeah worked in both retail and hospital-based pharmacy settings. “These experiences firmed up my plans right at the time Rosalind Franklin was accepting applications for its new College of Pharmacy. I had looked at other pharmacy programs and was most impressed with Rosalind Franklin’s offerings. When compared to the others, it was clear that the new College of Pharmacy’s curriculum was well designed to prepare students for the future — for the increasing role we are playing as members of the interprofessional team. I was thrilled to be accepted.”

Najeeah says the pharmacist’s ability to interact and connect with patients is very appealing. “Pharmacists are trusted by patients and are viewed as important members of the local community,” she says. “I will have the opportunity to teach and support patients as well as continually learn about disease and new treatment options. This is the combination of science and personal connection I have always wanted.”

The second of six daughters, Najeeah says her Arab-American heritage is also an important part of her career aspirations. “I hope someday my work with patients will help foster understanding,” she says. She adds that her family’s pride in her academic success makes her very happy. “I am the first person in my extended family to go to graduate school. This, along with the privilege of being in the College of Pharmacy’s inaugural class, inspires me to work hard.”

She shared, “During our orientation my classmates and I were given pens commemorating our group as the first…the class of 2015. I am keeping mine as a memento. I know that someday I will look at it and remember this as a very special time.”
Danielle Erkoboni-Wilbur Leads and Inspires

Ask Danielle Erkoboni-Wilbur if she can “have it all” and she’s likely to respond, “Probably not, but I am definitely going to try.”

The indomitable spirit of this third-year Chicago Medical School student has already led to a variety of student leadership roles and activities, including serving as president of the university’s chapter of the American Medical Women’s Association (AMWA), mentoring with fellow students and volunteering at a clinic for underserved people in Chicago. “I like to be involved,” she says. She is also married — to a fellow third-year CMS student, Christopher Wilbur — and is an enthusiastic cook, a yoga practitioner and a devoted dog owner. “This year, with clinical rotations on my schedule, I may have to cut back on something,” she says.

A New Jersey native, Danielle received her undergraduate degree from Wheaton College in Massachusetts. Following graduation, she pursued her masters in public health at the University of Pennsylvania while working on pediatric wellness education and advocacy issues for The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. “I loved working on behalf of children, and in the back of my mind I knew that medicine was in my future,” she says. “My husband, whom I met on my first day of school at Wheaton College, was also interested in becoming a physician. So, once the decision was made we had to find a medical school that could meet our needs.”

She says CMS has greatly exceeded their expectations. “Chris and I were immediately struck by how the school treated us not as ‘numbers’ but as whole persons who have a real life,” she says. “In our experience, this was completely unique.” She adds that this is one of the attributes of CMS she makes sure to emphasize in volunteering as an admissions ambassador. “I help conduct tours for prospective students, communicate with incoming applicants and have been involved in conducting a number of seminars for married or nontraditional students — those who, like me, didn’t come to medical school directly from their undergraduate experience.”

Danielle says she was honored to serve as president of AMWA in her second year at CMS. “Our chapter has received national attention, thanks in large part to the women who preceded me,” she says. Last year, Danielle herself received two awards from AMWA in recognition of her leadership and vision. “Through my involvement in AMWA I gained an appreciation for the importance of dialogue with other women in the medical profession,” she says. “That has led to my involvement in mentoring and to my participation in seminars focused on women’s issues. We can sometimes feel burdened with the challenge of seeking fulfillment in both our personal and professional lives. It’s great to be able to talk about that with our peers and with female alumni who are willing to share their own stories.”

Her volunteer efforts have also taken Danielle into the community. She serves on the Executive Board of New Life Volunteering Service (NLVS), an organization that provides free health care to uninsured and underserved people at a clinic on Chicago’s north side. NLVS is staffed by volunteer physicians, health educators, nurses and medical students representing all of the Chicago area’s major medical schools. “I love my work with NLVS,” she says. “I get to learn from other 3rd and 4th year students as well as help mentor the younger volunteers. Best of all, I get to play a part in giving care to underserved people, providing preventative and basic services that can help them be well and stay well.”

She added, “Being in that environment, helping to care for people who turn to us for such basic needs, reminds me of my purpose,” she adds. “I believe everything I do at Chicago Medical School, and all that came before, will prepare me to do my best.”
Fiscal year 2011 marks the third year of positive financial results for the University with a net operating surplus of $1.6 million and an increase in net assets of 13% or $9.5 million. The University accomplished several key financial goals, including increased operating revenues, improved liquidity and increased working capital. In addition to increasing financial stability, we were able to invest in several critical initiatives that position us to meet the nation’s demand for a new generation of health care professionals and leaders. We invested in improving our physical infrastructure, including completion of our state-of-the-art Morningstar Interprofessional Education Center and achieved Precandidate status for our College of Pharmacy. The College has been over four years in the making.

### Operating Results

#### Revenues

Fiscal year 2011 has been a year of measured growth and stabilization. That growth is reflected in a 7% increase in revenue. The University’s operating revenues are composed of tuition and fees, sponsored research support, endowment spending and private contributions. While tuition rates increased an average 3% in FY 2011, total tuition revenue increased 7% due to increased enrollment. Significantly, revenue from sponsored research grew by 7% and revenue from patient care by 17%.

Donor support of the University and school/college scholarship programs continues to grow. FY 2011 saw a 14% increase in the annual fund. Grant support from the State of Illinois’ Independent College Capital Program, gifts from corporations and foundations, and a generous bequest from alumnus Dr. George Morningstar of the Chicago Medical School helped support the construction of the Interprofessional Education Center.

Endowment spending is a modest source of operating revenue for Rosalind Franklin University. The University utilizes a 5% spending policy in support of University operations. Annual endowment support declined 10% in 2011 as a result of the stock market declines in FY 2009.

### Expenses

In fiscal year 2011, the University was able to fully realize the financial impact of cost reductions and efficiencies that were implemented in 2009 and 2010. While overall revenue has grown by 7%, operating expenses have increased by just 4%. Along with growth in sponsored research support, direct research costs have grown by 4%. Growth in patient care revenue increased the costs of delivering that care. University overhead has remained static and discretionary resources have been allocated to key strategic priorities. Those priorities included: launching the College of Pharmacy, addressing deferred maintenance and increasing student financial support, scholarships and waivers. Overall student scholarships and tuition waivers have increased 24% over Fiscal Year 2010.
As the University’s Institutional Advancement efforts have expanded, support has increased incrementally each fiscal year. FY 2011 was an extraordinary fundraising year for Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. We received over $5 million in estate gifts from 7 donors.

Our Impact

As Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science has engaged in planning for both the near and long term, we have remained focused on several key priorities. In FY 2011, we allocated our resources to those priorities and will continue to do so in the future. In order to meet the nation’s future health care needs, we will continue to focus on educational affordability, measured growth in programs and schools, collaboration and partnership in the delivery of community services and financial stewardship that supports the next generation of Rosalind Franklin health care professionals. We are committed to making a positive contribution to the local community. In FY 2011, over 140 faculty and staff provided more than 2,500 hours of health-related outreach and service within the community. The Rosalind Franklin University Health System provided approximately $250,000 in charitable care.

Audited Financial Statements

The financial information provided has been excerpted from the audited financial statements.

Rosalind Franklin University’s fiscal year 2011 financial statements were audited by Crowe Horwath LLP, and an unqualified opinion was rendered. A copy of the audited financial statements is available by writing the Controller, 3333 Green Bay Road, North Chicago, IL 60064.
Your gifts to the University come with knowledge that every gift counts and every gift is invested where it matters most, the mission dedicated to educating well qualified health care professionals.

Together, we make Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science a national leader in interprofessional education and a premier environment for the education of tomorrow’s healthcare professionals. Gifts raised through our University Annual Fund will allow us to continue providing the level of excellence in education and research for which we are known in the health care field. Your individual participation is vital to our success.

Together, we achieve.
Together, we innovate and grow.
Together, we make things possible.

All of us working together make a tremendous difference as we continue to educate, discover and serve.

Thank you for your past and continued support.