We are pleased to share the 2012 annual report of Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science (RFUMS). 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.

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Our great University has had many proud moments. For example, in just the past few years we have watched with pride and excitement as our new Morningstar Interprofessional Education Center was dedicated, as the long-awaited inaugural class of our new College of Pharmacy was welcomed to our campus and as visionary leaders took their place at the helms of Chicago Medical School, Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine and the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

This year, the excitement continued as we came together to commemorate a momentous milestone: our 100th anniversary. And, though it had been anticipated for a long time, we were still astounded at the impact the Centennial celebration had for those around us. Students, faculty, alumni, staff and community friends, unified in their support for Centennial events, fostered a spirit of fellowship felt throughout the year.

The Centennial also invited contemplation about our distinguished past and its relevance to our present and future. These thoughts inspired the following questions:

What would the founders think of our University? If they could come back for one day, what would they see?

We believe the dedicated professionals who established Chicago Medical School would be amazed at the progress made. Committed to opening the doors to a medical education for worthy students of all backgrounds, they would see the legacy of their commitment. It would be especially visible in our diverse student body, which includes young people of many ethnic and racial origins. They would likely be astounded to see the number of women who grace our campus as students, faculty and University leaders.

Happily, Dr. William M. Scholl lived long enough to see podiatric medicine elevated to its rightful place and to appreciate the impact made by Scholl College graduates throughout the US and beyond. We believe he would be additionally gratified to see the pivotal role Scholl College plays in our interprofessional education model and to witness the pioneering podiatric medical and surgical research undertaken in the school that bears his name.

Building on the Tradition

We are mindful of our responsibility to build on the tradition of the countless dedicated men and women whose leadership strengthened RFUMS over the last 100 years. To that end, we are taking steps to ensure we can recruit, retain and sustain the best and brightest students and offer them an education that will prepare them well for the evolving health care environment of the 21st century. Our efforts include the Centennial Scholarship Campaign, which aims to ease the tuition burden for students at all of our schools and colleges. We have also taken a major step forward in partnering with undergraduate institutions. This has long been a priority for RFUMS as we work to attract outstanding students and help optimize their transition into our graduate and medical education programs.

Our innovative Alliance for Health Sciences with DePaul University has led to a new strategic approach to health sciences education through which we will streamline entry for qualified undergraduates, strengthen academic programs, enhance opportunities for faculty collaboration and expand research opportunities for students at all levels.

Today, the challenges are new, but our optimism is unchanged. Like our founders and the committed individuals who advanced their goals, we embrace the hard work ahead of us. We take inspiration from the energy and commitment of today’s students, faculty, alumni and leaders, who share some of their stories in the pages that follow. Reading them, we are sure you will agree that our University’s early principles of inclusion, excellence and teamwork are alive and well today.

Ruth M. Rothstein
Chair, Board of Trustees

K. Michael Welch, MB, ChB, FRCP
President and CEO
One hundred years. It’s a milestone that signifies achievement. For Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, the roots of a distinguished history lie in the founding of two of its schools, the Chicago Medical School and the Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine, which both opened their doors in 1912. The visionary commitments of these two schools led to the later establishment of the College of Health Professions, the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and the College of Pharmacy. It is, then, the history of all of RFUMS’s five schools, beginning with CMS and Scholl, which we now celebrate.
Chicago Medical School

Chicago Medical School (CMS), originally named Chicago Hospital-College of Medicine, was founded in 1912 with the vision of creating a school that, in quiet defiance of the times, would welcome students of diverse backgrounds and without bias due to race, religion, gender or ethnic origin. The school was first located at 38th and Rhoades; it moved to 710 S. Wolcott St. in 1930 and to 2020 W. Ogden Ave. in 1961.

Over the years, the school would weather many storms and for more than three decades it fought for accreditation. In 1948, under the inspired leadership of John J. Sheinin, MD, PhD, DSc, Chicago Medical School would become the first and only privately funded independent medical school to survive a national effort to reduce the number of medical colleges.

Over the next six decades, CMS made significant investments in research and facilities and in developing clinical affiliations with hospitals and universities throughout the US. The establishment in 1967 of the University of Health Sciences expanded the CMS curriculum and mission, making it one of the first medical schools in the nation to develop integrated educational programs for both future physicians and health sciences professionals. This was one of the early steps in RFUMS’s journey to become a leader in interprofessional education.

Chicago Medical School moved to its present campus in North Chicago in 1980. Today, it welcomes nearly 200 students each year, providing them with an interprofessional, team-based education that continues the school’s legacy of preparing outstanding physicians and health care leaders.

Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine

The history of the Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine also begins in 1912, when its namesake, Dr. Scholl, opened the school, then called the Illinois College of Chiropody and Orthopedics, at 1321 N. Clark St. Dr. Scholl was a man of indisputable drive, character and foresight. His conviction that the lower extremity, all but neglected by early medicine, was a vital part of overall health ignited the emerging field of podiatry and helped transform it into a respected and highly valued discipline. Throughout his career, Dr. Scholl pushed to advance the specialty and improve the college through a series of reorganizations, a move to larger quarters and stronger curriculum and research. The college would ultimately undergo a number of name changes, taking the name of its founder and most ardent supporter in 1981.

Like CMS, Scholl College withstood challenges from the medical establishment of the times. The school advocated for the specialty and its students, eventually prevailing in a number of efforts, including insurance parity, inclusion in the Medicare program, clinical privileges at the nation’s hospitals and federal funding under the Health Professions Educational Assistance Act. The college joined RFUMS in 2001.

In the 100 years since its founding, Scholl College has educated more than one-third of the nation’s podiatric physicians and continues to be at the forefront of podiatric medicine, research and interprofessional education.

An Interprofessional Commitment

The commitment to excellence that led to the founding of both CMS and Scholl College is echoed in the stories of RFUMS’s other schools: the College of Health Professions (CHP), the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS) and the College of Pharmacy. In fact, the University’s current stature as a model of interprofessional education began in 1967, when the University of Health Sciences was created and joined with CMS. This model was strengthened the following year, 1968, with the establishment of SGPS. And, at the forefront of the concept of the interprofessional health care team is CHP, which was modeling and teaching teamwork long before national and international commissions began calling for strategies to address issues including physician shortages, lack of accessibility and disparities in patient outcomes. Today, CHP is home to programs for future physician assistants, pathologists’ assistants, physical therapists, nurse anesthetists, nutritionists, psychologists, clinical counselors, health care administrators, and those pursuing interprofessional studies, to name a few. In 2011, RFUMS further enhanced the scope of its health sciences education programs with the creation of its newest school, the College of Pharmacy, and the arrival of its first class.
Today and Tomorrow

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science stands as a tribute to its visionary early leaders, men and women who fought for an inclusive approach to medical education and advocated for acceptance of an emerging specialty. One hundred years later, this spirit continues to inspire its current leaders, faculty and students, who on a daily basis exhibit a strong commitment to excellence, interprofessional education and an innovative vision for the future.

RFUMS of 2012 reminds us that many of the obstacles faced by young people a century ago have been largely erased. But there are still challenges to address, especially the cost of education. To help ensure that worthy students are given the opportunity they deserve, the University, in commemoration of its 100th year, has embarked on a 5-year, $5 million campaign to increase support for scholarships and to help fulfill a commitment to invest in the educational future of tomorrow’s health care leaders. Two lead gifts have been received in support of this campaign.

The Dr. Scholl Foundation, established by Dr. William M. Scholl in 1947, has donated $1 million toward this effort. This gift will provide scholarships for students in RFUMS’s colleges for the next several years. In addition, during the Centennial celebration, the family of Rosalind Franklin announced a gift of $500,000 to the Centennial Scholarship Campaign. In making this gift, Martin Franklin underscored the importance of this gift in securing the University’s continued focus on innovation and interdisciplinary education.
Two of a Kind

CMS Alumni Reflect on Lifelong Friendship

Fresh from undergraduate school in their native New York, Matthew Harris and Burton Garfinkel arrived at Chicago Medical School in 1952 with high hopes for the future. “I always wanted to be a doctor,” says Dr. Harris (CMS ’56). “I came to CMS to pursue that dream and I got what I came for — a great education. But I left with so much more, including a friend for life who happens to be one of the nicest people I’ve ever known.”

In fact, Dr. Harris says he and Dr. Garfinkel have led “parallel” lives. “Our backgrounds were so similar,” he explains. “We were both from New York City — although from different boroughs — and came from families with the same values regarding education and service. At CMS we became good friends and, over the years, our personal and professional lives have kept us very close.”

Dr. Garfinkel notes that both men met their wives around the same time and actually married on the same day. “We couldn’t attend each other’s wedding,” he says with a smile. “But we’ve made up for that. Following our residencies and time in the service, we both returned to the New York area to raise our families and pursue our careers. Our wives have also been good friends all these years and the four of us see each other often.” Dr. Harris adds that both couples are parents of three grown children. “Dr. Garfinkel and his wife are a little ahead of us with grandchildren,” he jokes. “They have 7 to our 6 and have recently added their first great-grandchild.”

Both physicians have had distinguished careers. Dr. Garfinkel recently retired from full-time practice, having worked for nearly 50 years as an obstetrician-gynecologist in the New York metropolitan area. But he remains busy and has recently been involved in organizing a Disorders of Sexual Development (DSD) Center of North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System at Cohen Children’s Medical Center in New Hyde Park, New York. This center addresses the diagnosis and treatment of infants born with ambiguous genitalia — a condition neglected by the medical community.

Following his residency in surgery at Bellevue Hospital, New York, Dr. Harris was drafted into the Army and was sent to Korea. There, he achieved the rank of Captain and was commanding officer of a MASH (Mobile Army Surgical Hospital) unit. Currently a professor of surgery at New York University, Dr. Harris is an internationally recognized oncological surgeon who has published extensively over his 50-plus year career. In 2003, Dr. Harris was honored by the NYU Cancer Institute as the First Distinguished Faculty Honoree as well as by the naming of the “Matthew N. Harris, MD, Examination Suite” at NYU’s Cancer Center.

Drs. Garfinkel and Harris also have continued their strong support for CMS and for Rosalind Franklin University. Both serve on the Board of Trustees and are involved in alumni leadership efforts, including those supporting scholarships for current medical students. Through their leadership, they continue to encourage the Class of ’56 to support tomorrow’s health care professionals through a variety of educational and philanthropic initiatives, and further the exemplary record of giving from that class. “I have never forgotten the opportunity Chicago Medical School gave me,” Dr. Harris says. “It is my privilege to serve and to do it in the company of Burt Garfinkel, my classmate and friend.”
During the Centennial celebration, three generations of the Franklin family traveled to Chicago to be present at the unveiling of the Dr. Rosalind Franklin Tribute Wall as well as a weekend of Centennial activities celebrating the University named in her honor. During this visit, Sir Roland Franklin and his wife, Lady Nina Franklin, took time to reflect on their memories of Rosalind.

“My sister was almost six years older than me, and I did not really get to know her well until I had finished my naval service in 1947,” he says. “I remember several holidays that we spent together walking up mountains in Wales, rambling in the Lake District and skiing in France. This last was a typically exciting excursion as neither of us could ski properly, but as mountains were there Rosalind had to climb them. We had a guide who was appalled when he realized after a few thousand feet of climbing we had no idea at all how to ski down. Fortunately, he was an expert guide, but said he had never before been so relieved to get clients down safely!

“I never went rock climbing with her but I understand she was a competent mountaineer,” he continues. “We played tennis quite a lot together. Dinner with her was never dull. She was all too likely to serve disgusting-looking toadstools, which any sensible but ignorant person like myself would never dream of eating. However, such was my reverence for my older sister that I always ate them and of course found that they were delicious.

“Rosalind got on very well with my wife, even though they had nothing whatsoever in common except strong characters. Once a week they used to go to the theatre together while I was trying to manage a boys’ club in the East End of London.

“I have to confess that neither I nor my brothers or sister appreciated for one moment how distinguished Rosalind was,” Sir Roland adds. “My father, who had studied science at University, probably did. The only person who really understood her importance and who knew nothing about science whatsoever was my wife.”

“At that time we didn’t yet know the meaning of her work,” says Lady Nina. “But I could see back then that she was special, and I told her so.”

“Rosalind was modest,” Sir Roland says. “She hardly ever talked about her work. She had an independent income and never used any of the money gifted to her by our parents. She never made a virtue of this. Her reluctance was principled but never advertised.

“When she became terminally ill she was only 35,” he continues. “She was unable to look after herself in her apartment and came to live with us. She was always good with children and they adored her. We had four at the time and I think they helped take her mind off her illness. She had extraordinary courage and while she was physically able to work or play tennis she did. When her pain was too great she returned to the hospital and then came back to us. She never made a fuss and never complained. At one time she told Nina what a pity it was that her life was going to be so short as she felt she was working at problems, the solution of which could materially improve the chances of survival of cancer victims.”

Lady Nina Franklin agrees about Rosalind’s strength during the time she was battling her disease. “She was very focused, even while fighting her illness,” she says. “When she was feeling good she kept on working, with the same purposeful approach she brought to everything she did.”

“I believe Rosalind would be astonished and delighted to know that RFUMS was named for her,” Sir Roland concludes. “The great honor conferred on Rosalind’s memory by the naming of this University is so appropriate in every way that it stands out far beyond all the other honors that have been so liberally bestowed upon her. She would have loved to have known that she had become a source of inspiration to so many students.”
Joseph X. DiMario, PhD, arrived at Rosalind Franklin University with a passion for developmental cell biology research, a commitment to teach and an interest in becoming involved in governance. He continues to do all three as Dean of the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS). In fact, he says, though his leadership role predominates, his love of teaching and research help guide decisions that are helping the school meet the challenges of a 21st century education.
“I joined the faculty in 1995,” he explains. “And, though it hadn’t yet been named Rosalind Franklin University, I saw in it many of the attributes that today make our institution such an outstanding resource for students in all areas of the sciences.” Dr. DiMario, who completed his undergraduate and master’s degree studies at Marquette University before attaining his PhD from the University of California, Berkeley, explains that SGPS, through its Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences, offers programs leading to a PhD degree in biochemistry and molecular biology; cell biology and anatomy; cellular and molecular pharmacology; microbiology and immunology; neuroscience; physiology and biophysics, along with combined MD/PhD and DPM/PhD degree programs.

“When I came on board, while teaching and continuing my own research, I also was eager to become involved in the governance of this excellent university,” he says. For more than 10 years, Dr. DiMario was active in the university senate, eventually serving on its executive committee and as chair of the faculty tenure committee. He says he was thrilled when given the chance to serve as Dean.

“The school continually attracts students interested in working in an environment where research is valued, and where the administration is ever mindful of the end game — what happens when our graduates complete their degrees.” He says that as Dean, acknowledging the realities facing his school’s graduates is a priority. “The environment is changing,” he explains. “There was a time when a young person with a PhD degree in the sciences could reasonably expect to find a university-based research and/or teaching position on completion of his or her degree. But today, the landscape has changed. There are fewer dollars available for research, especially ‘bench’ research. So, we have to make sure we help our students explore options so that they can leave here with a good chance of getting a job that optimizes their education and energies.”

Dr. DiMario says private business and industry, along with governmental agencies, are increasingly recognized as potential employers for PhD graduates. “Expertise in the sciences can be invaluable today, especially as businesses respond to new demands for green technology and safer products. We’re making progress in forging relationships that can help us. For example, Rosalind Franklin University’s continued outreach to the area’s pharmaceutical companies will help open doors to more and more opportunities.”

A strategic plan for SGPS addresses areas of critical importance that dovetail with the University’s vision. These include educational excellence, research, recognition, recruitment, and interprofessionalism. Funding is key, and Dr. DiMario says the school will implement some new, creative approaches, including an incentive program that rewards PhD students for pursuing grants and a mentoring initiative that pairs students and faculty members in preparing fellowship applications.

Dr. DiMario emphasizes that his leadership as Dean is energized by his own love of scientific investigation. “Rosalind Franklin University is proud of its role in research, and the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies is the engine that drives it,” he says. “With 45 graduate students across 35 to 40 labs on the campus, this is a vigorous, exciting enterprise.” He confesses his own heart is never far from the lab environment. Working with two of the school’s graduate students, he continues his own research, an NIH-funded study of the role of cell lineage in skeletal muscle development. In addition, Dr. DiMario says he still loves the classroom and serves as course director for the first-year Chicago Medical School embryology course.

“I am proud to serve as Dean of this school and to be part of Rosalind Franklin University’s vision for the future. Truly, its commitment to ‘life in discovery’ is embodied in the students and faculty I am privileged to lead.”

— Dr. Joseph DiMario
Dr. Qeena Woodard Aims to Give Back

Qeena Woodard, DPM ’03, embraces her work as a busy podiatric physician and teacher with humility and a quiet confidence. She says that’s a family trait.
“My mother, who is a teacher, never preached to us about working hard and doing a good job,” says Dr. Woodard, Assistant Professor at the Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine. “Even when my father died at a young age, she just carried on and set an example, making sure we all grew up with a firm foundation of school, church and family.” For young Qeena, growing up in Harvey, Illinois, as the eldest of four, the “school” part came easily. “I was a good student and was lucky enough to go to a high school where my early interest in science was encouraged and nurtured. In fact, every summer I was invited to participate in science excursions organized by my school. I went to Space Camp, studied whales off the coast of Oregon and participated in an archeological excavation in the southwest. I took advantage of every opportunity.”

It was during her high school years that Dr. Woodard first took notice of podiatric medicine. “My grandmother had diabetes and many of the foot problems that can accompany this disease,” she says. “I would often accompany her to her podiatrist appointments and was very impressed by her doctor. He spoke so beautifully about podiatry that I chose that topic myself for a speech assignment in school. The profession interested me from then on.”

She attended Emory University, majoring in Spanish with a minor in African studies. “But becoming a doctor was always top of mind, so I made sure to also take all the courses considered ‘pre-med,’” she explains. Following graduation, she took a break from school, working in the registration department of a Chicago hospital. “That helped me clarify my goals,” she adds. “I applied to Scholl College, was accepted and became a proud member of the Class of 2003.”

Following residency in San Antonio, Dr. Woodard joined a large podiatric medical/surgical practice, caring for patients in Chicago’s South Side communities and suburbs. “When I was asked to join the faculty at Scholl I was flattered and happy,” she says. “I am pleased to be part of the educational program that was so pivotal in my own life and work.” She says that as a teacher and a practitioner she is very interested in surgery and applied biomechanics. “I don’t think we can separate these two aspects of our specialty,” she emphasizes. “Even a seemingly ‘minor’ foot or ankle condition can result in a gait change that can affect a patient’s recovery, rehabilitation and well-being. I hope to share those insights with my students.”

Dr. Woodard notes that her podiatric medicine practice enhances her ability to be a good teacher. “I am able to share with students the realities of podiatric medicine,” she says. “In turn, being part of a school like Scholl helps me stay in the forefront of podiatric medicine innovation, which helps me be a better physician.”

She humbly accepts her position as a role model for female and minority students, too. “I was often the only woman, or the only African American, in my classes from high school on,” she recalls. “My hope is that my work as a physician and teacher will encourage others to pursue their dreams of accomplishment no matter what their circumstances. That would make me proud.”

— Dr. Qeena Woodard
From the windows in his lab, Dr. Adrian Gross can look out on the campus of Rosalind Franklin University and its neighboring community. It’s a view that cannot compare with the one he enjoys when he travels home to Switzerland, to the Alpine resort town where he grew up and where his parents still live. And yet, he says, “This is home now. This is where I do the work I love.”
Adrian Gross, MD, came to Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science in 2011 as Associate Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. A dedicated research scientist, he also teaches and serves as course director of Clinical Molecular Cellular Biology at Chicago Medical School.

His “journey” to RFUMS began with an early love of science that led him to the University of Geneva, where he received an MD degree. “Though I was trained as a clinician, I always knew I would pursue research,” he says. “I love the scientific aspect of medicine. I like to know how things work.”

Dr. Gross’s interest in research took him to Harvard University, where his postdoctoral work focused on potassium ion channels, which are cell membrane proteins that play a key role in human biology. At Harvard, Dr. Gross was part of a team led by Dr. Roderick MacKinnon, who won a Nobel Prize for his work identifying the molecular structure of the potassium ion channel. “Dr. MacKinnon’s group used x-ray diffraction — the same technique used by Dr. Rosalind Franklin to create the pivotal photo 51 — to determine the three-dimensional structure of the potassium ion channel,” Dr. Gross says. “This greatly advanced our understanding of these important proteins.”

His interest in pursuing potassium ion channel research then led him to UCLA, where Dr. Gross worked with another renowned scientist, Dr. Wayne Hubbell, who is credited with advancing this study through the use of electron paramagnetic resonance (EPR) spectroscopy. Building on his experiences at Harvard and UCLA, he then went to Northwestern University, where he was an Assistant Professor. Since his arrival at RFUMS, in a laboratory that includes a postdoctoral student and a technician, Dr. Gross uses x-ray crystallography and other techniques, including EPR, to explore the structure and function of potassium ion channels.

Dr. Gross explains that understanding the potassium ion channel is important because it plays a role in a number of biologic activities. “For example, it contributes to the electrical activity that coordinates the heart’s beating,” he says. “If the function is compromised, either by a genetic mutation or chemically, it can result in death.” He illustrates the relevance of this work with a recent experience.

“A few years ago several drugs were introduced for use in patients with a variety of unrelated medical conditions,” he explains. “These drugs had gone through all the extensive phases of testing — in the lab, in an animal model and in a controlled set of patients. They had been found to be safe and effective and received the necessary approval from the FDA. However, once in widespread use, it was discovered that the drugs had something in common. They were cardiotoxic, introducing a type of fatal heart disease that wasn’t there before. With the drug then pulled from the marketplace, further research determined that the affected patients had a potassium ion channel dysfunction that led to this unfortunate effect.

“Studies at the molecular level, such as the work we are doing in my lab, thus have a very practical application,” Dr. Gross says. “We know that about a third of all genes in a typical genome — the complete set of human genetic information — code for membrane proteins such as the potassium ion channel. And yet we have so much to learn about them. My work, like that of colleagues all over the world, is helping us explore the genome so that we can personalize medicine based on the genetic information of the individual patient.”
The rural communities of Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley might seem to have little in common with the bustling suburban region of northern Illinois. But according to Ateequr Rahman, PhD, MBA, RPh, the two areas share troubling health disparities and populations that are often medically underserved. “That is one of the reasons why I decided to join the faculty of the College of Pharmacy,” Dr. Rahman says. “In fact, I was doubly pleased. I saw the chance to be part of a new college, grow along with it and help shape its future. I also welcomed the opportunity to apply my work in rural health issues to the challenges facing the communities surrounding Rosalind Franklin University.”
His work in the community has begun. Dr. Rahman, Associate Professor in the College of Pharmacy, is the lead co-investigator in a research study that is assessing the value of an interprofessional team-based approach in improving health outcomes in seniors with diabetes. The Interprofessional Care Model study focuses on residents of several senior living facilities throughout Lake County. “A multidisciplinary team, including myself as the pharmacist, along with a nurse, physician, physical therapist and podiatric physician, has developed materials to help identify risk factors for complications and assess needs,” he says. “This is a study that perfectly reflects Rosalind Franklin University’s commitment to interprofessionalism, both in the classroom and in the community. It promises to give us good information on how we can improve care and outcomes for patients with diabetes.”

Using the Rosalind Franklin University Health System Community Care Connection mobile health unit, Dr. Rahman and other members of the team travel to senior sites to see the participants. This approach is convenient, enabling the Interprofessional Care Model team to see the seniors on a regular basis at the buildings where they live. “We pull up outside their facility, they come on board and we assess their condition, provide any needed treatment and answer questions about medication, symptom control or any other issues that might be raised.”

Dr. Rahman brings a distinctive background in health outcomes and community medicine to the new College of Pharmacy. He earned his PhD in pharmacy administration with a focus on pharmacoconomics and outcomes research from the University of Louisiana at Monroe, where he had previously obtained a master’s degree in business administration with a focus on health economics. He has done extensive research in the areas of diabetes management and fall prevention, focusing on how infrastructure affects access to services and influences the health of a community.

Dr. Rahman is also passionate about pharmacists’ unique abilities to have an impact on health. “I hope to convey to our students that whether it’s by counseling patients on their medication therapy or teaching them how to use a medical device, they are in a position to empower patients to be their own advocate. I hope that my work in the classroom and in the community will help them understand the vital role we can play.”
CMS Alumna Leads Chicago Public Schools’ Health Initiative

Dr. Stephanie A. Whyte still marvels at how a pediatrician influenced her life. “He was my doctor, and at the age of just six years old I knew that I wanted to follow in his footsteps,” she recalls. “When I shared this with him, he took me seriously, encouraged me and told me to work hard for my dream.”
Today, Stephanie A. Whyte, MD, CMS ’96, is also in a position to affect the lives of children. In 2012, she was appointed Chief Health Officer of the Chicago Public Schools (CPS). This is a new position, in which Dr. Whyte oversees student health policy and programming within CPS and collaborates with the Chicago Department of Public Health on the Healthy CPS initiative of the city’s public health agenda, Healthy Chicago. Her role fulfills a key element of CPS’s efforts to promote health and wellness in addition to student achievement.

Dr. Whyte says her background, both personally and professionally, has prepared her well for the challenge of this position. She grew up in the Grand Crossing neighborhood on the city’s South Side and attended public school there through eighth grade. She attended a private Lutheran high school, embracing a college-prep curriculum she hoped would help her gain admittance to a good college. “I was always thinking about the goal I set as a little girl,” she recalls. “I never wavered in my desire to become a pediatrician.”

She says her years as an undergraduate at Illinois Wesleyan University were challenging. “I had to work harder than many other students and was told I would never make it into medical school,” she says. But Chicago Medical School, working with the Chicago Area Health and Medical Careers Program (CAHMCP), gave her the opportunity she needed. CAHMCP is a cooperative project whose mission is to increase the number of qualified minority graduates in medical and other health professional schools. “Through CAHMCP and CMS, I was given the chance to take some ‘bridge’ courses that put me in a position to have a good first year of medical school,” she explains. “That was the start of a positive four years, where I got the encouragement and faculty support that helped me take the next step toward my goal.” Following graduation, Dr. Whyte completed her residency in pediatrics at Louisiana State University Medical Center in New Orleans.

Following her residency, Dr. Whyte and her husband, internal medicine physician Mark Williams, CMS ’96, worked together to provide primary care services to kids and adults on Chicago’s West Side. In 2001, she was offered the opportunity to focus on asthma, a disease that disproportionately affects children in the city’s most underserved areas. She joined the Mobile C.A.R.E. Foundation, traveling throughout the city in a mobile health unit to provide asthma care and education. “This was — and remains — a passion for me,” she says. “Asthma is one of the most serious health challenges faced by urban children, especially African-American children. And, with proper treatment, understanding of asthma triggers and guidance on smoking cessation, we can prevent complications and keep kids healthier. In my new role, this will continue to be a priority. Asthma is the leading cause of school absence and accounts for an annual loss of more than 14 million school days per year, with each student averaging eight missed school days.” She notes that CPS already has good policies on the on-site availability of asthma rescue medications and asthma management. “But this remains an ongoing vital issue for us to address.”

“…There are so many barriers for children to conquer in getting the education they need and deserve. We recognize that overall health and well-being are critical in ensuring attendance, attentiveness and classroom achievement.”
— Dr. Stephanie Whyte

She says current priorities at CPS also include programs targeting obesity, access to care and sexual health education. “There are so many barriers for children to conquer in getting the education they need and deserve. We recognize that overall health and well-being are critical in ensuring attendance, attentiveness and classroom achievement.

“My goal is to lead the Chicago Public Schools in removing health-related barriers to education,” she adds. “There is an indisputable link between healthy students and healthy school environments and academic achievement. I am privileged to be able to play a critical role in addressing this. As a child of an immigrant single mother and the first physician in my family, I know I am a symbol of what can be accomplished when adults work together for the benefit of children. I am extremely honored to do this work.”
She was a child who liked science. “I always knew I would choose some kind of medical career,” acknowledges Katy Trotter, DPM, a member of the 2012 graduating class of Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine. “But, because my dad is a veterinarian, as a child I thought I would follow in his footsteps and take care of animals. The decision to pursue podiatric medicine came later and grew out of my involvement in athletics.”
Growing up in Little Silver, New Jersey, Dr. Trotter loved to run. Her passion for the sport continued into high school and, while attending Stanford University, she competed in cross country and track. She was a nine-time All American runner and holds Stanford records in steeplechase. She also was named to the PAC 12 and NCAA all-academic teams, recognizing students who excel in both athletics and academics. “It was at Stanford that I was first exposed to podiatric medicine,” she recalls. “During my last two years of school I worked with two podiatric physicians who tailored their practices toward athletes. These physicians had gone to Scholl College, which put it at the top of my list.”

Now a first-year resident at the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center in Chicago, Dr. Trotter is again learning from a Scholl alumnus. John F. Grady, DPM ’80, serves as the director of the medical center’s podiatric medicine residency. “I got to know Dr. Grady on my very first clerkship rotation as a third-year Scholl student,” Dr. Trotter recalls. “He is a great physician and teacher, and an even more wonderful person,” she says. “He was the major reason why I sought this residency and was thrilled to match at Jesse Brown.”

Dr. Trotter explains that the Jesse Brown residency affords her the opportunity to care for patients with a range of needs. “At the podiatry clinic, we see up to 100 patients every day,” she says. “They represent the full spectrum of foot and ankle issues, many of which are related to chronic conditions such as diabetes. The patients are so appreciative of the care we provide, which makes my work even more rewarding.”

She praises her Scholl College education. “Scholl strives to give students a solid foundation in all aspects of medicine, not simply the foot and ankle,” says Dr. Trotter. “I sat side by side with medical students during the first two years, where the expectations of competency were exactly the same. This standard of excellence impressed me and prepared me extremely well for my residency.”

Dr. Grady says this preparation is evident. “Over the years, I have been privileged to work with Scholl graduates who, like Dr. Trotter, enter their residencies with a strong clinical foundation and a commitment to work as part of a team,” he says. “But just as important is another quality I see consistently in Scholl College graduates. It’s humility. Dr. Trotter is an excellent example of this. At Scholl, she was class valedictorian. Yet despite her exceptional athletic and academic credentials she is always fighting to make herself better, and has the greatest sense of humility I’ve witnessed in someone her age, much less someone with her résumé. I think it speaks much about Scholl College and about podiatric medicine in general that such a person chose this profession. As a Scholl alumnus myself, this makes me proud.”

Dr. Trotter says working with Dr. Grady has made her transition to residency very easy. “He does more than teach — he also inspires,” she explains. “For example, when he is first introduced to students or residents he asks that they make him a promise. He begins by asking a question, ‘If I teach you something and you find it to be wrong, what will you do?’ The answer, according to Dr. Grady, is always the same. ‘You notify me. Promise that you will tell me.’ The promise he asks of us reflects his strong belief in always doing the right thing for patients. I hope to follow that example.”
Nicole Oddo says she was raised in a home where health and fitness were valued. Now, as a second-year physical therapy student in the College of Health Professions, she is sharing those commitments with people in the community. A 2012 recipient of a Schweitzer Fellowship, Nicole has designed and implemented a program aimed at improving the health of underserved older adults in Waukegan, Illinois.
“I appreciate the role of regular screenings, diet and exercise in helping people get healthy,” she says. “When I heard about the Schweitzer Fellowship and its goals, I saw an opportunity to develop a program that could have an impact.” Named in honor of famed humanitarian and Nobel laureate Dr. Albert Schweitzer, the Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellows Program encourages service-minded health professions students to follow his mission to “make their lives their argument” by addressing the health challenges of people whose needs are not currently being met. Nicole proposed a multifaceted project that aims to improve the health and safety of seniors, especially those who have been inactive.

Her Balance Workshop combines fitness approaches and education to help seniors understand the importance of fall prevention, determine their level of risk and learn techniques to improve balance.

The other initiative is the Walk It Out program, aimed at encouraging senior participants to make walking a regular part of their efforts to be healthy. Both programs are being presented through a partnership with Waukegan’s Park Place Senior Center.

“In addition to the fitness programs, I am also presenting lectures on health-related issues such as nutrition and conditions common to seniors,” she says. “And, an important part of the program is its focus on bringing people together to promote a sense of community, friendship and mutual support. Preventing the isolation and loneliness that can plague our older adults is a central feature of this program.”

Through the Schweitzer Fellowship, Nicole is expected to provide at least 200 hours that address an unmet community need. And she must submit regular reports that detail the progress of her program. “I have identified goals and objectives, such as the number of steps I hope my ‘walkers’ will eventually complete,” she says.

Her fellowship also provides Nicole with a monetary award that will help with tuition costs. “I am so grateful,” she says. “The Schweitzer Fellowship has given me some financial support for my schooling at Rosalind Franklin University. But even more important, it has allowed me to create a program that can help people in our community. I feel very lucky.”
The Community Care Connection mobile health unit pulls up at the curb in front of St. Anastasia Church in Waukegan, Illinois. It’s Food Pantry day, which means lots of people from the neighborhood have already arrived and are waiting in the church basement for the bags to be distributed. Before the Pantry opens they’re told, in English and Spanish, that the Community Care Connection van is outside, and they are welcome to come there for a wellness check, health screenings and information, all free of charge.
One of the first people to visit the unit is a man in his 30s, who says, “My English is not so good, but I would like to have your services.” He shares that he works in a restaurant, but does not have any health insurance. He appreciates the opportunity to have his blood pressure checked, his cholesterol tested and his questions answered. “I want to stay healthy,” he says with a smile. This is his first time coming to the Community Care Connection van. “We will keep a record of what we do today,” nurse Aimmee Daly, RN, tells him. “That way, next time we see you we can see how you’re doing.”

“I can’t say that this man is typical of the people we serve, because there really is no ‘typical patient,’” says Michael Smith, Coordinator of the Community Care Connection. “We help people of all ages, races and situations at sites throughout Lake County. But many, like this gentleman, take advantage of our services because they have limited resources and appreciate the opportunity to receive professional screenings free of charge. We often schedule our screening visit dates to coincide with food pantry dates, as we did in this case, so that we can reach out to people in the community who really need our help.”

Smith explains that the Community Care Connection mobile health unit, part of the Rosalind Franklin University Health System (RFUHS), is staffed by a team of health care professionals offering a variety of health screening services, including blood pressure; blood sugar/diabetes; cholesterol; body mass index; osteoporosis; and foot screenings. Students from Rosalind Franklin University often assist with the screenings under the supervision of licensed health care providers, which offers them an invaluable learning experience.

The Community Care Connection is just one of the services of RFUHS, which also offers podiatric medicine, internal medicine and family medicine services at its North Chicago location and behavioral health and reproductive medicine services in Vernon Hills, Illinois, and provides health care and counseling services for students of Rosalind Franklin University. Each year, RFUHS serves more than 23,000 individuals who generate approximately 16,500 visits. Approximately 30% of these patients are uninsured or underinsured. “One of the best things about the mobile health unit is our ability to travel to sites where we can make a difference,” Smith adds. “It is a compelling and very visible expression of the University’s commitment to this community.”
Jeeten Singha admits he had a singular motivation in seeking the office of vice president of social affairs for the Class of 2014, Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine. “I knew that one of the main responsibilities of this position was to be in charge of the Dance for Diabetes,” he says. “I wanted that job!”
Jeeten got his wish, with a position that also included organizing fundraisers, setting up class events and attending Student Council meetings. But he says the most exciting challenge was organizing the Dance for Diabetes, an annual event sponsored by Scholl students that raises money for the American Diabetes Association. “This year, our Dance would be the first event of the University’s Centennial year celebration,” he says. “And I planned to knock it out of the park!”

The event, held in January at Chicago’s Drake Hotel, was attended by more than 500 guests. Through Jeeten’s efforts, and with strong support from students at all RFUMS schools, faculty, administration, staff and alumni, the event raised $28,000 — $21,000 for the ADA and another $7,000 for the University’s new Students Dedicated to Diabetes Research and Education Initiative. “We aimed to start our Centennial year with a night to remember, and we did,” Jeeten says.

Jeeten’s leadership of the Dance is just one of the ways this third-year student has made his mark since coming to Scholl. He is also active in a number of student professional organizations, including the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons Student Chapter, the American Podiatric Medical Student Association and the Illinois Podiatric Medical Student Association. He has also served as Chair of the Lake County Arthritis Walk and has volunteered for events such as Lollapalooza, the Chicago Marathon and the Ironman, Wisconsin.

He also serves as a Scholl Ambassador, a role he relishes. “I love having the opportunity to talk to prospective students about this wonderful college,” Jeeten says. His activities have also included outreach to the community’s young people. He served as President of INSPIRE, a student group that mentors and tutors at-risk students from Zion-Benton Township High School, in nearby Zion, Illinois. His efforts as a student leader have led to a number of awards and recognitions, including the RFUMS Student Leadership Award and Scholarship, the “You Rock” Student Leadership Award and Scholarship and the Scholl College Alumni Association Community Engagement Award.

Jeeten was also a nationally ranked junior tennis player, a passion he credits with his interest in podiatric medicine. “As an athlete, I was always aware of the importance of sports medicine,” he says. “As an undergraduate at Olivet Nazarene University, I got to know an inspirational podiatric physician, which contributed to my decision.” But Jeeten also attributes his choice of profession to the home where he and his identical twin, Seeten, grew up. “My mother and father are both in health-related fields and openly shared with us the joy and fulfillment of working in a profession where they could help people,” he says. “They are happy with their work and inspired me to follow in that direction. I know I’ve made the right choice.”

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— Jeeten Singha
Lauren Kuta believes in full circles. Growing up in a suburban Chicago household, she was encouraged by her father to become a pharmacist. “He thought it was a great career for a woman and, with three daughters, he was always looking out for our futures,” she says. Today, many years later, Lauren is a member of the College of Pharmacy’s inaugural class and is on the road to making her father’s long-ago wish come true. But the path took several turns.
“Following high school, I wanted to pursue interior design,” she recalls. “I went to community college for a short time but found I wasn’t really ready for it.” Lauren then enlisted in the US Navy and, for the next five years, was deployed at bases in the Middle East and Europe. Her excellent work as a communications specialist, which supported the efforts of Operation Iraqi Freedom, earned Lauren three Navy and Marine Corps Achievement medals and a Good Conduct medal.

On completion of her military service, Lauren decided to take advantage of her veterans’ benefits to return to college. “By that time, I had decided to focus on science, with a goal of possibly pursuing a career as a dentist,” she explains. At Northern Illinois University she majored in biological sciences, with a minor in chemistry. “One of my chemistry professors sought me out and gave me the opportunity to work as a researcher on a project synthesizing a drug delivery agent,” she says. “That experience clarified a few things for me. First, it showed me the tremendous influence that encouragement from a teacher can have. Second, it inspired me to change gears a bit and pursue a pharmacy degree.”

One of the Chicago-area programs Lauren looked at was Rosalind Franklin University’s new College of Pharmacy. “I couldn’t believe this great timing,” she says. “If accepted, I would be in the very first class.” And, when Lauren attended the open house, her decision was sealed. “I could tell this was a place where the connection with my teachers would be what I had hoped,” she said. “The attention of a teacher from NIU had led me to this choice, and I knew I wanted the same kind of engagement for the next four years.”

Lauren’s initial delight with her admission to the College of Pharmacy was soon magnified by an unexpected phone call. “I was informed that I had been selected to receive a scholarship that would help me pay for this wonderful education,” she says. “I was overwhelmed, very humbled and so happy. This acknowledgment has made me want to work even harder to excel.”

As for the future, Lauren is leaning toward working in a retail environment. “I have already been exposed to the retail pharmacy setting as part of my coursework,” she says. “I love having the opportunity to talk to people of all ages and help them get the medications and guidance they need to stay healthy. My choices and experiences have brought me to the place where I am now, where I am more certain than ever that I have chosen a great profession. My dad was right.”

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— Lauren Kuta
It’s a profession with a long and distinguished history. In fact, as early as the 1860s, nurses were administering anesthesia while caring for wounded soldiers on Civil War battlefields. In the late 1880s, the profession of nurse anesthetist continued to take shape as surgeons sought ways to reduce the high morbidity and mortality attributed to the anesthesia of the time. One of the first was Alice Magaw, who was recruited to her role by Dr. Charles Mayo, who created the Mayo Clinic with his brother, Dr. William Mayo. Working together, Magaw and the Mayo brothers were credited with transforming anesthesia techniques and improving surgical outcomes. Surgeons and nurses from throughout the nation and the world traveled to Minnesota to observe and learn.

Nurse Anesthesia Program Prepares Students for Vital Role
The Nurse Anesthesia Program of the College of Health Professions (CHP) builds on this proud tradition. “Our mission is to prepare and educate nurse anesthetists to provide the highest quality of advanced practice nursing care,” says Sandra Larson, PhD, CRNA, MS, APN, chair of the program. She explains that certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) provide anesthesia in collaboration with surgeons, anesthesiologists, dentists, podiatric physicians and other qualified health care professionals. “All anesthesia professionals, whether their background is in nursing or medicine, provide the same types of anesthesia services,” she says. “CRNAs practice with a high degree of autonomy and in every setting in which anesthesia is delivered.”

CHP’s 27-month Nurse Anesthesia Program begins with classroom teaching, with the second phase including a full-time residency component in which students get a broad base of experience with patients at all acuity levels and undergoing surgical procedures and anesthetic techniques of varying complexity. The program began in 2008 and, in just a short period, has earned recognition for excellence. “Nurses seeking to enter this profession must have a bachelor of science degree, be licensed as registered nurses and have unique experience in critical care nursing. In fact, most applicants are formally certified as critical care registered nurses,” Dr. Larson explains. “Admission requirements for the program include a minimum of one year in ICU nursing, along with a highly competitive cumulative and science undergraduate GPA. Each year, our applicant pool averages for both of those elements have increased, reflecting the increasing high caliber of professionals who want to be part of our program.” She points out that the program’s success is also reflected in recent board-certification results. “Our graduates must pass a national board nurse anesthesia certification exam in order to practice. Our Class of 2012 raised the bar for all future graduates by achieving a 100% first-time pass rate. Most recently, we were thrilled to receive news that our program received 10-year accreditation, with no requirement for progress reports, from the Council on Accreditation. Further, I was proud to learn from the Council that very few programs are granted this maximum accreditation.”

Dr. Larson says our University and program faculty, our culture of excellence and our clinical sites are the keys to its quality. “In a way, we have been able to turn a challenge into an advantage,” she says. “Unlike many nurse anesthetist programs, ours is not based in a hospital. So, we have taken our University to 27 clinical sites, affording us the opportunity to expose our students to various types of practices, settings and anesthesia experiences and to attract faculty members from hospitals in Illinois and Wisconsin who represent a range of anesthesia specialties. In other words, our students might learn firsthand about obstetrical anesthesia from a practicing CRNA who specializes in that field and from another who, like myself, is a specialist in cardiothoracic anesthesia. Moreover, each of our faculty members personally mentors three or four students and has a weekly dialogue with them. This is an outstanding, personalized investment in each student’s training.”

She explains that programs such as this one are vitally important in the evolving health care environment. “Today, 65% of patients in the United States receives anesthesia from a CRNA,” Dr. Larson says. “In rural America, CRNAs are the primary providers of anesthesia, enabling health care facilities in underserved areas to offer needed obstetrical, surgical and trauma stabilization services.

“We expect the role of the CRNA to continue to expand as communities and institutions face the challenges of balancing costs with the need to provide safe, outstanding surgical care,” Dr. Larson adds. “Our program, offering excellent education at a University that values professional teamwork, is well poised to make an impact.”

“Our program, offering excellent education at a University that values professional teamwork, is well poised to make an impact.”

— Dr. Sandra Larson
The financial position of the University continues to strengthen since FY 2009. Fiscal year 2012 sees the results of a financial strategy focused on recovery from the impact of the global downturn in 2008 and 2009. Net assets and unrestricted net assets have increased to $83 million and $70 million, respectively. Our endowment continues to rebuild and operating results have been increasingly positive for four successive years. We have met or exceeded our benchmark financial metrics for liquidity, debt service, cash flow and infrastructure investment.

Operating Results

Net operating results, for FY 2012, were $3.3 million, the result of strategic investments in revenue-producing endeavors and a rigorous focus on expense control. Operating revenue increased by $9 million, or 9% over last year, with the largest contributions to growth coming from tuition and sponsored research. Consistent with our commitment to educational affordability, the average increase in tuition rates was just 3% across all colleges. Growth in tuition revenue was driven by growth in enrollment. The College of Pharmacy successfully filled its inaugural class of 65 and the application rates for all programs far exceeds the number of students that we can accept.

Seven years ago, RFUMS made significant investments in its research infrastructure. While we have reaped the benefits of those investments, in prior years, in the quality of our faculty recruits, research opportunities for our students and in research publications and grants, we are also seeing tangible financial results. Despite a challenging NIH funding environment, total sponsored research revenue increased by 16% in FY 2012. Included in grants and contracts is a $1 million grant from the State of Illinois for the Independent Colleges Capital Program. The grant was used for the construction of the Morningstar Interprofessional Education Center.

Expenditures

In fiscal year 2012, enrollment grew by 5%, total revenue by 9%, but overall operating expenses by just 6%. The University has realized the financial benefits of cost reductions and efficiencies that were implemented in previous years. University overhead has remained static and discretionary resources have been allocated to key strategic priorities. In FY 2012, those priorities included: investments in educational excellence including the restructuring of core departments and curricula, investments in educational technology and upgrades to our Learning Resource Center and classroom spaces, investments in strategic partnerships and alliances, and in our research enterprise.
Going Forward

As the University focuses its sights on the future, we believe that the next 10 years are critical ones for higher education and for the health professions. Our financial strategy over the prior four years has been focused on strengthening our financial base and positioning the University to respond to our rapidly changing external environment. In May 2012, Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science launched a new four-year strategic plan. Our vision: To achieve national recognition as the premier interprofessional health sciences University. Our financial investments reflect our commitment to achieving that vision.

Audited Financial Statements

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

Rosalind Franklin University's fiscal year 2012 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 health care 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.