

Dear colleagues,

This year marks 26 years that I have served as Dean of the School of Medicine and 14 years as Executive Vice President/Chancellor for Health Sciences. When I look back on those years, it's incredible to think of all we have accomplished together. While there are still key projects that are close to my heart that have not been completed, I feel that it's time to retire and transition the HSC and School of Medicine to new executive leadership.

In discussing my decision with President Garnett Stokes, we agreed that I will stay on in my current position helping to facilitate the important work that you do for our community until a permanent replacement is hired and in place. Dr. Stokes will commence that search immediately. Once I hand off my leadership role to my successor, I will look forward to working part-time in the School of Medicine directly with students. The students are at the center of why we are here, and I will now have the opportunity to spend more meaningful time with them and with my colleagues in the School of Medicine.

Words can never describe what The University of New Mexico, the School of Medicine and the Health Sciences Center have meant to me over the years. I came here as a young man in 1976, fresh out of medical school, seeking a residency in family medicine. I thought this was just a next step in my career but what I found was a beautiful community, my family and my home. I will never be able to repay the debt of the many kind New Mexicans, students, faculty, staff and alums who have enriched my life. I will never tire of watching the Sandia Mountains turn that picturesque shade of pink in the evening, or the smell of roasting chile in the fall, or of continuing to hear of all your successes in the coming years.

I want you to know that even though my tenure as Chancellor and Dean are winding down, my commitment to the work is not. We will continue to vigorously pursue our legislative agenda, including free medical school tuition in exchange for a commitment to practice in the state for four years post-residency. One of the things I am proudest of is shepherding a medical school with students who come from, reflect, and serve New Mexico and I remain committed to removing any barriers that might keep us from expanding that mission. We will also continue to move forward with the new UNM Hospitals tower to address the needs of our practices and patients statewide. I look forward to seeing many of you in the years to come as we celebrate its groundbreaking and someday, its grand opening.

Transitions are hard, but rest assured that the President and the Regents fully support the wonderful work you all are doing, as well as the many initiatives and partnerships we are currently engaged in or negotiating. They will work tirelessly to ensure that the right leader is in place to continue the good work we have done, and to take Health Sciences and the School of Medicine to the next level. Health Sciences is in a strong place financially and structurally and will remain under solid leadership both throughout the remainder of my tenure, and as we transition to our next leader.

Thank you all for being my colleagues and my friends. Working side by side, we have improved healthcare for all New Mexicans, increased equity and diversity amongst health care professionals, and bolstered our research, education and clinical missions. You should be so proud of the work we have done and the path we are forging for the future. This time with you has been the work of a lifetime and one of the greatest loves I have ever had.



Paul