

Dear Members of the NJMS Community:

Now that the New Year has begun, I'm sure many of you are wondering what 2014 has in store, not only for you, but for Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. We all know that a lot can happen and change in a 12-month period. Indeed, our momentous merger with Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, last year, serves as proof of that. But we also know that with change, comes welcomed possibilities for growth and advancement.

In the six months since becoming a unit of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences, we have worked to seize opportunities that will help us to grow and advance, while maintaining our commitment to providing quality education to our students and top-notch care to our patients; to conducting cutting-edge research; and to being of service to our neighbors in Newark and surrounding communities. For example:

- Noting NJMS's commitment to service learning, diversity, and community engagement among our strengths, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education renewed our accreditation for a maximum term of eight years.
- We created the Institute for Infectious and Inflammatory Diseases which combined three centers of excellence at New Jersey Medical School—the Public Health Research Institute, the Center for Immunity and Inflammation and the Center for Emerging Pathogens—to pursue novel approaches to detecting, treating, and preventing a wide range of current and emerging diseases caused by infectious agents and harmful inflammation.
- We remain at the forefront of medical care. In fact, 45 of our physicians, representing a wide range of specialties, were identified as being among the best in their respective fields in the 16th Edition of Castle Connolly Top Doctors: New York Metro Area.
- Our scientists continue to make their mark on the global stage. For instance, a team of researchers from three departments at New Jersey Medical School showed that the topical anti-fungal drug Ciclopirox causes HIV-infected cells to “commit suicide.”
- In our continuing efforts to forge collaborative relationships with other units of RBHS, we have commenced efforts to develop a Multi-Professional Group Practice. As one of the first integrated group practices on the east coast, this effort will provide patients with access to an array of quality health-related services that will include primary, surgical, and dental care as well as physical therapy and nutritional sciences.
- In August, we welcomed 178 newly minted medical students during our Barbara and Norman Seiden White Coat Ceremony. The event was our first as a unit of Rutgers.
- In an effort to enhance our cancer care services, we have begun to explore the possibility of aligning our Cancer Center with the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey.

These examples represent a mere fraction of the activities undertaken at New Jersey Medical School in the last few months and illustrate what we can accomplish with diligence, ingenuity, and a lot of hard work. But we cannot rest on our laurels. We must challenge ourselves to produce results that will not only advance our individual areas, but that will contribute to Rutgers' overall goal of becoming a nationally recognized top-tier institution. If we do this, I have no doubt that 2014 will be a banner year for New Jersey Medical School. In the meantime, I offer you and those you hold dear my genuine wishes for a happy and healthy New Year.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Johnson, MD, FAAP '72  
*The Sharon and Joseph L. Muscarelle Endowed Dean*  
Rutgers New Jersey Medical School