The Dean's Message
Richard Besdine

I believe most of you have heard about the University's recent announcement that my successor as dean of medicine and biological sciences has been selected. I look forward to working with him on a smooth transition. In this, my last message to you as interim dean, I want to tell you what a privilege it has been for me to lead Brown Medical School since July 2002. I feel that much has been accomplished – beginning with much-needed curriculum reform, the LCME accreditation visit, allocation of new faculty positions and research space, and the establishment of new and stronger relationships with the University and with our hospital partners.

The major progress during this interim period is a direct result of the confidence of University Hall in a vision of excellence for Brown Medical School and the Division of Biology and Medicine, and of the commitment to support that vision with new resources. President Simmons, never complacent with the status quo, has clearly signaled to all of us that we must constantly strive to be better. And it has been an honor for me to work closely with Provost Zimmer to create new opportunities that will enable our School to reach excellence and full maturity.

During this interim period, I have grown both professionally and personally, and look forward to putting my skills and knowledge to good use for Brown and for human health and health care. Further advancing the program on aging that brought me to Brown is an exciting and challenging leadership opportunity. I wish my successor in the deanship every success; I commit to being available as needed to help build on the strong foundation that has been established at Brown Medical School for the past 30 years.

One of the brightest spots of my tenure has been in getting to know so many of you medical students. I have valued your insights, commitment to Brown, and constructive criticism, and have tried to be responsive to the many legitimate concerns you have expressed. I look forward to the full realization of the work we have begun in the areas of teaching and the curriculum, physical facilities, and, one day, a dedicated building with the words “Brown Medical School” chiseled in stone above the door.

Thank you for an enriching two and a half years. Here’s wishing you safe, healthy and restful holidays.

Flu Vaccine Triage

Who really needs it? Who gets it? How to decide?
a panel discussion presented by the Ocean State Ethics Network and co-sponsored by the Office of Continuing Medical Education.

Thursday, December 2nd
8:00am - 10:00am
Chancellor’s Dining Room

Guest panelists include an infectious disease specialist and a representative from the State Department of Health. At this discussion we hope to address the scope of the flu vaccine shortage on a statewide level, develop a better understanding of how the present shortage impacts different communities of patients and healthcare providers, and discuss bedside rationing and principles of distributive justice as it applies to the flu vaccine shortage. Breakfast will be served.

Please RSVP
Donna_Goodnow@Brown.edu
or 863-3969

Happy Holidays!

December 8th-15th - Hanukkah
December 21st - Winter Solstice
University closes - Dec. 24th at noon
December 25th - Christmas Day
December 26th - First Day of Kwanzaa
January 1st - Happy New Year!
University resumes - January 3rd, 2005

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I attended the annual meeting of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) in early November. This affords me a good opportunity to see what's going on in medical education in the rest of the country. I was reassured that we are heading in the right direction on all fronts.

Our plans to implement the doctoring course next fall aligns well with a growing national movement focused on the teaching of clinical skills. Paul Ramsey, the Dean at the University of Washington Medical School, presented a plenary talk that was attended by more than a thousand delegates that featured his schools version of our doctoring course. The key elements of his course are the creation of a small cadre of physicians dedicated to teaching clinical skills coupled with a continuity clinic for students in the community where they can practice those skills. This is exactly the model we are using for our doctoring course.

I also attended several sessions dealing with integrated curricula. I discovered that all schools who have attempted to better integrate their basic science courses have struggled with the classes. Most schools have tried to closely coordinate courses around an organ system theme, much as we have done throughout the second year and what has recently been attempted with histology and physiology. This is not really true integration. Schools have also found that it takes a lot of effort to maintain even this model of closely coordinated teaching. It begins to unravel after several years.

Attending these sessions reaffirmed my belief that we needed to utilize a better model for integration as we contemplate a major curriculum reform at Brown. The vision statement recently approved by the Medical Curriculum Committee is just such a model. It envisions integration occurring around a patient-centered curriculum. The major challenge facing us in achieving this transformation will be identifying the financial and human resources necessary to undertake this formidable task. I remain optimistic that we will be able to do so.

The movement towards competency-based curricula in both undergraduate and graduate medical education continues as a major force on the national level. Brown is widely viewed as the international leader in this endeavor. Professionalism also remains as a dominant theme. A consensus has emerged on the definition of professionalism, but the means to measure it remain elusive. Checklists are insufficient to capture the essence of professionalism. Our use of portfolios holds great promise as a more appropriate assessment method.

The AAMC meeting proved to me that we are on the right track. There are no easy answers, but success is attainable.

I wish you all the best for a happy, healthy, and peaceful holiday season!

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**WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE VARIOUS MEDICAL SPECIALTIES OUT THERE?**

MD2008 and MD2007 should consider taking advantage of physician shadowing through the "Medicine In Action Program" which gives you the opportunity, either here in Providence during the semester or in your home state during breaks, to explore a variety of clinical settings and specialties, and to learn more about physician lifestyles.

Go to [http://bms.brown.edu/students/miap/](http://bms.brown.edu/students/miap/) to see the available physicians and fill out a request form online.

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**THE DIRECTOR**

Alexandra Morang

This is the time of year when study space is in demand. The MDL folks have agreed to unlock additional rooms in the BMC on weekends and late evenings in order to increase the amount of available space. In addition, from 5-11pm, rooms 217 and 212 can be opened by the BMC caretaker if not in use as a classroom. If you would like to create a study group of three to four people, you can reserve a study room in advance through Carrie Furtado in the BMC (x2482). In addition, there are several study rooms in the Sciences Library that can be reserved by individuals and small groups. To reserve a room, just call Ginine Hefner at 863-2405. These rooms hold 6-10 students comfortably, have two walls of blackboards, and can be reserved for 4 hour time blocks.

Best of luck on your exams and residency interviews and have a wonderful holiday season!
News from SNMA: Brown Medical School’s chapter of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) recently hosted a debt management workshop led by Harvard Business School graduate students; the workshop focused on loan consolidation and payback. SNMA has also been busy conducting outreach and providing community support. On November 12-14, members represented Brown Medical School at the SNMA regional conference at Boston University Medical School and participated in a clothing/food drive. The chapter also attended a Health Fair at Ebenezer Baptist Church in South Providence. 

Upcoming Events: SNMA is currently seeking volunteers for HPREP (SNMA's high school program), and will be hosting a social. For more information, contact co-presidents Sheree Carney (Sherree_Carney@brown.edu) or Akita Evans (Akita_Evans@brown.edu).

USMLE Step 1 Workshop: On Monday, December 6th from 12:00 pm – 1:00pm, in Room B-13, BMC, Dean Stephen Smith and Learning Specialist Phil Tetreault will provide an overview to Step 1 including the latest preparation materials, methods for developing an effective study plan, techniques for processing and recalling content, question and answer approaches, and ways to develop a board study group as well as an outline of the various resources available at Brown Medical School. All second-year medical students preparing to take Step 1 are invited to attend. Lunch will be provided.

OFFICE OF WOMEN IN MEDICINE

Debra Abeshaus

The Women in Mentor Program will continue throughout the year. There are still some terrific opportunities. We welcome you to e-mail us [debra_abeshaus@brown.edu; michele_cyr@brown.edu] or to stop by the Office of Women in Medicine, Arnold Lab 132/130 about your interests in a “mentor-match.” Also, the WIM Mentor Notebook, which includes a list of mentors, is available for your review in Arnold 132.

Each year the Association of Women Psychiatrists’ announces the Leah J. Dickstein, M.D. Award. The award recognizes a female medical student who has demonstrated superior academic achievement, creativity and leadership—and who best exemplifies the spirit of creativity, energy, and leadership that Dr. Dickstein epitomizes and seeks to foster in others. If you would like to be considered as a nominee for the 2005 Leah J. Dickstein, M.D. Award, applications and details are available on line [www.womenpsych.org], or by stopping by the Office of Women in Medicine (OWM) in Arnold Lab, 1st floor. Completed applications of prospective nominees and the names of two references are due to the Office of Women in Medicine, Box G-A132 by January 10th. Call x3-2450 with questions.

Best wishes for a peaceful holiday respite — happy new year!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Armand D. Versaci  Research Scholar in Surgical Sciences Award recognizes and supports the research initiatives of outstanding residents and fellows to be mentored by Brown Medical School faculty. Two years of salary support for residents or fellows to train under the direct supervision of a qualified mentor. The objective is to foster the development of physician-scientists who will go on to academic careers in surgery. Deadline is Dec. 31, 2004. Start date: July 1, 2005. For more information contact Jorge Albina, MD 401-444-4296 or Jorge_Albina@Brown.edu.

Roswell Park Cancer Institute’s Summer Oncology Research Program Fellowships offering experience in clinical and basic scientific research. Competitive stipend support ($280 per week) to engage in clinical and/or basic scientific research for an eight week period. The program runs from June 6 though July 29, 2005. Applications due Feb. 15, 2005. For more info

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Senator Reports

PLME Senate
Isis Burgos

It is pretty hard to believe that we are but a few days away from marking the end of the fall semester! However, even as the semester draws closer to the end, everyone in the Senate continues to work hard to provide you with programs that you might find valuable and appealing. Listed below are some of the latest news from the Senate.

In an effort to unite the PLME Senate and Med School Senate, we are currently helping the Med School Senate with the Breeze for Wheeze 5K run that is being organized for April 2005 to raise money and community awareness for the Community Asthma Programs of Hasbro Children’s Hospital Asthma Camp. If you are interested in being a part of the planning committee, please email me at Isis_Burgos@brown.edu.

The Whole Patient and Whole Physician chairs are currently in the process of planning events for next semester. If there is a particular topic that you would like to be addressed at a future program or a speaker that you would be interested in bringing to campus, please contact the chairs. Ann Kuo and Carly Seidman are the Whole Patient Chairs and Mary Ottinger and Zachary Gordon are the Whole Physician Chairs.

We will be continuing the study group sessions next semester. They will be starting up again sometime during the second or third week of the semester. If there are any classes for which you would like us to organize a study group, please let us know! As always, you are free to bring along with you any of your non-PLME friends! Also, snacks and drinks are provided!

I just want to remind you that we are still selling PLME t-shirts. The t-shirts cost $10 and are available in a variety of colors. In addition, we are also selling new hooded sweatshirts, which are available for $20.00. If you would like information about how to select/order a t-shirt/ sweatshirt (colors/sizes/etc), please email George_Turini@brown.edu. Please support the Senate by purchasing a t-shirt or a sweatshirt!! These funds help us to put together programs such as the study groups.

George and I look forward to seeing you at the PLME Holiday Social on Friday, December 10 from 12:00 to 1:30 pm in the Chancellor’s Dining Room. As always, George and I look forward to hearing from you. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. Good luck with your finals! We hope that you have a happy and safe winter break!

Student Senate
Charles Hebert

It’s hard to believe that the fall semester is nearly over. Here are a few upcoming items for the month of December before finals get underway.

MD ‘08’ers – The pilot mentor program between PLME undergraduates and medical students mentioned in the last issue of the Pulse has been revised by the PLME co-presidents. We now hope to hold three panels in the spring semester designed to orient rising first-year medical students and answer any other questions they may have. First year students will be a part of some of these panels; please keep an eye on your email when the spring semester begins.

MD ‘07’ers – The USMLE Step 1 informational session about registration and exam content held on November 17 was very well-attended. The majority of students in the second year received it as helpful and thought an additional session devoted specifically to questions would be useful. A date for this future session is in the works. Also, the Senate and the administration hope to convene a panel of upper class students to host a lunchtime discussion of USMLE and answer any questions you might have.

MD ‘05’ers – The graduation planning committee for May Commencement was recently convened to begin the early steps of organizing this major event occurring late next spring. A number of students are already serving on the committee, but there are spots for a few more interested people. Please let Donna Arruda (Donna_Arruda@brown.edu) know of your interest in participating.

All Students: Please remember that you are welcome to attend our regularly scheduled senate meetings held on the first Tuesday of each month in the Purple Palace.

The next senate meeting will be on Tuesday, December 7 @ 7:30pm in the Purple Palace of the BMC. Please make an effort to vote prior to attending!!! Enjoy the holiday season!!!
Hope you all enjoyed a wonderful Thanksgiving with family or friends. Here are some opportunities to keep in mind during December. Good luck with exams, and enjoy a safe and peaceful holiday break!

PLME Class of 2007—Don’t forget the required Educational Planning Meeting on Wednesday, December 1 at 12:00 noon in the Chancellor’s dining room, Sharpe Refectory. At the meeting, Deans Ip and Smith will review the educational planning process that you, with the assistance of your PLME advising dean, will begin next month. It is imperative that all PLME sophomores attend this meeting. Your PLME Educational Plan packet must be picked up at this time. If you will be unable to make the meeting or may be late because of a schedule conflict (i.e., class or lab), please contact Joan_Fullerton@Brown.edu or 863-3133.

ALL PLMEs, EIPs, and Medical Students are invited to the **PLME Holiday Social** on Friday, December 10, 12:00-1:30 p.m. in the Chancellor’s dining room. Take a study break and enjoy a buffet lunch with fellow students.

Summer Research Assistantship Program (SRA) 2005 is open to all PLME undergraduates and medical students. Before leaving campus for winter break, get further information about applying by contacting Joan_Fullerton@Brown.edu, 863-3133. Be sure to meet with possible faculty sponsors and begin plans for your summer research assistantship proposal. Deadline is February 25, 2005.

Summer Fellowship in the Arts and Humanities in Medicine 2005—one fellowship is available to either a PLME undergraduate or medical student. Proposal guidelines are available from Joan_Fullerton@Brown.edu, 863-3133. Deadline is February 25, 2005.

Have you signed up to SHADOW A PHYSICIAN through the Medicine In Action Program? If not, visit http://bms.brown.edu/students/miap.

Announcing the Undergraduate Student Scholars Program in the NIH Center for Molecular Studies in Digestive and Liver Disease at the University of Pennsylvania, an organized program of summer lectures and presentations combined with basic research experience in the laboratory of an expert investigator. The curriculum is designed specifically for undergraduate students with an interest in medicine and biomedical research. For more information and an application, visit www.uphs.upenn.edu/molecular/Summer_Program/index or contact Yuliis Bell at belly@mail.med.upenn.edu or 215-898-0850. Applications must be received by March 1, 2005.

Do YOU have your ROADMAP to opportunities in INTERNATIONAL experience, or PUBLIC HEALTH and MPH, or RESEARCH? Visit http://bms.brown.edu/plme to download your copy.

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**PLME SENIORS**

Thinking of taking time off before entering medical school?

Consider the Postbaccalaureate Intramural Research Training Award (IRTA) and the National Cancer Institute’s Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA) Fellowships which provide opportunities for recent college graduates to spend a year engaged in biomedical investigation at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland and selected off-campus locations.

While in this program participants work side-by-side with some of the leading scientists in the world in an environment devoted exclusively to biomedical research. The duration of the program is normally one year, but the fellowship can be extended for an additional year provided the performance of the trainee is satisfactory and continued support by the laboratory is available.

Both programs offer a challenging laboratory experience. The NIH Academy is only able to accept about ten trainees a year (www.training.nih.gov/student/Pre-IRTA/irtamanualpostbacAcademy.asp). These are trainees who have demonstrated a well-defined interest in health disparities. The Postbaccalaureate IRTA (www.training.nih.gov/student/Pre-IRTA/previewpostbac.asp?AppType=Postbac) selects a much larger number of trainees who have a broad scope of research interests.
BMS Admissions Staff on the Road:
Perhaps some of you have already visited the new page on the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid’s web site entitled “Admissions Staff on the Road” (link to it from “Of Interest to Applicants” at http://bms.brown.edu/admissions/news/). On it you will find a list of upcoming events in which Admissions staff or BMS deans will be involved. For example, Dean Smith will be traveling to Boston University next March, participating as a panel member at BU’s Premedical Society’s “Deans Night.” In addition to special events such as this, we will be making regular visits to many of BMS’s feeder schools and a number of top colleges and universities in the Northeast. Our goal is to raise awareness about the newly-implemented “standard” route of admission, and to promote Brown Medical School in general.

It is easy to speak at such venues about the many features and qualities of BMS: its atmosphere of intellectual openness and creativity; passionate, intelligent students; accessible faculty; an abundance of research opportunities; and groundbreaking curriculum, just to name a few. But much of what makes Brown unique among other medical schools lies in its intangibles; specifically, the individual experiences of Brown Medical students. Presentations tend to come alive (as does the audience) when the speaker touches on real-life examples. Applicants typically ask us, “What’s it really like to be a medical student at Brown?” We would love to get your help in answering this question, and there are two ways you can contribute. First, you may have anecdotes or thoughts you would be willing to share about any aspect of your BMS experience, which we could incorporate into our talks. Or you may be interested in more direct involvement, in which case we would invite you to join us on one of our recruitment visits (particularly at your alma mater), where you would have the opportunity to meet with prospective applicants and personally share your Brown Med experience. A list of schools that we anticipate visiting can be found on the OAFA web site at http://bms.brown.edu/admissions/interest/road.html.

If either of these options is of interest to you, please contact Susan Browne at 863-9834 or Susan_Browne@brown.edu. Thank you in advance!

Step I Exam Fee for MD ’07 Students
If you are a financial aid recipient and you wish to register for Step I before your second semester refund is available, our office would be happy to provide a short-term loan to you for this purpose. The Step I exam fee, which is currently $445, is indeed included in your financial aid budget, but the timing for this expense unfortunately does not always coincide with the issuance of your refund. Please be in touch with Filomena Zani (863-1142 or Filomena_Zani@brown.edu) by December 15th if you would like to request a short-term loan.

Did you recently receive a revised financial aid award? Several dozen students have, and all of the revisions involved improvements, typically the replacement of one loan with a better loan or in some cases an increase in your scholarship. If your revised award required you to complete a new set of Brown loan promissory notes, please be sure to sign and return them to the Brown University Loan Office as soon as possible. Call or email Filomena Zani if you have any questions.

Residency Interviewing Expenses for MD ’05 Students:  We would like to remind you again to save receipts for residency interviewing expenses, which may be tax deductible if you itemize your deductions on your tax return. In addition, please remember to keep track of any moving expenses in the spring as these, too, may be deductible under certain circumstances. We will provide further guidance regarding these tax issues in January and again at the financial planning workshops in the spring.

Best wishes to you and your families for a restful and joyous holiday season!

First- and Second-Year Medical Students
Junior and Senior PLME Students
want to study in GERMANY this summer?
(Lectures in English, room & board included)

Choose one two-week course (includes intensive seminar)

**Tubingen University**
June 19-July 1, 2005
“Comparative Medical Ethics”

**Rostock University**
July 4 - July 16, 2005
“Infectious Diseases, Tropical & Travel Medicine”

*OR, attend both programs for a total of four weeks.*

**An information sheet is available from Hilary_Sweigart@brown.edu**
On November 10, 2004, 75 physicians and other health-care professionals attended a Clinical Faculty Retreat. Dr. Jordan Cohen, President of the American Association of Medical Colleges, presented his perspectives on medical education in the twenty-first century. During the workshop sessions, Dr. Arthur Frazzano, Associate Dean for Clinical Faculty and course leader for the Doctoring course, discussed the role that the office-based physician will play in the new two-year clinical skills course that will replace Medical Interviewing and the Physical Diagnosis course next academic year.

At its November 3, 2004 meeting, the Medical Curriculum Committee unanimously approved The Report of the Strategic Planning Subcommittee of the Brown Medical School Curriculum Committee. The statement provides a new integrated curriculum vision for the Medical School. The document will be forwarded to the Dean for his consideration.

At its November 18, 2004 meeting, the Subcommittee for Years I & II decided to review during the spring semester the pharmacology and the supporting structures sections of Bio 351: Integrated Pathophysiology/Pharmacology.

At its November 16, 2004 meeting, the Subcommittee for Years III & IV decided to discuss with the clerkship directors the substantive review process now that all of the core clerkships have undergone a review. The subcommittee members wish to learn from the clerkship directors how the review process may be enhanced, and how the subcommittee can best help the course leaders improve their core clerkships.
call or write Arthur Michalek, at 716-845-2339 or arthur.michalek@roswellpark.org.

Doris Duke Clinical Research Fellowship Program is soliciting applications for the fourth class of fellows. The 2005-2006 fellows will begin in July 2005. Stipends of $23,000 plus health insurance to spend a year conducting clinical research and receiving didactic training. Deadline is Jan. 18, 2005. More information available at www.ddcf.org/mrp/crf or contact the Foundation at ddcfcrf@aibs.org.

The Stanley J. Sarnoff Endowment for Cardiovascular Science, Inc., announces the research Fellowship awards for 2005-2006. The Sarnoff Fellowship Program supports outstanding medical students to conduct intensive work in a biomedical research laboratory for one year. Annual stipend of $25,000, moving allowance, travel expenses and health insurance. Deadline Jan. 12, 2005. For more info contact Dana Boyd at (703) 759-7600 or dana.boyd@verizon.net or go to www.SarnoffEndowment.org.

The White House Fellowships is now accepting applications for the 2005-2006 Class of Fellows who typically spend a year working as full-time, paid special assistants to senior White House Staff. Deadline Feb. 1, 2005. For more info see www.whitehouse.gov/fellows or contact Lisa Walsh at lwalsh@whf.eop.gov or (202) 395-4522

The Osler Library of the History of Medicine at McGill University sponsors a travel grant, designed to assist scholars who need to travel and establish temporary residence in Montreal in order to use the resources of the library. Grant is available to historians, physicians and those interested in the arts and humanities of medical history. Award of $1,500 (Canadian) and must be held from 2-4 weeks during 2005. Deadline is Dec. 31, 2004. More info available from Pamela Miller, (514) 398-4475 ext. 09870 or Pamela.Miller@McGill.Ca

2005 American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) Grant Programs: The Glenn/AFAR Scholarship for Research in the Biology of Aging is designed to attract potential scientists to aging research and provides MD and PhD students the opportunity to conduct a three-month research project. Up to 25 scholarships of $6,000 will be awarded. Deadline Feb. 25, 2005. The AFAR medical student Geriatric Scholars Program is to encourage medical students to consider a career in academic geriatrics. Visit www.afar.org or call 212-703-9977 for more information on both grants.

The American College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ACNP) in conjuction with Pfizer, Inc are offering the ACNP/Pfizer Minority Summer Fellow Program for 2005 to promote the interest of minority graduate students and residents in careers in psychopharmacology and the neurosciences. Support to carry out a research project for 6-8 weeks and $7,500 to cover room/board. Research interest should be in the area of schizophrenia. Deadline is Dec. 30, 2004. For more info contact ACNP Secretariat at (615) 322-2075.