From the President’s Desk

A Hopeful Look to the Future

Welcome to 2010, the beginning of both a new year and a new decade. We are cautiously optimistic that we have bid farewell to what was the country’s most difficult economic year in decades. Despite the continued uncertain economic climate, the MGH Institute has much to be hopeful about in the coming year.

We have emerged from our own economic downturn and are now operating with a positive financial balance. We have a talented and dedicated group of faculty, staff, and senior administrators, along with students who are highly motivated and committed to their chosen health care fields. We are especially fortunate to have a very active and engaged group of Trustees, and to be part of one of the largest and most viable health care systems in the country.

Over the past year, we have been witness to executive branch and congressional efforts to address the nation’s critical priority of reforming our system of health care, which many say is not a system at all, as it does not reflect a system’s defining hallmarks – a group of interacting, interrelated, interdependent elements that form a coherent whole. Whether a coherent system or not, and regardless of what the final health care reform legislation eventually looks like, the Institute’s mission to educate the very best health sciences professionals will be influenced by what emerges and is ultimately approved.

We will continue to monitor reform efforts to assure that our programs and faculty remain responsive to and appropriately aligned with these, and our graduates continue to be well-prepared to practice and lead in the complex and ever-changing world of health care delivery.

New Growth on the Horizon

As we project our future, we anticipate continued growth through new programs and initiatives, and sustained commitment to achieving our strategic priorities. These priorities include:

• Advancing the Institute's distinctiveness as a premier health sciences graduate school;
• Ensuring an outstanding student experience from enrollment through graduation and beyond;
• Sustaining and further strengthening the excellence of our academic programs and faculty;
• Building our research capability and productivity; and
• Aligning our resources to support our strategic priorities.

These priorities are further strengthened by a cross-cutting commitment to diversity, leveraging our relationships with Partners HealthCare, and applying a model of continuous improvement to all we do.

Bonds with MGH, Partners Strengthening

I’m happy to report that we have made much progress in strengthening our place within MGH and Partners HealthCare. In December, I had the privilege of joining Partners senior leaders and others in honoring outgoing Partners president and CEO Dr. James Mongan for his vision and leadership of Partners (and previously of MGH) during the past 15 years. Dr. Mongan has been a wonderful friend and supporter of the Institute, and the Institute’s Board of Trustees presented him with a “Friend of the Institute” certificate of appreciation at our May 2009 Commencement.

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Institute Sets Fundraising Record at Scholarship Gala

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Begun in 2007 to raise scholarship funds for students attending the Boston graduate school for health sciences, the gala generated more than $300,000, pushing the total amount raised for scholarships to more than $825,000 for 2009. The amount set a new record for the event.

Proceeds from the gala fund new scholarships for MGH Institute students studying nursing, physical therapy, speech-language pathology, and medical imaging. Enrollment has grown more than 35% in the past five years to more than 900 full- and part-time students, requiring the school to expand its financial aid resources accordingly.

“These goals include:
• Developing a road map and identifying concrete actions to support diversity.
• Achieving growth and assuring sustainability through diversification of programs and revenue as well as bold innovation, i.e., assuring the Institute remains on the cutting edge of health sciences education.

In March, the Trustees will focus on identifying key measures that will enable them to track progress in achieving these goals, with anticipation of receiving quarterly “dashboard” reports.

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“To get this kind of turnout in this economy is very impressive,” said MGH Institute President Dr. Janis P. Bellack, “It’s a strong indication that people value the education we are providing to help alleviate the shortage of health care professionals not just in nursing but in all fields.”

Three $25,000 gala Diamond Sponsors – CVS MinuteClinic, Massachusetts General Hospital, and Dr. Charles and Mrs. Ann Sanders – each underwrote one scholarship for a currently enrolled student.

From the Board Room

Trustees Set Goals For the Next 18 Months

At its December meeting, the Board of Trustees reviewed the Institute’s strategic priorities, and outlined a set of specific goals for the next 18 months to guide their own work and governance responsibilities.

These goals include:
• Enhancing the Institute’s brand and distinctiveness through relationships with Partners and beyond, through appropriate global aspirations and research goals, and through reputation and recognition.
• Effectively managing organizational culture change as the Institute grows, including attention to ongoing development of faculty, staff, and administrators; and
• Ensuring alignment of the Institute’s vision and fiscal resources.

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Institute Prepares for Accreditation Review

The MGH Institute is scheduled for its 10-year review by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) this Spring. NEASC serves as the regional accreditor of the Institute, and maintaining regional accreditation is essential to ensuring access to federal financial aid and other federal resources.

For the past 18 months, members of the Institute community have been engaged in a collective self-study process to evaluate the Institute against the NEASC standards for colleges and universities. A Self-Study Steering Committee, chaired by Associate Provost Bette Ann Harris, staffed by Executive Assistant to the President Elizabeth Camelo, and composed of the chairs of ten subcommittees, has coordinated and led the self-study review. Each of the ten teams includes members from administration, faculty, and staff, and students have had an opportunity for input to the standard on Students as well.

The self-study report, which was completed and submitted to NEASC this month, will be posted on the Institute’s Web site (www.mghihp.edu) for the entire community to read.

The site visit and evaluation, scheduled for March 28-31, will be conducted by a team of eight individuals drawn from various areas of higher education such as academics, finance, IT, and student affairs. The team will be chaired by Dr. Beverly Swan, provost emerita at the University of Rhode Island. Dr. Swan is an experienced site visitor and team chair, and has already made a preliminary visit to the Institute.

During the site visit, the team will meet with members of the Board of Trustees and key administrative and academic units, and will hold three open meetings for students, faculty, and staff. The team will issue its preliminary report the morning of March 31, which will be submitted to the NEASC Commission on Higher Education for review and formal action on the Institute’s continued accreditation. The Commission is expected to notify the school of its action in Fall 2010.

The review process has been one of critical self-examination that involved identifying the Institute’s many strengths, acknowledging its ongoing challenges, and outlining recommendations for improvement.

“I am confident the Institute is well-positioned for a favorable review by the site visit team and the NEASC Commission on Higher Education,” said President Bellack. “I hope you will carefully review the self-study report when it becomes available, and will join with the full Institute community in welcoming the site visit team to our campus in late March, and participating in the visit as the opportunity allows.”

Please contact Associate Provost BA Harris or Executive Assistant Elizabeth Camelo with any questions about the review process or the upcoming site visit.

Search for School of Nursing Dean Under Way

The search for a new dean of the School of Nursing is moving forward, as three candidates gave presentations to the Institute community as part of the formal interview process.

“We’ve been excited about the quality of candidates from across the country,” said Department of Physical Therapy Chair Leslie Portney, DPT, PhD, FAPTA, who is chair of the 12-member Search Committee. “The outstanding reputation of the Institute and its nursing programs continues to attract interest from many experienced and well-known nurse educators.”

Dean Margery Chisholm, EdD, RN, CS, ABPP, has announced she will be returning to teaching at the Institute once a new dean has been appointed. Dr. Chisholm, who had been director of the former nursing program, was named the first dean when the Institute reorganized last spring and created a new School of Nursing.
MGH Institute Publishes 2009 Annual Report

In its 2009 Annual Report, the MGH Institute highlights the achievements of its faculty, students, and alumni.

The 36-page report, entitled *Advancing a New Era in Health Sciences Education*, has five sections that detail how the Institute remains a unique and innovative graduate school that integrates rigorous academics with clinical practice.

The sections are: The Vision to Lead, Innovation and Teaching, From Practice to Mastery, Creating Leaders, and Building the Future.

Profiles are sprinkled throughout the publication and are matched to large-scale photographs, giving readers a glimpse of the people who exemplify the qualities that make the Institute a transformative experience for so many.

Also included are the school’s financials, grants, endowment, and donors for Fiscal Year 2009, as well as its new Fact Sheet and Mission Statement.

The complete Annual Report is available as a PDF by going to www.mghihp.edu/about-us/news-room/publications/default.aspx.

From the President’s Desk (continued from page 1)

We look forward to working with the new Partners president and CEO Dr. Gary Gottlieb, former president and CEO of Brigham and Women’s Hospital. We wish him well in leading Partners during this time of great challenge and impending change in health care. I will be meeting with Dr. Gottlieb to update him on the Institute’s progress, as well as our vision and plans for an even stronger future.

Next up: Re-accreditation

Despite the challenges in both the economy and health care, the Institute remains a dynamic and exciting place to learn and work. As we enter this new semester, we have completed our self-study in preparation for an evaluation visit in late March by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). We look forward to showcasing our many strengths while also acknowledging where and how we need to improve, and our plans for doing so.

An Ode to the Coming Spring

In the midst of this winter season, I leave you with this uplifting passage from 20th Century British author-poet Vita Sackville-West, and wish for a quick journey to spring:

*The shortest day has passed, and whatever nastiness of weather we may look forward to in January and February, at least we notice that the days are getting longer.*

*Minute by minute they lengthen out. It takes some weeks before we become aware of the change.*

*It is imperceptible ... as we watch it day by day, until the moment comes when with a start of delighted surprise we realize that we can stay out of doors in a twilight lasting for another quarter of a precious hour.*

Janis P. Bellack, PhD, RN, FAAN
President and John Hilton Knowles Professor

Short Takes

Communication Sciences and Disorders Associate Professor, Charles Haynes was inducted into the International Dyslexia Association’s Hall of Honor for his contributions to the field of dyslexia.

Alumnae Grace Ann Good ’01 and Adele L. Keeley SON ’81 were named 2009 Nursing Spectrum National Nursing Excellence Nurse of the Year Award winners.

The *Boston Herald* profiled several students and faculty in a story that ran throughout the paper’s special pull-out section on health care careers. It was published in November 2009.

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders Clinical Instructor Carmen Vega-Barachowitz was recognized as a Diversity Champion by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

Department of Physical Therapy Clinical Associate Professor Tracy Brudvig was appointed to the Specialty Council on Orthopedic Physical Therapy of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) for a four-year term that began in January.

Associate Professor Janice Bell Meisenhelder gave a talk to Massachusetts General Hospital nurses on her original research, “Terrorism, Post-Traumatic Stress, Coping Strategies, and Spiritual Outcomes” and its implications for compassionate clinical care. The talk was detailed in the hospital’s *Caring Headlines* magazine in November.

A new Diversity Council has been formed. Composed of members throughout the school, its charge is to provide a forum for continued vigilance directed toward creation, promotion and maintenance of activities, programs, and policies that further the Institute community’s understanding of and support for diversity.