DEAN’S REPORT

Vibrant — this is the perfect adjective to capture the times in our profession and our school. Enjoy a glimpse of the lively activities in the School of Nursing through the pages of this issue of the Progress Report as we celebrate accomplishments of our alumni, faculty, and students, and the 30th anniversary of Creighton’s master’s degree program in nursing, ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* in the top 100 graduate programs in nursing.

Excitement abounds in our profession with the October 2010 release of the landmark report: *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. Sponsored by the Institute of Medicine and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the *Future of Nursing* report is the outcome of a two-year study conducted by a panel of health care experts on nursing’s capacity to respond to the needs of a reformed health care and public health system, and includes national recommendations for nursing roles, service delivery and education, and related changes in public and institutional policies. The four messages that underlie the recommendations in the report are:

- Nurses should practice to the full extent of their education and training.
- Nurses should achieve higher levels of education and training through an improved education system that promotes seamless academic progression.
- Nurses should be full partners, with physicians and other health professionals, in redesigning health care in the United States.
- Effective workforce planning and policy making require better data collection and an improved information infrastructure. (*Institute of Medicine, 2011, S-3*).

Creighton faculty members are engaging in discussions on implementation of the report’s recommendations and addressing the challenges faculty shortages pose to transforming the educational system and health care delivery. For example, in addition to preparing nurses for advanced practice, the School of Nursing offers three graduate-level education courses to teach nurse practitioners, clinical specialists, and nurse managers the principles of learning and instruction, including the processes, philosophies and supporting theories for designing and assessing curriculum and instruction, and evaluating learning, educational programs and offerings. We received federal funding through the Nurse Faculty Loan Program that pays up to 85 percent of tuition for students who plan to teach following graduation. Our faculty who are nurse practitioners are providers in area clinics and serve as exceptional models of nurses who practice to the full extent of their education. We also created a new position in the school, Faculty Development Coordinator, to plan and implement activities that support and enhance all dimensions of the faculty role—clinical practice, teaching, service, and research/scholarship. Dr. Anne Schoening is the School’s first Faculty Development Coordinator, and she is working closely with the other members of the faculty and academic leadership team to promote excellence in clinical and nursing education, support the teacher-scholar model, assist faculty members with academic career development, and enhance retention of faculty members.

Throughout its history, your school and its faculty have demonstrated a sustained commitment to leading innovation in nursing education. I also want to acknowledge the many contributions our alumni make to the teaching mission of the school. The Alumni Advisory Board members provide input into the types, relevance, and quality of the school’s educational offerings. Many of our alumni serve as clinical preceptors for graduate and undergraduate students, guest speakers in courses, and presenters at special educational events such as the recent alumni reunion continuing education program.

Your ideas and participation are welcome as we examine the *Future of Nursing’s* recommendations and work to redesign and transform health care and nursing practice and education.

Best wishes to all for a blessed holiday season and a wonderful 2011.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Howell, PHD, RN