The University of Kansas Medical Center serves Kansas by educating the health care leaders of tomorrow, making research discoveries that are changing the world, and building healthier communities throughout our state.

The theme of the annual report you have before you is “Building the Future of Health Care.” KU Medical Center has experienced a year that saw the dedication of a new state-of-the-art simulation center, as well as groundbreaking ceremonies for a new Health Education Building and the new Cambridge North Tower at The University of Kansas Hospital, our primary clinical partner.

Yes, we are building for the future in the literal sense, providing our students, researchers and patients with modern facilities for learning, discovery and patient care. But KU Medical Center’s new buildings are more than capital improvement projects. They are the launching points for a new era in our history. It is our hope that our rapidly evolving physical campus will serve as a motivator for our unique and diverse community of students, faculty and staff dedicated to education and innovation.

Those who come to us in search of a health care education, a promising scientific career or leading-edge clinical care deserve to find that in the best environment we can provide. Thanks to the support of our donors, community partners, alumni and legislators, we are well on our way to doing just that.

Douglas A. Girod, M.D.  
Executive Vice Chancellor  
The University of Kansas Medical Center
As one of the nation’s rising academic medical centers, the University of Kansas Medical Center is constantly searching for new and better ways to train the next generation of leaders in health care and biomedical research.

One of the ways KU Medical Center is advancing education is through upgrading teaching facilities. Ground was broken in the summer of 2015 on the $75 million Health Education Building, which will allow KU Medical Center to increase the number of health care providers trained, and to educate them in the technologically advanced environment required by a modern health care curriculum. The building, which is scheduled to open in the summer of 2017, will serve as the primary teaching facility for the KU schools of Medicine, Nursing, and Health Professions and will include significant simulation space and flexible, state-of-the-art learning space to support interprofessional education and other new models of teaching.

Also in 2015, the $2 million Zamierowski Institute for Experiential Learning opened. The institute, a joint venture between KU Medical Center and The University of Kansas Hospital, is outfitted with state-of-the-art manikins and medical equipment in patient suites designed to simulate realistic clinical situations for students, faculty and health care providers.

Educating Leaders

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Campuses in Salina and Wichita graduate first 4-year classes

In May 2015, the KU School of Medicine campuses in Salina and Wichita graduated their first four-year classes. Eight students graduated from the Salina campus, which was established in 2011 to help train more medical students with a desire to practice in rural and underserved areas of Kansas. The Wichita campus, which ranks fifth in the country when it comes to training primary care physicians, had eight students among its first graduating class, who had spent their entire four years of medical education in Wichita.

Students participate in IPE training

Nearly 1,000 KU School of Medicine, School of Nursing, School of Health Professions and School of Pharmacy students and faculty participated in interprofessional training exercises. The exercises are designed to help students better understand the roles each health profession plays and allows them more intense interaction with students from other disciplines. The training involves giving small interdisciplinary teams an actual case study, with the teams working together to come up with an interprofessional patient transition plan.

New deans for nursing and health professions hired

New deans for the School of Nursing and the School of Health Professions came to KU in 2016. Sally (Maliski) Fic, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, was named dean of the School of Nursing after serving as associate dean for academic affairs at the UCLA School of Nursing. Abiodun Akintunji, Ph.D., MPH, MBA, the new dean of the School of Health Professions, was associate dean for research in the College of Allied Health Sciences and professor of physical therapy, ophthalmology and neurology at Georgia Regents University in Augusta, Georgia.

Devin named a Fulbright Scholar

Kirsten Devin, a third-year student at the KU School of Medicine, was awarded a prestigious Fulbright U.S. Student Program grant in 2015. Recipients of Fulbright grants are selected on the basis of academic and professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential. Devin will spend nine months working at a health clinic at Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora in Minas Gerais in Brazil. She said she has a special interest in studying gender-related preventive medicine in the South American country.
Researchers at the University of Kansas Medical Center continued to build upon their success in pursuing breakthrough discoveries in clinical research, basic sciences and translational research. This year, scientists in the KU Schools of Medicine, Nursing and Health Professions worked to find treatments for disease, to better understand the causes of disease and to improve patient outcomes. Over the past year, KU Medical Center researchers have made great strides in unlocking some of the mysteries around the role metabolism plays in Alzheimer’s disease; advancing the search for a cure and treatments for polycystic kidney disease; and exploring the role a derivative of saffron may play in the inhibition of pancreatic cancer cells.

Through programs at The University of Kansas Cancer Center, Frontiers, and the KU Alzheimer’s Disease Center KU Medical Center works in partnership with our region and state’s renowned universities, hospitals, nonprofit organizations, lawmakers, civic groups, and others on research initiatives that are changing the face of health care.

Advancing Research

PKD core center announced
Kansas Polycystic Kidney Disease Research and Translation Core Center was launched with a $5.4 million grant from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The center is one of only four nationwide to receive this type of research funding from the NIH. The five-year Core Center Grant (P30) was awarded to James Calvet, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and his colleagues at the Kidney Institute.

Researcher given breast cancer clinical research award
Priyanka Sharma, Ph.D., with the Drug Discovery, Delivery and Experimental Therapeutics program at The University of Kansas Cancer Center and associate professor of hematology and oncology, was awarded the 2015 Advanced Clinical Research Award in Breast Cancer from the American Society of Clinical Oncology to research biomarkers in triple negative breast cancer. Triple negative breast cancer is defined by the absence of therapeutic markers (estrogen receptor, progesterone receptors and HER2 protein).

Older adults improve brain function by raising fitness levels
New research conducted at KU Medical Center indicated that older adults can improve brain function by raising their fitness level. Jeffrey Burns, M.D., professor of neurology and co-director of the KU Alzheimer’s Disease Center, led a six-month trial conducted with healthy adults ages 65 and older who showed no signs of cognitive decline. The results of the study were published in the journal PLOS ONE. The research indicated that the intensity of the exercise appeared to matter more than the duration.

Early physical activity helps stroke recovery
Associate professor of physical therapy and rehabilitation sciences, Sandra Billinger, PT, Ph.D., FAHA, and her team at the Research in Exercise and Cardiovascular Health (REACH) Laboratory, designed a first-of-its-kind study to objectively quantify stroke patients’ activity early after stroke, especially during the hospital stay.

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Faculty member brings better health care to Ghana

During the past five years, providing aid to the African nation of Ghana has become a driving force for Karen Schell, DHSc, RRT-NPS, an assistant professor in the Department of Respiratory Care Education. Schell has teamed with Lisa Trujillo, DHSc, RRT, an assistant professor at Weber State University in Utah, to create Ghana’s first bachelor’s degree program in respiratory care. The program launched in the fall of 2015 at the University of Ghana with 10 students—a first for the school and a first for the country.

As of January 1, 2016, all three institutions came to a final agreement on the clinical integration process Implementation began immediately with the merging of The University of Kansas Hospital and the 18 foundations that comprise The University of Kansas Physicians. This new model will allow the health system to achieve greater mission alignment, increase its level of care and grow revenue, part of which is then directed to fund research and education within the medical center.

Training program improves obstetric emergencies outcomes

Health care professionals at KU Medical Center and The University of Kansas Hospital have been using a classroom and simulation program designed to improve outcomes for mothers and their babies experiencing obstetric emergencies. A research study published in the journal of Perinatology in 2015 found that the program is associated with a significant reduction in the rates of Cesarean delivery and Cesarean birth. The study was led by Susana Patton, Ph.D., associate professor of pediatrics at KU Medical Center.

Making healthy food affordable for diabetic children

A healthy diet for families with children who have type 1 diabetes can add up to $1,500 or more to a family’s annual food budget, according to a study by researchers at the University of Kansas Medical Center. The study was led by Susana Patton, Ph.D., associate professor of pediatrics at KU Medical Center.

Healing Patients

The University of Kansas Medical Center maintains strong relationships with clinical partners in Kansas City, Wichita and Salina to provide students and faculty with exemplary clinical training and practice opportunities. These partnerships are critical to the university’s ability to meet its core mission of improving the lives of Kansans through education, research and clinical care.

In Kansas City, the close-knit relationship between KU Medical Center, The University of Kansas Hospital and The University of Kansas Physicians creates the foundation for the academic medical center’s success. During the past four years, these three organizations have been engaged in negotiations to integrate clinical operations and position the academic medical center to better compete in a rapidly changing health care environment.

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Project Eagle turns 25

Project Eagle, which works to promote the healthy growth and development of the most vulnerable young children and families in Wyandotte County, Kansas, marked its 25th anniversary in 2015. The organization is part of the Department of Pediatrics at the KU School of Medicine. In 1995 Project Eagle was selected to become one of the first Early Head Start programs in the country and one of 17 national Early Head Start research sites. Project Eagle now serves more than 1,000 families in Wyandotte County.
KU audiology students help marching band

Audiology students in the Department of Hearing and Speech launched the Adopt-A-Band program in 2015. Members of the KU chapter of the Student Academy of Audiology provided high-quality earplugs for members of the Marching Cougar Pride at Shawnee Mission Northwest High School in Shawnee, Kansas. About 80 members of the marching band received the earplugs, which promise to reduce noise by 20 decibels. The SAA plans to continue working with the Shawnee Mission Northwest band and possibly adopt other area schools.

KU Medical Center researchers and clinicians were in all 105 Kansas counties this year looking for the cures and preventive measures that will improve the health of Kansans. Working with our partners, KU Medical Center is helping to educate a diverse workforce; sponsoring programs that encourage young people to pursue careers in health care; and increasing the number of health care providers to rural Kansas.

KU Medical Center’s outreach and community health initiatives touched the lives of countless people in our community, state, region, country and world this year.

Building Communities

Sensory Enhanced Aquatics Swimmers reaches milestone

Founded in 2012 by Lisa Mische Lawson, Ph.D., an associate professor of occupational therapy, Sensory Enhanced Aquatics Swimmers is a program that works with children ages 4 to 17 in the autism spectrum and their families to teach swimming and water safety. KU occupational therapy students gain valuable experience by working one-on-one with the children to develop a plan for learning how to not only swim but be safe around water. The program reached the 100-student milestone in the summer of 2015.

School of Medicine students at Philmont

Every summer since 1958, students from the KU School of Medicine have served as medics for the 23,000 campers at Philmont Boy Scout Ranch in New Mexico. Working at the ranch provides a hands-on experience for the students who serve 30-day rotations during June, July and August. Medical personnel see everything from bug bites and dehydration to cardiac conditions and bear attacks. Eight students who have finished the third year of medical school are assigned to each of the 30-day rotations under the supervision of physicians.

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KU Medical Center students perform community service

Every year, incoming students in the School of Health Professions, School of Medicine and School of Nursing armed with paint brushes, shovels and rakes, fan out across Wyandotte County, Kansas, Wichita and Salina as part of the annual community service days. In 2015, more than 330 students in all three locations took part in two days of community service. The students completed service projects at houses, schools, community centers and other locations throughout the communities where they will be receiving their health care educations.
Sources of Financing
KU Medical Center’s sources of funding in fiscal year 2015 totaled $356 million. The largest source of funding, the Kansas state general fund, pays for educating students in the School of Medicine, School of Nursing and School of Health Professions.

Expenditures by Program
KU Medical Center’s expenditures in fiscal year 2015 totaled $356 million. The largest expenditure is funding the cost of education for students in the three schools.
Fast facts

Student enrollment by school (excluding medical residents/fellows)
- 1,273 School of Medicine
- 638 School of Nursing
- 625 School of Health Professions
- 21 Other

Total number of KU Medical Center employees on all three campuses: 4,141

Student enrollment by campus (excluding medical residents/fellows)
- 2,557 Total
  - 2,269 Kansas City
  - 257 Wichita
  - 31 Salina

Number of faculty at all three schools (full-time): 1,027

Medical residents and clinical fellows by campus
- 826 Total
  - 545 Kansas City
  - 281 Wichita/Salina

Number of faculty at all three schools (part-time): 210

Number of support staff and other professionals at all three campuses: 2,904