Faculty and staff,

Since becoming executive dean in March, I have had several opportunities to spend time with visitors from India, China and other countries. Generally these visits involve discussions of existing educational and research collaborations, or trying to develop new ones. These relationships fit with our mission to provide students with multicultural perspectives and prepare them for a global society.

Each year, dozens of students and faculty travel around the world, learning valuable lessons and providing services that enhance the communities they visit. I support these activities and plan to work to bring better coordination and more resources to these efforts. I also hope to support these activities with my direct participation as my schedule allows.

Of course, not all international opportunities require overseas travel. Recently, I met with Dr. Joe LeMaster in the Department of Family Medicine in Kansas City. Joe had just returned from Gulu, a city in northern Uganda, where he led a KU group to define opportunities for shared medical education. I was fascinated to learn that Joe’s clinical responsibilities consist largely of caring for members of Kansas City’s Bhutanese community. He is able to communicate with his patients and their families in their native language, which he learned while living and working in Nepal for 10 years.

Joe is just one of our faculty members working with diverse populations. School of Medicine students and faculty touch many communities throughout the state. We are grateful for their efforts, and I look forward to working with you to develop new ways to meet the health care needs of these diverse communities.

Robert Simari, M.D.
Executive Dean
University of Kansas School of Medicine

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