About five years ago in Kansas, our state
A workforce report said it don’t look so great.
There are not enough doctors in Kansas, you see –
So who will take care of you and of me?

Right now, there’s a shortage, but by 2022,
The numbers drop lower. Then what will we do?
For doctors in Kansas, we know what to do.
Why, you should know, too. Just turn to KU!

Give us more doctors! The best of the best!
And be sure they choose primary care and move west.
Past 81 or very southeast
KU must do this at the very least.

Whoa! Wait! Some wise folk said.
Surely you jest –
We can’t just make doctors and make them go west.
We need a real plan – this is hard, you see.
We need a taskforce or two or three.
And we need a real rural doc as the chair
and lots of stakeholders from here and from there.
Well, how about Moser way out in Tribune?
Let’s get folks together and get started soon.

And the taskforce convened under Bob Moser’s charge
They made recommendations – some small and some large.
But the one rec that made the most sense of all
Was distribute the training - take down the wall.
Train medical students closer to home, where the shortages are,
Don’t make them roam to the far eastern side, near Missouri, no less
Start a new campus and end this distress!

And this is where I come onto the scene.
Distribute education, I see what you mean.
I think we can do it, but it will be tough.
We’ll need buy-in and money, but that’s not enough.
We need the right place for a campus to be.
A community must want us too, don’t you see.
This won’t really work if it’s built from the east.
We’re likely to get it all wrong at the least!

Well, where should we go? Where should we try?
Where in Kansas could this plan really fly?
Why Salina, of course. It’s the right place to try.
They made a residency program fly.
Freelove and Allred and Kraft and Owings
Run a fine program and look where they’re going.

The Smoky Hill program is a major success!
They make family doctors and they do go west
Northwest and southwest and southeast, too
We’ll go to Salina. Yes, that’s what we’ll do.

But where is Salina, oh, where can we be?
We’ll need classrooms and labs and a place for TV.
(Interactive TV to pipe in the science
From KC based faculty to be in compliance.)
We need lots of space but you know we can’t buy…
State budget is tight so we’ll just have to try
To find us a partner who wants to jump in
And create this great campus – it must be win/win!

So, let’s try the hospital. Maybe they want to play.
We’ll meet with Mike Terry and see what they say.
We’ll paint them a picture and see what they think.
But I barely got started and within a blink,
They said – yes, we’re in, now what do you need
And I paused for a moment; I paused, yes indeed.
For I thought I would have to give a hard sell
I never imagined it going so well!
So after a minute, I recovered and said,
“We really need space to move this ahead.”

“We can help you with space,” Mike said with a smile,
“We space we can give - let us think for awhile.
And what kind of space will it take to make do?
Classrooms and offices and study rooms, too?
Yes, you’ll need that, but there’s something else, yes
That you must not forget – do you want to guess?
A place like a lounge for a study vacation
Yes, a place to discuss the administration!”

We laughed and said, “thank you.”
They said, “What is next?”
Ah yes, what is next, has me quite vexed!
I need a director of this campus to be.
I need someone amazing. Now, this will be key.
The director must be a physician in town
With the skills to get this thing off the ground.
We started looking around for the best choice to make
And I stumbled upon, one Bill Cathcart-Rake!
I could tell at first glance that he was the one.
He was the one who could get this thing done!

Now with a director and a promise of space,
We began to embark on this marathon race.
We set up a deadline not two years away.
July 2011 – that would be the day
The first students arrive, oh, it would be great –
The first fabulous eight – I could hardly wait!

But the next hurdle was as big as can be
You see – there’s these folk, called the LCME.
And the LCME would say yes or say no
We had to get past them, we had to, and so…
We pulled together the pieces and put on a show
And when we finished they said, “Good to go.”
You can build your campus and expand your school.
And off the record, we think it’s quite cool.

All at once, several things just had to get done
On this great marathon, we continued to run.
We needed more money to see this thing through.
Endowment and John Mize knew just what to do.
The hospital, Foundation, and Endowment – KU
Would all work together to see this thing through.
And they did, yes they did, just look around you!
And one other partner really came through –
Skills lab and testing at KWU!

At the same time – another critical piece
We needed a team of onsite expertise!
And this team you have here is second to none –
Drs. Townsend and Smith, and yes, Robinson.
And Owing and preceptors from each specialty
And family doc mentors, yes, they will be key.

Doc Johnston and Lucy, Laura, Mike, too
And CCR watching all that you do!
Yes, the team you have here has answered the call,
But that is not all, oh no, that is not all.

There’s another group working that you may not know
Working out all the details to make this thing go.
My team in KC, working down to the wire
Led by none other, than Dr. Mark Meyer.
Mark Meyer and Bonaminio, too
Listed a ka-jillion things left to do.
Both easy and hard things and one by one,
They’re checking them off and getting them done.
Kennedy, Thomas, and McCurdy, too
And Fishback and Shaw – they all have come through!
And so many more who have played their part
And done what it takes to make a great start!

And so here we are – Salina’s a gem!
But enough about us, let’s talk about them.
The real heroes for whom Salina was made:
The students, these here, who have joined our crusade.
Rany, and Sara, Claire and Erik Dill
Kayla and Tyson and Daniel and Jill
Right here they are – pioneers brave and smart.
We want you to know, you are here in our hearts.
We’ve worked many years to bring this to you.
So work really hard – do what you must do
To become great physicians – the best of the best
And when you’re ready to practice – be sure to look west!