Message from the UA Senior Vice President for Health Sciences

The first day on a new job, like the first day of school, is an invigorating milestone marked by excitement and anticipation. I can tell you that I’m filled with great enthusiasm today as I begin my duties as UA senior vice president for health sciences.

I’m originally from El Paso, Texas, so no stranger to the Spanish Southwest. After spending several years in the east, and the last few in Chicago, I’m happy to be back in the Southwest and I certainly won’t miss the cold weather! I am very impressed with the warm welcome my family and I have already received from the UA community and the people of Tucson.

I’m looking forward to getting to better know the talented and dedicated faculty, staff, students and leadership of the Arizona Health Sciences Center’s five colleges and The University of Arizona Health Network. With campuses in Tucson and Phoenix – Arizona’s two largest cities – tremendous opportunities exist for training the next generation of health professionals and clinician-investigators and for building thought leader programs across the broad spectrum of biomedical and translational sciences.

This is an energizing time for health-care education, research and patient care at the Arizona Health Sciences Center. As you know, AHSC has many strengths that present unique opportunities for tremendous growth and advancement. Our expertise in cancer, heart disease, respiratory health, neurosciences, integrative health, environmental health and other key disciplines provides a strong foundation for growth. A strategic focus for AHSC will be to further increase our capacities in genetics, genomics, informatics, translational research, population health, and comparative effectiveness research, for these areas will be critical as we strive to become one of the nation’s premier academic health centers.

Equally important will be our efforts to work seamlessly with the UA Health Network toward improvement of the overall quality and cost effectiveness of the health-care delivery system for all patients, both locally and throughout the state.

It is a privilege to lead this organization as we begin working together to move AHSC forward through this time of change in our nation’s health-care system. Our work here is critically important to the health of the people of Arizona and far beyond.
will seek your input, through individual and group meetings, town halls and other means to further identify our strengths and initiate tactics that will most efficiently and effectively accelerate a trajectory of success. We know we will need to grow and develop our clinical, research and education enterprises if we hope to reach our aspiration to become a leading health sciences center. This is an exciting journey we are on together.

I hope you will join me Thursday, Sept. 19, at 3:30 p.m. at the UA BIO5 Institute, Room 103, for an informal reception in Tucson where we will have a chance to meet and get to know one another.

A reception also is being planned for the Phoenix Campus at a later date. If you are unable to attend either reception, please don’t hesitate to contact me with your thoughts on how AHSC can move to the next level in serving our state and nation.

I look forward to meeting all of you, and I am confident that our current success and future potential will come from our deep connections with our faculty, staff, students and community.

Skip

Joe G.N. “Skip” Garcia, MD
Senior Vice President for Health Sciences
Endowed UA Professor of Medicine