



RICHARD L. PAGE, M.D.
DEAN

March 15, 2021

Dear Larner Community:

A year ago, the pandemic and its effects became very real for us, and for all our families and loved ones. Here at the College, we shifted abruptly to online learning and suspended clinical instruction. Soon after that, following Governor Scott's executive order, all in-person activities at the College were suspended, and employees began working in accordance with the STAY HOME/STAY SAFE order.

This year has seen the world gripped by the greatest public health crisis in a century. It has caused disruption unlike anything any of us could have imagined, and an unbelievable human toll in sickness and death. As a result, the financial impact has been profound and our very way of life has been taken away from us. The impact on finances and health has not been equitable, with underrepresented and marginalized groups being most affected. In the midst of this crisis, our nation and our community have undertaken a long-overdue reckoning with injustice and systemic racism. I'm proud of our renewed efforts to promote diversity, equity and inclusion, although we have much to do. Furthermore, the stress of the pandemic has exposed the critical importance of mental health support in our College.

Throughout this tumultuous time, faculty, staff and students of our College have responded the way those in support of health care and science must-- with energy and resourcefulness. Our clinicians faced all the many unknowns that come with the appearance of a new infectious disease; they valiantly cared for their patients and sought new and more effective approaches to deal with COVID-19. Our biomedical researchers rallied to enable Vermont to meet its needs for COVID testing materials, and they pursued dozens of fast-tracked research programs targeted at the disease. All the while, our faculty adjusted to the changing rules for education, and our outstanding graduate and medical students continued in their studies unabated. The special group that supports our missions, our staff, stepped up to the ever-changing landscape, and especially uncertain financial circumstances, to sustain our ongoing efforts in research, clinical care and education.

At this one-year anniversary we all are fatigued. But I hope this understandable response is outweighed by the promise for the future that lies before us. Thanks to the amazing efforts of the worldwide biomedical scientific community, we now have highly effective vaccines that have

THE ROBERT LARNER, M.D. COLLEGE OF MEDICINE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

OFFICE OF THE DEAN | E-126 GIVEN BUILDING | 89 BEAUMONT AVENUE | BURLINGTON, VT 05405-0068
PHONE 802-656-2156 | FAX 802-656-8577 | RICHARD.PAGE@MED.UVM.EDU | WWW.MED.UVM.EDU

Larner Community
March 15, 2021
Page 2

been developed at a record pace. Here in Vermont, and at UVM, we have done an admirable job of adhering to public health protocols, and vaccination programs are reaching an increasingly large number of people each week. We still must exercise great care, but there is now a light at the end of what has been a very long, dark tunnel.

Later this week we will hold an online Match Day Celebration for our medical Class of 2021, and I hope you will join us for that important event. This event demonstrates that we have stayed true to our missions even in the face of great adversity. And in just four weeks, many members of our community will take part in our LCME reaccreditation virtual site visit, the 18-month preparation for which has engaged more than 300 members of our community who have not missed a beat in their work despite the challenges of the pandemic. Outside, on the southern end of our medical campus in Burlington, workers are finishing the foundation of the Firestone Medical Research Building, and its steel framework will soon begin to rise in the sky. I am confident that a bright future lies ahead of us.

As we acknowledge this one-year anniversary, I cannot imagine a better group to address these events as the faculty, staff and students of the Larner College of Medicine. We aren't out of this yet, but I believe we soon will be, and can further accelerate our efforts around our strategic plan, Vision 2025.

I look forward to that time in the not-too-distant future when we can all gather together again. Until then, let's continue to stay safe and well.

Sincerely,



Richard L. Page, M.D.
Dean, The Robert Larner M.D. College of Medicine
The University of Vermont
Given E-126, 89 Beaumont Avenue
Burlington, VT 05405

Office: 802-656-2156
Fax: 802-656-8577