

# Thomas Jefferson University

DEFINING THE FUTURE OF CLINICAL CARE



## Jefferson College of Health Professions

### Strategic Plan



Dear Friend of JCHP,

The Jefferson community has embraced a vision for redefining this nation's clinical care, one that requires great innovation and a tremendous shift in long-maintained cultures, attitudes, and educational practice. In cooperation with our colleagues throughout Thomas Jefferson University, we have created a strategic plan for the Jefferson College of Health Professions that examines every facet of the College and remolds it for one crucial reason – the precious health of the patients our students will one day serve. I invite you to learn more about this mission and join us in our endeavor.

Sincerely,

James B. Erdmann, PhD  
*Dean*  
*Jefferson College of Health Professions*

The faculty members of the Jefferson School of Health Professions – with their broad array of scholarly backgrounds – were instrumental in shaping a strategic model that integrates the needs and strengths of diverse healthcare disciplines. This new plan promises ample opportunity for discovery and innovation in teaching and learning, interprofessional education, research, and service to the community. We have great expectations for educating future healthcare practitioners under this new philosophy.

Janice P. Burke, PhD, OTRL, FAOTA  
*Dean*  
*Jefferson School of Health Professions*

Nursing education has been a fundamental component of Jefferson's mission since 1891. As society's demand for nurses grows ever greater, this centrality to Jefferson's mission becomes increasingly apparent. The Jefferson School of Nursing's strategic initiatives will provide an unparalleled education for future leaders of the nursing profession, stimulate much-needed research in the field, and spark innovation in the care offered to patients within the Jefferson Health System and throughout the area.

Mary G. Schaal, EdD, RN  
*Dean*  
*Jefferson School of Nursing*

The new Jefferson School of Pharmacy is committed to developing an environment for students and faculty that fosters collaborative relationships among healthcare practitioners and scientists. The establishment of our Doctor of Pharmacy program as part of this strategic agenda has provided an unprecedented opportunity to create an innovative, learner-centered, and interdisciplinary curriculum that will enable our students to develop the requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes to provide excellent patient-centered and population-based health care.

Rebecca S. Finley, PharmD, MS  
*Dean*  
*Jefferson School of Pharmacy*



## Our Mission

As an integral component of Thomas Jefferson University, the Jefferson College of Health Professions shares the institutional mission and vision of the University.

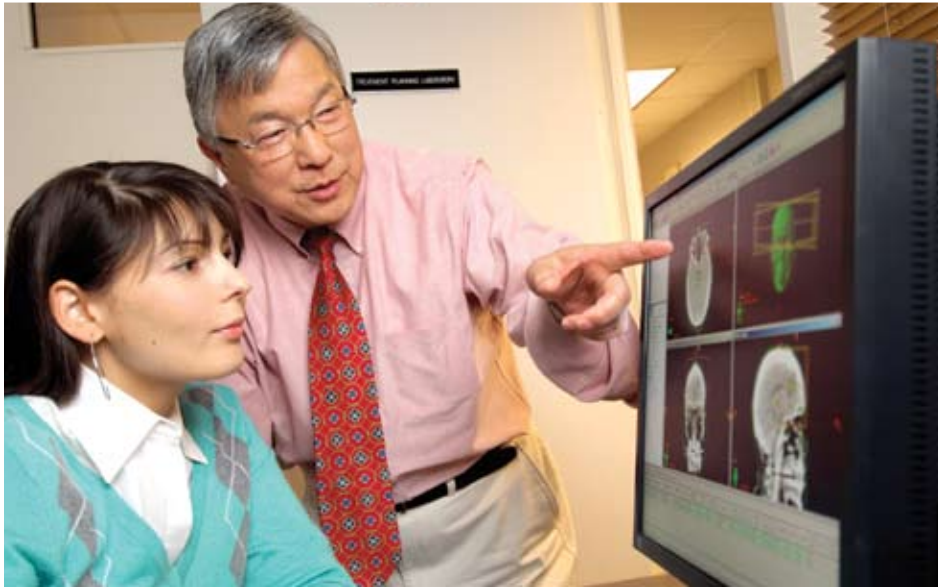
Thomas Jefferson University is dedicated to the health sciences. We are committed to:

- Educating professionals in a variety of disciplines who will form and lead the integrated healthcare delivery and research teams of tomorrow
- Discovering new knowledge that will define the future of clinical care through investigation from the laboratory to the bedside, and into the community
- Setting the standard for quality, compassionate, and efficient patient care for our community and for the nation

*As we define the future of clinical care, we accomplish our mission in partnership with Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, our education and clinical care affiliate.*



## DEFINING THE FUTURE OF CLINICAL CARE



For generations, Jefferson has provided a superior education enabling graduates to offer the highest quality care in their chosen fields. It has become clear, however, that a traditional curriculum that focuses narrowly on one specialty will not prepare students to meet the complex needs of their future patients. The Jefferson College of Health Professions is therefore creating a revolutionary new model for healthcare education – a true community of healthcare professionals and scholars whose varied members will learn with and from one another, embrace each other's contributions, and collaborate to provide the finest care possible.

This new model will draw together students from across the health professions, teaching them about each other's disciplines and preparing them to work in a new way – as members of an integrated healthcare delivery team designed around the needs of the patient.

These teams will offer care that is more informed, compassionate, and responsive than that which a single professional could ever provide. The entire Jefferson community has dedicated itself to fostering this innovative method of care delivery. We believe this shift, which will be manifest in our teaching, research, and clinical care, is the only way to address a burgeoning healthcare crisis in a nation presented with an aging population, rising chronic disease, escalating medical costs, and a shortage of healthcare providers. Rapid advances in health care compound these threats by making it unlikely that any one care provider could possess expertise in all necessary areas. JCHP will educate the men and women who will confront this crisis – healthcare professionals who value a team approach that integrates the strengths of many disciplines and is tailored to the unique needs of each patient. As the leaders of these teams, our graduates will define the very future of clinical care.

**We are creating a true community of healthcare professionals and scholars whose varied members will learn with and from one another, embrace each other's contributions, and collaborate to provide the finest care possible.**



## An Integrated Approach to Learning

If we expect our graduates to one day work together as a team, we must first train them as one. Doing so will help them understand the roles of other team members, develop the communication skills necessary to collaborate in a clinical setting, and determine when they need to take the helm or when they should defer to the expertise of a colleague.

Because this approach requires an entirely new kind of education, we are reassessing our curriculum to take advantage of interdisciplinary connections, incorporate developments in technology, and reflect advances in health care while keeping outstanding clinical care at the center of everything we do.

The tangible symbol of this new educational strategy is the newly opened Dorrance H. Hamilton Building, which for the first time brings together future nurses, pharmacists, physicians, therapists, and technologists to learn in the same classrooms and simulated clinical settings. Training together using the latest technologies in realistic environments will give students from all fields the knowledge, experience, and mindset to be successful members – and leaders – of the integrated healthcare team.

As a comprehensive health education institution, we recognize the importance of providing superior training for *all* members of the healthcare delivery team. We are therefore committed to broadening our curriculum to include all major health professions and to expanding our programs to reduce professional shortages. To reflect this commitment, we recently restructured the College to include a new School of Pharmacy, a School of Nursing, and a School of Health Professions that incorporates our traditional offerings in the allied health professions. In addition to helping offset the predicted shortage of pharmacists in coming years, the creation of the School of Pharmacy also reflects the key position the pharmacist will occupy in tomorrow's healthcare team. Given our existing faculty expertise in this area, the excellent resource we have in the pharmacy of Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, and the many opportunities for collaboration with hospital and community pharmacists, researchers, and pharmaceutical companies in this region, JCHP is poised to be a leader in pharmacy education. With the need for nurses at an all-time high, elevating our nursing program to school status is helping us to address the nursing shortage while competing with our

peers to recruit the most promising future nurses. Growth in the School of Health Professions is allowing us to serve patients in important new ways. For example, our new program in Couple

**Training together using the latest technologies in realistic environments will give students from all fields the knowledge, experience, and mindset to be successful members – and leaders – of the integrated healthcare team.**

and Family Therapy diversifies our offerings by enabling faculty and students to explore patient and family emotional needs to enhance their well-being and health. As these new initiatives unfold, we are exploring opportunities in other specialty areas as well.



## Expanded Graduate Programs

JCHP offers programs for healthcare providers at every stage of their career, from recent high school graduates to those seeking professional doctorates in their field. But as we commit ourselves to educating leaders, we must place new emphasis on providing the level of degrees these men and women will need. For this reason, we are expanding our graduate offerings in key areas. We recently created doctoral programs in physical therapy, nursing practice, pharmacy, and occupational therapy, and we are working to offer more. We also have established master's degree programs in family therapy, nurse anesthesia, and radiologic sciences and have converted our existing bioscience technologies certificate programs into advanced master's degrees. These programs, which offer specialties in biotechnology/applied molecular technologies, cytotechnology/cell sciences, and medical technology/clinical laboratory sciences, represent the only fast-track master's level programs in these specialty areas in the country and the only master's degrees in these fields in the Northeast.

Escalating tuition costs discourage many students from pursuing careers in health care, which contributes to the professional shortages threatening the nation's health system. Generous student financial aid is a key way of increasing the number of nursing majors, direct care nurses, and nurse educators in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. To address this need, a coalition formed by Independence Blue Cross, the Pennsylvania Higher Education Foundation, the Dr. Edna B. McKenzie Scholarship for Disadvantaged Students Program, and the Pennsylvania Center for Health Careers has established a number of grant programs for nursing students. As a program participant, Jefferson School of Nursing received more than \$600,000 in 2007-2008 to support students in our programs. Our students are extremely grateful for this support, and we look to other benefactors to help make all our exceptional programs accessible to the country's most promising students, regardless of their financial means. A student body that is economically, geographically, and ethnically diverse not only enriches the learning environment, but also ensures that our society's future health will be in the hands of the most talented people in this nation.

Another way in which JCHP is broadening its student base is by entering articulation agreements and joint programs with peer institutions. By collaborating with other universities, we can make a Jefferson education attainable for more students, augment the programs we offer existing students, and streamline academic requirements to reduce the tuition burden and the time it takes students to complete their educations and begin addressing the healthcare needs of society.

## An Enhanced Environment for Discovery

The JCHP faculty has traditionally dedicated most of its time and resources to educating future healthcare professionals. However, we realize that our faculty's research has tremendous potential for advancing the frontiers of healthcare knowledge and for improving the way we educate students and treat patients. Providing greater opportunity to conduct research is also crucial in attracting top faculty and doctoral candidates to our new programs. Clearly, we cannot aspire to educate the leaders of tomorrow without enhancing our research enterprise.

Under its own strategic plan, the University has defined five areas – cancer and cancer biology, cardiac and cardiovascular biology, neuroscience, population and public health, and infectious diseases and vaccines – in which it believes investment in research will yield the greatest benefit for society. Discoveries made in the laboratory will be translated to clinical settings and taught to the next generation of practitioners, setting a new standard for patient care. Therefore, JCHP is developing a College-wide research agenda that melds our faculty expertise with University priorities by focusing our efforts on neurological, cardiovascular, and oncologic diseases across the lifespan. We aim to examine their impact on both patients and caregivers and use these findings to design interdisciplinary educational and training techniques for healthcare professionals.



## Research that Bears Results

A prime incubator for JCHP research is the Center for Applied Research on Aging and Health (CARAH), led by Dr. Laura Gitlin of the Department of Occupational Therapy. In a society with a rapidly aging population, CARAH seeks to enhance the quality of life of the elderly through interdisciplinary research on physical frailty, dementia care, end of life comfort care, healthy aging, and at-home care. Blending JCHP strengths in areas such as occupational therapy and physical therapy, CARAH's recent findings have yielded techniques for increased longevity among the frail elderly and for a lighter burden on the caregivers of those suffering from dementia. These new methods, which enable the elderly to safely and comfortably remain in their homes, promise a greater quality of life for patients and caregivers, as well as a reduced cost to individuals and society. CARAH's Living Laboratory for Elder Care will provide these innovative evidence-based services and training opportunities for healthcare providers. Investing in research programs like this one will not only help us train our students and others in innovative techniques, but it will also help JCHP advance scientific knowledge and promulgate the use of evidence-based care in our society.

Creating a focused, interdisciplinary research program that will yield real benefits for patients and caregivers will require significant investment. The College is dedicating the interest from a \$1 million trust fund for this purpose, but outside contributions will be crucial to the endeavor. We must build an interdisciplinary research infrastructure that incorporates shared resources, mentoring of fledgling researchers, assistance in obtaining research funding, grant-writing workshops, statistical support, seed funding, and bridge money to support faculty projects between grants. We must also create endowed chairs that will help us recruit and/or retain faculty members with the expertise to lead us in this venture.





## New Opportunities in Clinical Care

As we transform the way our students learn and our faculty teaches and investigates, our dedication to the patient remains unchanged. All our efforts are aimed at providing the most superb clinical care for today and setting even higher standards for tomorrow.

Our College has the greatest mix of future healthcare professionals within the Jefferson community. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to lead the way in creating an interdisciplinary learning environment in which to educate students to work together, learn from each other, and value what each profession brings to the healthcare team.

## Working Across Disciplines

JCHP has worked closely with other divisions at Jefferson to establish the Jefferson Center for Interprofessional Education (JCIPE), which is dedicated to developing shared educational opportunities. Led by Dr. Molly Rose from the Jefferson School of Nursing and Dr. Christine Arenson of the Jefferson Medical College Department of Family and Community Medicine, JCIPE will create new teaching opportunities in clinical settings through initiatives such as integrating students with multidisciplinary teams within Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, pairing groups of students with patient mentors who have chronic illnesses, and expanding student-initiated health programs to include students from a greater variety of disciplines.

Clinical innovation will arise not only from our educational mission, but from our research enterprise as well. With our new emphasis on faculty investigation, heretofore unimagined clinical applications will emerge. We are looking to the future development of a clinical services arrangement for the college's faculty that will translate research findings into clinical applications and test their effectiveness for patients. In addition to providing better care for patients and new education opportunities for students, this practice would enhance faculty expertise and provide much-needed revenue for JCHP priorities.

With our new emphasis on faculty investigation, heretofore unimagined clinical applications will emerge.

A promising example is the potential translation of the findings of the Center for Applied Research on Aging and Health into creative, practical applications that will significantly increase the quality of life of patients and caregivers alike. While there is much opportunity to offer such services in collaboration with Thomas Jefferson University Hospital and our affiliates in the Jefferson Health System, the impact of our research will not stop at Jefferson's institutional borders. Our faculty also will partner with external organizations to train their providers, thus bringing better care to a greater number of patients and significantly widening the impact of our research.

DEFINING THE FUTURE OF CLINICAL CARE



## Superb Scholars

Without a stellar faculty, none of these plans can come to fruition, so we must make a significant investment in recruiting and retaining the nation's best healthcare scholars. Endowed professorships will encourage our superb faculty to stay here at Jefferson and will entice other leading experts to join us. We have recently completed a faculty satisfaction survey that has helped us to gauge their needs and respond appropriately. We are increasing research support, refining the faculty evaluation process, revising eligibility criteria, and creating a new track for faculty members to be considered for tenure. And as we work to increase diversity within the student body, we must enrich our faculty in the same way.

We share the University's goal of making Jefferson the employer of choice for academic support staff in the Philadelphia area. We also are reviewing our administrative structure to ensure that it meets the needs of our new programs and growing student body. To provide the most interdisciplinary learning experience possible, we are working to enhance collaboration within the College's schools and between JCHP and other areas of Jefferson, such as the Jefferson Medical College, the Jefferson College of Graduate Studies, and Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. Like our colleagues throughout the University, we are working to implement a five-year budget and capital planning process and refine our information technology infrastructure.

As we move forward on these initiatives, we are also committed to continuous quality improvement, for the actions we take on our campus will affect the futures not only of our graduates but also of the countless patients they will serve for years to come.



## A Strong Foundation for Innovation

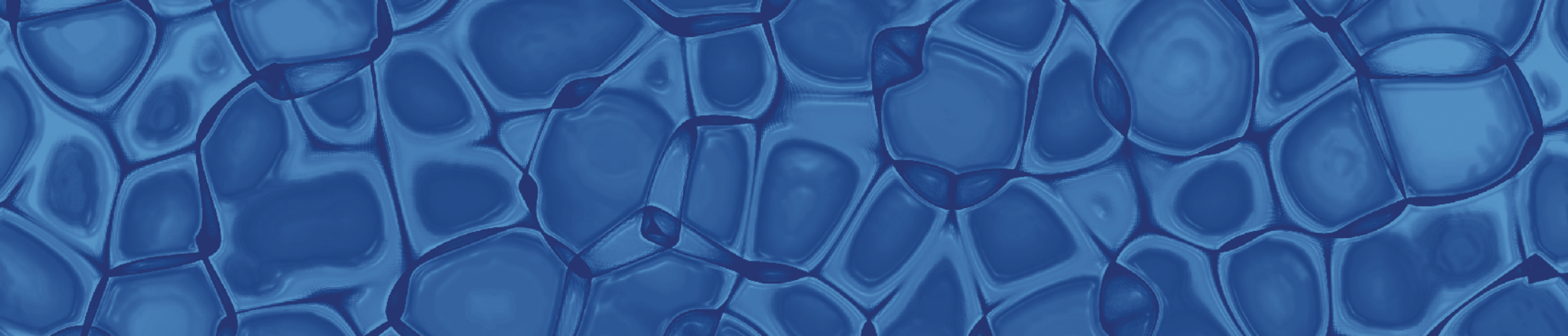
With a bold new direction, record enrollments, and an expanding curriculum, we must be sure that JCHP has the appropriate infrastructure for serving the College's needs.

We are working to standardize the technological support available in all our classrooms and are addressing our deferred maintenance needs with an immediate focus on our educational facilities. We must conduct extensive renovations to the upper floors of the Edison Building and the teaching laboratories on the fifth floor of Jefferson Alumni Hall to accommodate interdisciplinary

learning and innovative teaching technologies. We are working with other Jefferson colleagues to outfit the Hamilton Building with simulated clinical settings, such as surgical suites, critical and emergent care areas, inpatient hospital rooms, a pharmacy practice area, and a model apartment, to give teams of students the opportunity for collaborative, hands-on training in even the rarest of conditions without placing an unnecessary burden on patients in need of care. As the University moves forward with plans to create an ambulatory care facility, we will work to ensure that its design also presents opportunities for interprofessional education.



The actions we take will affect the futures not only of our graduates but also of the countless patients they will serve for years to come.



Thomas Jefferson University  
Jefferson College of Health Professions  
130 South 9th Street, Suite 715  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
[www.jefferson.edu/jchp](http://www.jefferson.edu/jchp)

February 2008