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ENHANCING THE COMMON GOOD SINCE 1918

KAREN DAVIS
President

January 21, 2008

Ann Stevens
President
BioMedSA
602 E. Commerce Street
San Antonio, Texas 78205

Dear Ann:

Thank you for all you did to make my December visit to San Antonio so informative and productive. I was honored to receive BioMed SA's Julio Palmaz Award for Innovation in Healthcare and the Biosciences. And, I came away with a much deeper appreciation of the potential San Antonio has to offer – from establishing a vibrant biomedical community to setting a high standard for high performance in the health system. San Antonio has so many strengths – as one of the top ten population centers in the U.S., a diverse community, a growing health sciences center and medical research program, and a budding biomedical industry. Further, it is rare to discover formal mechanisms to link these resources, and foster collaboration to benefit the community as a whole.

Investing in future leaders is, of course, the most significant step that can be taken to ensure future scientific advance. I was most impressed by the University of Texas Health Sciences Center in San Antonio (UTHSCSA) and the steps it is taking to recruit, inspire, and train health professions students. The gifted and visionary leadership of President Francisco Cigarroa is a major asset. His commitment to improving health care for the underserved and attracting a new generation of medical leaders is evident and his enthusiasm contagious. Dr. Ruth Berggren, Director of the Center of Medical Ethics at UTHSCSA, is broadening the perspective of medical students and exposing them to cutting-edge concepts in health policy and health care delivery.

I found it stimulating to engage with local hospital leaders in candid dialog about the challenges we all face in achieving a high performance health system. Likewise, it was a privilege to brief local newspaper leaders and community partners for UTHSCSA's Clinical and Translational Science Award proposal.

BioMed SA is clearly a major force in bringing together business, community, health care, and academic leaders to share information and collaborate toward realizing the potential San Antonio has to offer the nation. The vision of Chair Henry Cisneros in creating this organization has contributed to an amazing track record of success in a very

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short period of time, thanks in part to your able leadership. To my knowledge the organization is unique – with major political leaders, military and civilian health leaders, business, academic, and philanthropic heads serving on the Executive Committee and working together to seize opportunities for advancing science and health care delivery in San Antonio.

The effects of this in accelerating medical research – both within the academic sector and the commercial sector – are evident in the burgeoning medical center complex. Significant research from cancer therapy to health promotion are underway, and the interdisciplinary expertise and community involvement that can be assembled in support of research undertakings hold promise of even greater future success in attracting national research funding support.

Many thanks for all you have done to promote scientific progress and the fulfillment of excellent health care for those most in need in the San Antonio community. Our December visit was an excellent opportunity to get an overview of the health system and research enterprise, and to form a base for a visit by the Commonwealth Fund Commission on a High Performance Health System in April 2008. I look forward to my return to your welcoming city and to a continuing exploration of ways to promote the most accessible, efficient, high quality health system for the people of South Texas and the United States.

Best wishes,



Karen Davis