It is my pleasure to present this 2008 annual report to you. It was a busy and successful year with many laudable accomplishments to share. Our success can be seen only as a reflection of the tremendous talent and unwavering dedication of our faculty and staff and the enormous talent of our residents and students. It is thanks to their collaborative efforts that our program is in the top echelon of internal medicine departments. As interim chair, I must extend my gratitude to the senior leadership of the department including the associate chairs and division chiefs, the senior administrative staff and their team, our former Interim Chair, Dr. Robert Todd and to Dean James Wooliscroft, all of whom have provided steady support and encouragement during this time of transition.

Certainly the realities of our economy cannot be ignored but, here too, our department excelled. Thanks to the exceptional leadership—at the departmental and division levels—we have continued a positive trend in revenues while managing our investments and our expenses in the most efficient manner possible.

I believe one of the drivers of our continued growth is the unwavering commitment to our tripartite mission: patient care, research, and education. Our department’s vital role in carrying out the mission came to the fore last fall with the announcement of the Medical School’s first six inaugural “destination programs.” Internal Medicine is central to four of these and plays key roles in the other two. Already anchored by strong clinical and research programs, we have seen a definite advantage in our ability to garner research dollars in these areas. Therefore, these high-profile, bench-to-bedside programs enable us to provide better care—and ongoing improvements in care—because of the resources they draw. The recent advances in cancer care are an excellent example of the follow-on discoveries that can come from our destination programs; our faculty at the VA were instrumental in numerous advances in cancer care last year. In addition, our destination programs provide unmatched multidisciplinary training experiences for our students, interns and residents.

In terms of clinical progress, the VA group also made significant changes in the structure of its inpatient medicine teams and their rotations to improve patient care and education, introducing an Intensivist program to match the hospital’s. Our work in expanding patient care programs at the Taubman Center is advancing nicely as well, as we further expand our efforts in gastrointestinal, pulmonary and renal care. Soon we will focus on a combined musculoskeletal program to leverage our expertise in rheumatology, orthopedic surgery, physical medicine and other related specialties. The new facility for the Metabolism, Endocrinology & Diabetes division at Domino’s Farms is on schedule, freeing up additional space for additional program development at the Taubman Center.

One of the most noteworthy research accomplishments is our rise in the rankings of National Institutes of Health funding among departments of internal medicine across the country. We ascended in the ranking from seventh in 2007 with 183 grants totaling $94.9 million, to fourth in 2008 with 202 grants totaling $122 million. This is a real testament to the leadership of Dr. Benjamin Margolis, associate chair for basic and translational research, and Dr. Anna Lok, associate chair for clinical research. Thanks to the efforts of Hematology & Oncology faculty, and the
leakage of Dr. Larry Baker, the department received a $72 million Southwest Oncology Group (SWOG) grant to support the ongoing activities of SWOG clinical community oncologists, in the development of cancer control and prevention clinical trials, including two of the largest National Cancer Institute funded prostate cancer prevention trials.

On the academic front, we retooled our residency curriculum and increased simulation-based learning. We also saw continued growth in our recruitment, successfully drawing 83 new faculty members and despite intense pressure from other institutions, successfully retained nine faculty members. Additionally, 41 of our faculty have been recommended for promotion with provost review in progress. Three faculty members, Drs. Roger Grekin, Timothy Nostant and Rebecca Van Dyke, received 2008 Dean's Office Awards. Dr. Gary Hammer was elected to the American Society for Clinical Investigation, and Drs. Kathleen Cho and M. Bishr Omary were elected to the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine. And finally, seven of our faculty members: Drs. Shaomeng Wang, Martin Myers, Jr, José Jalife, Mario Delmar, Akinlolu Ojo, Anna Lok and Hakan Oral, were honored with endowed professorships which are detailed throughout this report and listed on page 63.

As you can see, we’ve made strong progress, despite the economic challenges faced by the state of Michigan and the nation. I am confident that our long-term growth will continue to be steady and strong, if not always steep. We’ve got tremendous talent on our side. The Association of American Medical Colleges released a study in 2007 showing that 67 percent of physicians who completed undergraduate medical studies and residencies in Michigan currently practice in the state. This means the impact of our success will continue to extend far beyond our campus.