

# *A Message from our Dean*

## *J.M. Cairo, PhD*



Forty years ago, the LSU Board of Supervisors approved a request by the LSU Medical Center in New Orleans to establish a School of Allied Health Professions. It would become the fifth school within the Medical Center, joining the Schools of Medicine, Graduate Studies, Dentistry, and Nursing. The School was charged with the responsibility of educating healthcare professionals that would make up the allied health workforce for the State of Louisiana. Since the inception of its first class of students in 1971, the School has graduated more than 6000 health care providers who have gone on to become leaders in the allied health professions.

Creating an educational environment that fosters excellence requires dedication and a sustained effort from faculty, staff, and students. This dedication was never more apparent than during the months and years following the devastating hurricanes of 2005. In the midst of coping with personal losses, our faculty and staff worked diligently to resume classes in less than 30 days thus ensuring that the educational experiences for our students would not be compromised. The results of their efforts speak volumes. We have seen a record number of applicants for all of our programs in the School during the 2009-2010 academic year. Indeed, enrollments for the LSU School of Allied Health Professions in New Orleans increased 41 percent during the past 3 years. All of our graduates continue to successfully complete their national board examinations and nearly 80% of our graduates choose to remain in Louisiana to care for the citizens of our State.

As we cross the threshold into a new decade, the School of Allied Health Professions is committed to maintaining the spirit of excellence which has been the hallmark of our academic and clinical programs. The addition of the new LSU Academic Medical Center and the Veterans Administration Medical Center in downtown New Orleans in 2013 will certainly be a cornerstone of the entire LSU Health Sciences Center. This modern academic medical center will provide resources that will enhance our ability to provide interdisciplinary educational experiences that will be crucial in the coming years. It will also afford our faculty and students opportunities to be on the cutting edge of medical breakthroughs.

*J. M. Cairo*