



VICTOR J. DZAU, M.D.

*President*

June 6, 2017

Dear Colleague:

Every day the Academies work to provide independent, objective advice to the nation. The National Academy of Medicine's (NAM) role in this effort is more important than ever. Whether it's providing a roadmap for measurable progress toward better health and well-being, or addressing ethical concerns regarding controversial and cutting edge technologies, the NAM is addressing the most pressing health and medicine issues. Your gift to the Annual Fund provides the flexible resources needed to carry forward the Academy's important work. Please join me in making a gift to the NAM Annual Fund.

The NAM receives no government appropriation, and membership dues and endowment funds alone are not sufficient to sustain our vital programming and initiatives. The NAM depends on philanthropy from individuals like you to advise the nation and the world, identify and respond to emerging challenges, catalyze action, achieve impact, and promote the importance of science.

Your philanthropic support advanced Vital Directions for Health and Health Care. We launched this initiative in 2015 by using flexible dollars raised through our annual appeal and its final publication was released this past March. It engaged more than 150 leading experts who authored 19 papers, conducted a public symposium, and received input from NAM members during a special session of the 2016 Annual Meeting. With the Vital Directions framework in place, the NAM is working to help policy makers and health leaders put aside partisan debates and focus on fundamental priorities. We wish to achieve better health and well-being, high value health care, and a strong science infrastructure that will encourage research breakthroughs. We are now meeting with members of Congress and the administrative branch, as well as policy makers and stakeholders at all levels to help educate and guide them.

The NAM's ability to address urgent issues affecting the fields of medicine and health care is invaluable and dependent on your support. In December 2016, the NAM launched a first-of-its-kind Action Collaborative on Clinician Well-Being and Resilience. As you might know, every year in the United States, approximately 400 physicians take their own lives—a rate more than double that of the general population. The bottom line is that the people we rely on to keep us healthy may not be healthy themselves, and that has serious implications for patients. This collaborative is working to improve clinician well-being and resilience through a dynamic network of more than 50 national organizations, including clinician and consumer groups as well as health care organizations and policy making bodies. Grounded in evidence-based knowledge, the initiative will assess and understand the underlying causes of clinician burnout and suicide, and advance solutions that reverse the trends in clinician stress, burnout, and suicide.

Your gift to the NAM Annual Fund also supports our growing Health Policy Educational Programs and Fellowships. These programs work to expand opportunities for early- to mid-career scientists, scholars, and practitioners by immersing them in health policy development and administration on a national scale. In 2017, we will be seeking out gifts and grants to expand our fellowship program. One opportunity that we are exploring is to expand internationally. We have created partnerships with institutions in Hong Kong and have already secured a grant from a private philanthropist to support a cohort of three fellows from the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

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Finally, our new program to curate “big ideas” is taking shape. Our goal is to inspire the best and brightest to unite around shared priorities and grand, even audacious goals. Our inaugural *Healthy Longevity Grand Challenge* hopes to accelerate breakthroughs in aging biology and ensure that all sectors of society benefit from extended healthier lives. Longevity and aging are affected by a complex set of factors including genetics, the environment, nutrition, social issues, and infrastructure. Science and technology are at an inflection point. If we can bring together the very best minds from medicine and other fields, we can accelerate research and innovation to push towards a healthy, productive elderly population that is a reality for everyone. Our plan is to develop a series of challenge prizes and awards, provide expert guidance, and engage the public. We have established a design committee and are working to secure private funding to carry the challenge forward.

We rely on flexible funds to enable us to plan and conceptualize important programs and initiatives, such as Vital Directions, Clinician Resilience, the expansion of our fellowship program, and Grand Challenges. Not only does your annual fund gift make these programs possible, your gift is leveraged many times over as we secure the major gifts and grants that are needed to realize our vision.

Every day we make important strides toward the goal of improving people’s lives by leading, innovating, and impacting the future of health and health care. Please join me in making a gift to the Annual Fund and help us continue to advance health and health care in America. Your philanthropic support is essential and will truly make a difference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victor J. Dzau". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "V" and "D".

Victor J. Dzau, M.D.

P.S. Thanks to your dedicated philanthropic support of the NAM, we once again had the highest giving participation rate amongst the three academies last year at 27%. Your gifts to the NAM Annual Fund enable us to leverage new gifts from corporations and foundations, while devoting resources to crucial programs and initiatives. I am honored to lead such an engaged membership.