



## *Annual Message from the Executive Director*

Elena B. Olson, JD

January 5, 2009

Dear colleagues,

Happy New Year! It has been a privilege to be a part of the [Multicultural Affairs Office \(MAO\)](#) team for the past eight years. MAO is fortunate to be a part of the Mass General. We are one of the few hospitals in the country that has an independent office dedicated to recruiting, retaining and advancing physicians, students and researchers who are underrepresented in medicine ("URM"), and helping develop culturally competent physicians. Each year, we enhance our current programs and develop new initiatives, which bring us closer to our goal of creating an environment where a diverse physician and faculty workforce will thrive.

As we enter into the New Year, we reflect upon this past year's successes and those who have helped us get there. Despite our challenges, which include Boston's high cost of living and non-diversity friendly reputation, we have accomplished a great deal. I am attaching a list of 2008 highlights to demonstrate some of the progress we've made over the past year. Over the next few weeks, our faculty and trainees will also be receiving a hard copy of our much awaited MAO faculty directory, which will provide a resource for networking, referrals and recruitment.

There are many who have contributed to our success. First, we are fortunate to have a dedicated and passionate [staff](#), who works tirelessly to reach our goals and objectives. Our newest additions include Dr. Michael Watkins as an Associate Director and Dr. Monique Sellas as manager for trainee affairs, who are already hard at work as liaisons to our residency training programs, helping with recruitment of URM applicants.

In addition, our unique advisory board, co-chaired by MGH President Peter Slavin, MD, and MAO's founding director Dr. Winfred Williams, is comprised of hospital and physician leaders who are helping us shape the agenda for physician diversity issues. Thanks to the insight of our board, MAO set two priorities in 2008 - addressing the specific needs of mid to senior career faculty and helping create a more welcoming work environment for all URMs. Many of the strategic initiatives we developed to address these goals are listed below in the 2008 MAO Highlights.

Third, we have an energetic and talented [Organization of Minority Residents and Fellows \(OMRF\)](#), chaired by Nicté Mejía, a fourth year Neurology resident. Together with her Executive Board - Dan Gebremedhin from Internal Medicine, Karen Winkfield from Radiation Oncology, and Andrea Jackson from OB/GYN -

this resident team has been one of our greatest assets this year. During the past 6 months, the OMRF has worked on many MGH community outreach projects mentoring high school kids and participating in health fairs, created education and career development seminars, and enhanced networking and social opportunities, all of which have helped build a stronger community of URMs at MGH. The Board and many of our residents have also been instrumental during the current residency recruitment season, serving as "champions" for their programs by attending MAO applicant receptions and ensuring a positive experience for all of URM applicants.

Fourth, we are grateful to the many MGH faculty who have served as preceptors and mentors to our students and trainees, and seminar speakers in 2008. Without their involvement and commitment, we could not have advanced the [Summer Research Trainee Program](#), the [URM Medical Student Mentorship Program](#) and the [Chester Pierce Research Society](#), among other MAO initiatives.

Finally, we could not be where we are today without the vision and support of our hospital leaders, department chairs and training program directors. In particular, Peter Slavin deserves special mention for taking an active leadership role to improve diversity and cultural competence at all levels. David Torchiana, MD, MGPO chief executive officer and chairman, also deserves credit, especially in bringing recruitment and retention issues of physicians to the policy agenda. Finally, I would like to thank Allison Rimm, vice president, strategic planning and information systems, for her expert guidance and counsel, which have contributed enormously to MAO's accomplishments.

In sum, our successes are a result of working together. We look forward to our continued collaborations in the future.

Best wishes for a 2009 filled with hope, peace and happiness!



Elena B. Olson, JD  
Executive Director  
MGH Multicultural Affairs Office

### **Multicultural Affairs Office (MAO) 2008 Highlights**

- MAO has new space! Our office has expanded to BUL 119 to include a multipurpose room, which serves as a combined conference room, resident and faculty lounge, and reception hall.
- Completed our first MAO faculty directory.
- Honored the 29 URM residents and 10 clinical fellows who graduated from MGH training programs in 2008 in a graduation ceremony this past May. This is the highest number of URM graduates recorded in the history of MGH. MAO is creating an URM alumni directory to stay connected with all of

our graduates.

- Department leaders and MAO worked together to increase the number of URM fellows who moved into faculty positions, which translated to 60% retention rate.
- Held various focus groups to determine challenges facing URM faculty, and one on one meetings with URM Associate Professors and senior Assistant Professors and the Center for Faculty Development to establish specific needs of our mid to senior level URM faculty. Many recommendations resulted from these meetings, including the creation of department specific diversity action plans. The MAO Advisory Board will develop an implementation strategy for these plans in 2009.
- Expanded the eligibility of the Clinician-Teacher Faculty Development Award to include URM faculty from all academic levels.
- Awarded three [Minority Faculty Development Awards \(MFDA\)](#) for physician-scientists and clinician-teachers. MAO honored these recipients in a recognition reception this past Fall, which included a first of its kind poster session reflecting the research and achievements of all MFDA recipients. Since 2003, MAO has awarded sixteen (16) awards and more than \$1.5 million in funds to URM faculty.
- Working with the DOM and VISIONS, Inc., helped develop a pilot diversity training curriculum focused on communication and teamwork for leadership, faculty, trainees and nurses.
- The Summer Research Trainee Program continues to attract a high caliber of candidates. Since 1992, over 200 college and medical students have participated in SRTP. 98% of SRTP graduates are in or have completed medical school, and two are currently doing their clinical training at MGH.
- Expanded multicultural education and cultural competency training to faculty, trainees in several departments and other healthcare staff.
- Created the MAO E-News, which includes monthly announcements, seminars, funding and news items of interest to the MAO community. The E-News was recently converted to a web based format.