



“It is your human environment that makes climate.”

—Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar
Following the Equator
Mark Twain, 1897

In 1969, the Cuyahoga River in northeastern Ohio caught fire. It wasn't the first time, but, thankfully, it was the last. So polluted and bereft of life, the river at that time was one in which a man “does not drown but decays,” according to *Time* magazine. That incident helped to spur several environmental initiatives, including the Clean Water Act and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency.

The following year, the first Earth Day was celebrated, and it's safe to say America is a much cleaner country now than it was in 1970. This is not to say, however, that all our air is fresh and our waters pristine – far from it. Environmental issues remain with us today, and probably always will. The argument over climate change and global warming rages on.

In terms of human health, however, simple truths prevail: fresh air is better than polluted air; clean water is better than polluted water; a diet consisting of fruits, vegetables, grains and other recommended components is better than one loaded with fats, sugars and the like. None of this is new, of course, but it may

take on more urgency as the amount of industrial chemicals we produce and import continues to increase. A few years ago, a survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found traces of 212 environmental chemicals in Americans, many of them toxic.

In this era of technological “upgrades,” we at the Medical University of South Carolina strive to upgrade our standard of living, beginning at home. Here, in the heart of the Holy City that is Charleston, you'll find on our campus an increasing emphasis on recycling and sustainability. Under the shade of a magnificent live oak you'll see the results of the “sweat equity” that goes into our half-acre Urban Farm. And, of course, our world-class scientists and clinicians continue to study the effects of the environment on our own well-being.

I am constantly in awe of the good works going on at MUSC at all levels, from the grounds crew to the health care providers to the researchers in their labs. I hope you are, too.

Thomas L. Stephenson
Chair, Board of Trustees



Dear Friends:

One of the great benefits of working or studying at the Medical University of South Carolina is to be able to live in one of the most beautiful natural environments in the world. Within minutes of our campus, one can visit rivers, tidal marshes, beautiful beaches,

working farms, and much more. It is not surprising, therefore, that folks here take our surroundings very seriously and have an abiding interest in how our health is affected by our environment.

In the following pages, you will read about some of the work that is going on at the Medical University in relation to the environment on campus and beyond. Over the past few years, we have made a genuine commitment to “greening” our campus. We are trying to manage our operations in an environmentally sustainable way – from the design, construction and operation of our buildings, to improving our energy efficiency, to recycling our waste products.

We are also working hard to have the green space on our campus be just as educational as what transpires in our laboratories and classrooms. Former medical school dean Jerry Reves and a dedicated team of individuals coordinated by arborist Nate Dubosh have secured certification of our campus as an arboretum. Susan Hoffius, the director of the Waring Library, and colleagues have created a medicinal garden that provides a living tribute to

the landmark work of the Medical University's nineteenth century faculty member, Dr. Francis Peyre Porcher.

Through generous support of Sodexo and other private donors, we have created an urban farm on our campus, where fresh fruits and vegetables are grown for consumption in our hospitals and by those who work here and with our neighbors in need. The farm is an educational resource for teaching about nutrition, and it is also a place in which students, faculty and staff can get some physical exercise and stress management.

As a research university, we are also committed to advancing the knowledge base about the interactions between the environment and health. Dr. Lou Guillet's award winning work, for example, has demonstrated that environmental toxins, such as hormone disrupters, can adversely affect reproduction in the wild. To the extent that the effects in these species serve as sentinels for affects in humans, it is important that we advance our understanding of these issues even further.

We hope that through these and many other efforts we are taking a small step forward as stewards of our environment. It is a responsibility that goes hand-in-hand with the privilege of calling this beautiful place our home. We hope that it will inspire others and in the process provide a healthier environment for generations to come.

With best wishes,

Raymond S. Greenberg, MD, PhD
President