

2008 CASE V Awards Program
Category 36: Best Specialized or Unit-Level Magazines

Medicine at Michigan
A Publication of the University of Michigan Medical School
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General Description

Launched in 1999, published three times per year and redesigned in early 2008, *Medicine at Michigan* is the signature publication of the University of Michigan Medical School. The magazine reports news within each of the three areas of the school's mission — research, education and clinical care — as well as alumni, faculty, student and philanthropic news.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of *Medicine at Michigan* is to engage the school's community, composed of a variety of groups, by telling the stories of the school and the larger health system of which it is part in a comprehensive and compelling fashion that provides something of interest to all readers. The magazine sets the stage for various institutional priorities and initiatives by strengthening the affiliation each segment of the school's community feels with the school.

To achieve this goal, the magazine strives to meet the following objectives by focusing on a depth and variety of stories that support each objective:

- Interest alumni in activities of the school and the alumni society
- Increase private giving to the school and health system
- Serve as a tool for student/faculty recruitment and retention
- Apprise students' parents of the value of the education in which they are investing
- Inform legislators of the work of the public institution they support
- Inform university and community leadership of the health system's work and contributions to the wider U-M community
- Represent U-M among its peers by highlighting its work in research, education and patient care

- Disseminate information about the school and health system to local and national media interested in health care and medical education in the U.S.

We are keenly aware, as well, that we're creating a major part of the school's historical record.

Institutional and Advancement Goals

Ranked among the top medical schools in the nation, the U-M Medical School seeks to raise its visibility among supporters, peer institutions, alumni, and prospective students, residents and faculty. Critical to increasing and sustaining the school's stature and quality is the ongoing goal of recruiting the best possible faculty-physicians, and retaining those individuals despite a climate of intense competition among academic research institutions. Competitive recruitment of top students and residents is another ongoing institutional goal. School leadership considers *Medicine at Michigan* to be the premier communications tool for these efforts.

In May 2004, the University of Michigan embarked upon the public phase of a \$2.5 billion fund-raising campaign; \$550 million of that total is the goal for the U-M Health System. Communicating the work of its researchers, physicians and faculty has been critical to the success of the campaign, and the health system surpassed its goal 18 months prior to the end of the campaign which occurs this December.

Audience

Approximately 32,500 individuals regularly receive the magazine, including:

- Alumni (medical students, residents, fellows, graduate students)
- Current students, residents, fellows and graduate students
- Parents of students
- Donors to any area of the health system
- Donor prospects
- Grateful patients of the hospitals and health centers
- All U.S. medical school deans
- State legislators and executives
- National, state and local media/journalist contacts
- Medical School faculty (including emeriti) and staff
- Regents (including emeriti) of the university
- U-M and health system leadership
- U-M development staff across all schools and colleges

Professional and Support Staff

Medicine at Michigan is staffed by a full-time editor, a three-quarter-time associate/photo editor, and a half-time science writer. An administrative assistant devotes approximately 15 percent time to managing distribution. Design services, illustrations and photography are provided on a contractual basis by U-M and non-U-M graphic designers, illustrators

and photographers. Freelance writers contribute two feature articles per issue and occasional profiles and short pieces; all other writing is completed by magazine staff or contributors from departments within the health system.

Budget and Unit Costs

Average budget per issue (exclusive of staff salaries and postage): \$62,000. Unit cost (based upon an average print run of 33,500): \$1.85.

Special Circumstances and Challenges

With its original look becoming dated, and based in part upon feedback from a reader survey, the magazine was redesigned for the spring 2008 issue. This time-consuming project was completed on schedule while still producing three issues of the magazine, also on schedule.

Documented results, measurements of effectiveness

A reader survey conducted in winter 2007 indicated the success of the magazine with its audience, particularly with regard to its stated mission.

- A 7 percent response rate was achieved, double the response expected.
- Among alumni respondents, 89 percent report the magazine increases their pride and affiliation with the medical school.
- Among all respondents, 84 percent report that the magazine strengthens their connection with the medical school and health system.
- Among all respondents, 86 percent report that the magazine leads them to consider the U-M Medical School as a good source of medical education.
- 56 percent indicate they are more likely to support the school and health system as a result of the magazine.
- 38 percent report getting most of their news of the health system from *Medicine at Michigan* — more than double the next highest-ranked news source (TV/newspapers, 15 percent).
- 84 percent always or frequently find the content interesting
- 81 percent report the reading experience to be always or frequently enjoyable

While only an indicator, these and other survey results tell us we are serving our readership well.

During nine years of publication, development officers have documented a total of \$6 million in gifts in which the magazine was instrumental or, in the case of two \$2 million gifts, solely responsible. Of special note, the two \$2 million gifts were made by a donor who, despite many years of cultivation and solicitation, had never given to the health system; development officers had ceased pursuing a health system gift from her. A cover story in the magazine prompted her call offering an outright gift to endow a professorship and an equal amount promised as a bequest.

Beginning in 2001, a giving envelope has been included in the magazine, garnering an additional \$164,800 in gifts through the end of calendar year 2007.

Other indicators of success include the following:

Development staff members have been enthusiastic about the magazine's role as an effective communication tool in their work. In the summer of 2007, this enthusiasm prompted the development office to undertake a special magazine mailing to nearly 10,000 donor-prospects; in 2008, a second special mailing was sent to an additional 14,000 prospective donors. The associate vice president for medical development and alumni relations has termed the magazine "the best ongoing case statement" for the school and health system.

The Office of Admissions and the Office of Student Programs routinely use *Medicine at Michigan* as the focal point of student recruitment and orientation materials, using approximately 800 copies each year. The Office of Faculty Affairs also regularly includes copies of *Medicine at Michigan* in faculty recruitment and orientation materials.

We distribute 75 copies of each issue to local, state and national media contacts; stories have gained the attention of media outlets at all levels, from the *Ann Arbor News* to *USA Today*.

Alumni relations and events staff regularly request copies of *Medicine at Michigan* to include with materials at local and national events, such as reunions and seminars.

Finally, in 2006, the outgoing dean of the medical school called the magazine "one of the best achievements" of his term as dean.