

IF KINESIOLOGY IS ABOUT MOVEMENT, THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT ABOUT THE TRAJECTORY.

THE DIRECTION IS UP.

STRAIGHT UP. by Pat Materka

# Reflections

Dean Beverly Ulrich  
Marks Tenure of  
Spiraling Growth  
and Achievement

From the rise in applicants, to the increase in funded research, to the growth of the endowment, Dr. Beverly Ulrich's ten years as dean has been marked by historic progress.

Now, as she prepares to transition back to research and teaching, she is hard pressed to name any single feat as the most significant. They all seem interconnected.

"When I was hired in 1999, the job was to bring in more research dollars and build the PhD program," she reflects. "I think we've done that in spades.

Kinesiology's total external income for research in 1999 was under \$2 million dollars; this year the Division will bring in \$7.8 million, including funds from NIH, NSF, USDE, as well as corporate and foundation funds. To-

1999



Beverly D. Ulrich begins her tenure as Professor and Director of Kinesiology.

2000



Renovations begin to transform CCRB racket ball courts and gymnasium space into research laboratories.

2000



Regents approve making Ulrich's Director appointment a Deanship.

2001

Peter Kinyon, '52, '56, establishes \$1 million charitable remainder trust, at that point, the largest gift in the history of Kinesiology.

2003

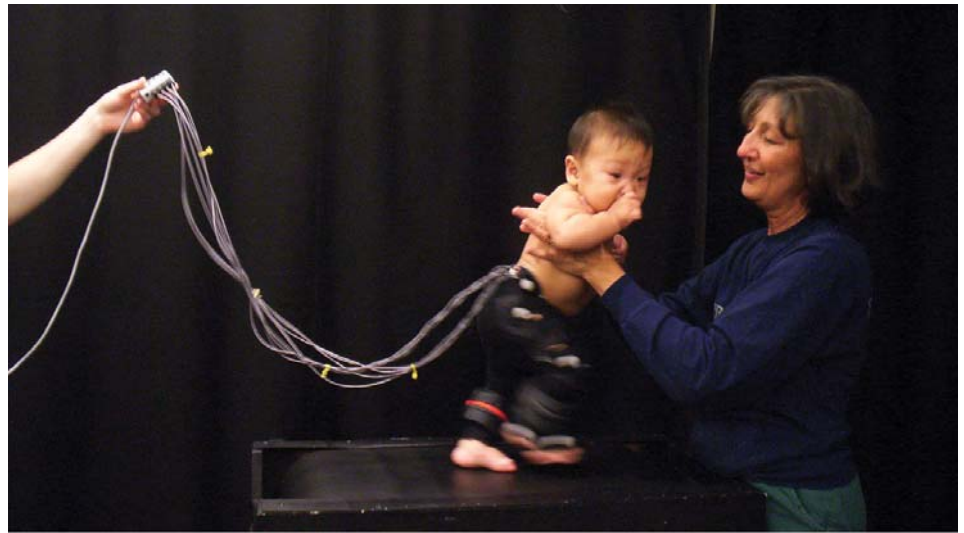
The Sport Management and Communication degree becomes the Sport Management degree to reflect major revisions to the mission and curriculum of the program.

gether these represent a seven-fold increase in federal funds and a two-fold increase in non-federal funds. “This work is being funded because our faculty members are addressing important societal issues related to health and mobility, from diabetes, spinal cord injuries and cerebral palsy to sport corporations’ societal responsibilities,” notes Dean Ulrich.

Kinesiology’s research is made even stronger by its links to other units across campus. These interdisciplinary collaborations involve such diverse areas as orthopedic surgery, geriatrics, psychology, engineering and business. “At Michigan, we approach complex problems from a variety of perspectives,” the Dean says. “It’s just good sense and good science,”

In addition to the growing body of Kinesiology research, the research income also fuels a graduate program that has grown from just two full-time fully funded doctoral students in 1999 to 32 full-time doctoral students in 2008–09, as well as 28 master’s degree students. Graduate student research assistantships and post-doctoral fellowships in Kinesiology have tripled over the past five years alone.

These laboratories are producing an impressive stream of scholarship. “Faculty publications in scientific journals have increased over the past decade in quantity, but more important, in quality,” Dean Ulrich attests. Faculty members have also taken on national leadership, with several serving as officers or fellows in their professional organizations and ten serve on the editorial boards of prominent research journals.



Dean Ulrich works with a young research subject in her Developmental Neuromotor Control Laboratory.

One of the best outcomes of all of this growth is mentorship. A typical lab group includes master’s and doctoral students and post-docs. Nearly all research faculty members also have a number of undergraduates working with them on projects. “In my lab, undergraduates have contributed to journal articles and accompanied me to conferences,” the Dean notes. “An outstanding graduate program enhances the undergraduate experience.”

including cross-campus transfers—who are interested in careers related to movement science, sport management, physical education and athletic training continues to grow. Because there are far more applicants than slots available, the quality of the undergraduate student body gets higher each year. Next to the School of Music, (where students must not only apply, but audition), Kinesiology has the highest yield of any unit.

### A Challenging Education

From former Director Dee Edington, Dr. Ulrich inherited a strong focus on the undergraduate program. “Growing the graduate program was mandatory, but never at the risk of compromising the quality of the undergraduate program,” Ulrich says.

Kinesiology has always been known for its friendly, collegial atmosphere. But what Ulrich emphasizes to prospective students is, “Come to Kinesiology because you want the very best preparation for the field you wish to pursue. Don’t choose us for the family environment. That’s a value-added feature, but secondary. Our first priority is to give you a challenging and exceptional education.”

And in fact, the number of students—

2003



Athletic Training Education Program gains national accreditation.

2003

Mike Leoni, BA '88, establishes the annual Movement for Life Golf Outing to support Kinesiology research.

2004

Kinesiology sets a \$10 million goal as the Michigan Difference campaign begins.

2005



Board of Regents approves \$11.5 million to renovate historic Observatory Lodge as Kinesiology’s new home.

2006



The school of Music Theatre and Dance and Kinesiology create a Movement Science Minor for Dance Majors.



Dean Ulrich gives an invited keynote address to the European Academy of Childhood Disability in Groningen, Netherlands.

This has informed all of her hiring decisions: “Because Michigan plays an important role with its research efforts in addressing the most important issues facing society today, excellent in research skills must be the first measure candidates for faculty positions must demonstrate,” explains Dean Ulrich. “To make the finalist list of candidates one needs to be a top-notch scholar, but to be hired, candidates must also want to teach and be good teachers.”

### Thinking Globally

Education is not confined to the lab and the classroom. One of the initiatives that excites Dr. Ulrich most today is the new Center for Global Opportunities in Kinesiology. Its mission: To develop and promote opportu-

nities for undergraduates to study, conduct research or do volunteer work in countries throughout the world.

“Most of our faculty and graduate students are already engaged in international research and participate in conferences around the world,” she explains. “But undergraduates are less apt to know about these opportunities or know how to pursue them. The senior leadership on the U-M campus agrees that all of the individual schools and colleges should do more to promote these experiences.”

She has made it a personal commitment, hiring a full-time staff person, **Sandra Wiley**, as International Program Coordinator. Ninety students have gained international experi-

ence since the Center began in 2006, and by the end of 2008–09, the number is projected at 150.

Twenty-two students have received Go-Global travel awards. So that no student is denied an international experience due to financial concerns, the Center is prepared to assist with funds through alumni donations and other resources. The goal is to make it as affordable and accessible as possible.

“We want our students to think of themselves as world citizens; to imagine their career paths in sport economics or preventive health care from an international perspective,” Ulrich says. “Global thinking has become part of the Kinesiology culture.”

### Viewing the Future

Of the multiple ways Kinesiology has grown and changed over the past decade, none is more visible than the matter of space. Following an \$11.5 million renovation approved by the U-M Regents, most of the faculty and staff moved to Observatory Lodge in 2007. Kinesiology gained 25,098 square feet of space that includes 22 faculty offices, 31 staff offices, three classrooms, a student study center and four research laboratories. Combined with its continuing presence in the Central Campus Recreation/Kinesiology/Dance Building and the Health Management Research Center on Huron Street, Kinesiology has gained a bigger footprint and greater visibility on campus.

The historic building on Observatory and Washington Heights with its gabled, Tudor façade celebrates tradition—Kinesiology’s

2006



The Judy and Fred Wilpon Family Foundation establish the Bone & Joint Injury Prevention & Rehabilitation Center with a \$5 million gift to Kinesiology and the School of Medicine.

2006

Center for Global Opportunities in Kinesiology is created to expand international study and research opportunities for students.



2007



The Bickner Endowed Chair established, Bruce and Joan’s generous gift make Kinesiology’s first endowed professorship possible.

2007



Kinesiology moves into Observatory Lodge, its new academic front door on campus.

2008

The Ross School and Kinesiology formalize a dual degree between the two academic units.

more-than-a-century at Michigan. The offices and classrooms inside, with their state-of-the-art technology link to the future. “Some of the new buildings on campus blend in,” Ulrich observes. “Not us! The exterior of this building is unique. When people see us, they remember us!”

“I am so thrilled to have a front door for Kinesiology.”

And she has laid the groundwork—(literally, raised the core of the down payment)—for a space that would house all activities not currently in Observatory Lodge, increasing efficiency and support our rapidly expanding funded research programs. That remains for the next dean’s agenda because now, Ulrich is looking forward to her transition from administration back to teaching and research. “Change is good. It will be motivating for the faculty. The next dean will do things differently, and that should engage people; shake us up a bit!”

“I am a detail person as well as someone who likes to think of herself as seeing the big picture,” she relates. “There are the major issues all deans must work on such as fundraising, staffing and space, but I also attend to tasks such as writing letters of recommendation for undergraduates, reviewing staff hires, and turning out lights in the building as I leave at night to save energy! Each of these is important to the success of Kinesiology at Michigan.”

“It’s hard to maintain this level of intensity. I won’t say Kinesiology has been my life for the past 10 years, but I do spend most of my

waking hours working on or thinking about it!”

And she has never lost her love of research. Before coming to Michigan, Ulrich was internationally recognized for her pioneering studies related to motor skill development in infants with Down syndrome. More recently Ulrich shifted her focus to children with spina bifida. She is at midpoint in a five-year National Institutes of Health grant. And she is eager to begin writing the grant proposals needed to move this work to the next stage—clinical trials.

“I think the knowledge we’re gaining can not only help children with spina bifida but be generalized to other disability populations with neural deficits” she says. “This research has a phenomenal potential for broader impact.”

Among the many rewards of her tenure, she particularly cites the alumni she has come to know, and the interactions with her fellow deans. “Michigan values interdisciplinary collaboration at all levels. Sometimes I faced problems that I could not discuss internally, and my dean colleagues have always been there to offer an objective viewpoint.”

During her year of administrative leave, in



Dean Ulrich and Nick Rademacher (MVS) discuss his options for both clinical and research experiences during medical school.

addition to working locally in her research lab, she looks forward to spending some time with colleagues at other universities who share her research focus. Visits such as these have not been possible on the tight schedule of the past ten years. She is also exploring developing a new course with a colleague in the Medical School which would combine clinical experience, the science of neuromotor control, and application to developmental disabilities.

“For one year (during her administrative leave), to be able to work just a 40-hour week, with evenings and weekends free—I can handle that,” she declares. “I love to play tennis, read, travel, garden and spend time with my nieces and nephews. I’ve got lists that are so long!”

“Imagine the possibilities.” **M**

2008

The School of Art and Design and Kinesiology begin a dual degree program.

2008



Kinesiology completes eight years of renovations within the Division’s research laboratories, lecture halls, classrooms and offices in the CCRB/Kinesiology/Dance Complex.

2008



Kinesiology increases the number of active research laboratories from 8 in 1999 to 18 in 2008.

2008



Total annual research expenditures reach \$6.9 million dollars, up from \$2 million in 2000.

2008



Kinesiology’s endowment reaches over \$6.5 million dollars, up from \$270,000 in 1999.