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JULIO M. OTTINO DEAN OF THE MCCORMICK SCHOOL

GREETINGS FROM MCCORMICK

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Synthetic biology is a good example. The field has emerged only within the past decade, enabled by breakthroughs that have opened new possibilities. Now we have the tools to rebuild cells to work for us—from solving energy problems to fighting against disease. We have made an investment in synthetic biology, hiring five professors who each connect with different disciplines across campus. It is difficult to know which ideas and technologies will ultimately triumph, but such is the nature of innovation.

The future also belongs to data. Large datasets are now available in nearly every part of our lives, and being able to cull information from them, understand that data, and use it to effect change is an essential skill we teach our undergraduates. When students get to use these skills to help optimize a complex event like the Chicago Marathon, it shows them how to use tools in real, often intense situations. Partnerships like these also provide a way for professors like Karen Smilowitz and Sanjay Mehrotra to continue their work in humanitarian logistics, creating models that will ultimately help make our world safer, and, when disasters do happen, help us to respond better.

You might notice a new look for our magazine. We have long been proud of this publication, but in the spirit of constant improvement we hope our new design better communicates the innovative work of our faculty and students. We are also dedicating more space to highlight some of our excellent alumni. They end up all over the world, in every industry, and we are glad to feature the impactful work that they do and learn how lessons from McCormick apply to their careers.

Lastly, we are excited to announce the launch of The Campaign for Northwestern. This ambitious fundraising campaign will enable Northwestern to achieve its bold vision, and provide the resources for the McCormick School to educate the next generation of whole-brain leaders and conduct pathbreaking research that will drive us forward. I thank the many alumni who have already stepped up to support our efforts.

As always, I welcome your feedback.

Julio M. Ottino
Dean, McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science