

# To Secure Merit

A Century of

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

1899-1999

In a city with a long history of medicine, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) has made a place for the osteopathic profession in Philadelphia and for itself as the nation's fifth largest medical school. *To Secure Merit* chronicles and celebrates the 100-year history of the College — the vision of two midwestern osteopathic medical students — from its humble beginnings in a two-room suite in a downtown office building to its present 17-acre campus on City Avenue.

As the chronology unfolds, stories emerge about the personalities and outside forces that shaped the College, the struggles to obtain legitimacy in the eyes of the public and allopathic medical community, and the choices the faculty and administration made in steering PCOM from its infancy at the turn of the century into a modern age of health care. No less fascinating is a series of thematic essays that shed light on forgotten or little known parts of PCOM's history such as legendary athletes, clinics and "booth doctors," student culture, military careers, the School of Nursing (gone for nearly four decades), the Alumni Association, and women and minorities.

Interspersed with the text are more than 225 photographs culled from the PCOM Archives and Still National Osteopathic Museum. Anecdotes and quotes span from the days before DOs could prescribe drugs or perform surgery to the present, a time when PCOM is synonymous with excellence in primary health care.

## Carol Benenson Perloff

Carol Benenson Perloff, MS, is an historian, much of whose expertise lies in medical history. In preparation for PCOM's Centennial, Benenson Perloff organized the College's Archives, conducted an oral history program and prepared a series of interpretive exhibits. She has also curated several exhibits and written catalogues for the University of Pennsylvania, Friends Hospital and other area museums and institutions.

## C. Everett Koop, MD

C. Everett Koop, MD, who contributes a foreword, is the former United States Surgeon General (1981-1989) and a long-time proponent of whole person medicine. As Surgeon General, Koop was the government's chief spokesperson on health. He continues to be a force for public health and health education through his writings, electronic media and public appearances. Koop is a prolific author and has written more than 250 articles and books on the practice of medicine and surgery, biomedical ethics and health policy. A recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor awarded in the United States, Koop is one of the most admired and respected medical figures in the nation.

