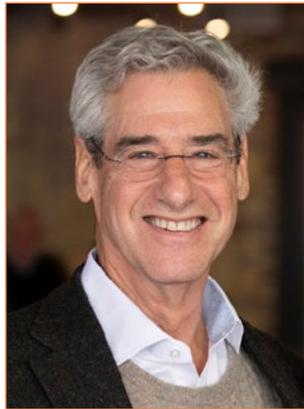


## Letter from President & Founder, Brian Berman, MD



With their dense clouds of gas and dust, **starburst galaxies** may look no different than others at first. But they produce new stars at extraordinary rates—hundreds of times faster than our own Milky Way—often fed by an influx of new material, collisions with neighboring galaxies, or the shock waves created by emerging stars. As we renamed the Nova Institute for Health last year, I couldn't help but think about our own creation of a star foundry over the last 15 years.

Our model is built on fire and heart—addressing urgent questions about people, places, and the planet by examining the full spectrum of health, healing, and flourishing. This purposefully collaborative approach relies on an influx of interdisciplinary insight and serendipitous collisions of ideas. The bright lights emerging through this unusual alchemy help shift paradigms across disciplines in support of our collective well-being.

Looking back, the path to the Nova Institute may seem like a natural trajectory, but, in fact, we had no blueprint to follow. We forged this unique space through an evolving set of questions and a persistent sense that things could be different. Early in my career, I was deeply dissatisfied with the medical approach to helping people with chronic disease. As I explored other healing traditions that seemed to focus more on stimulating well-being and self-healing, such as acupuncture and mindfulness, new paths opened for me on how to improve my conventional training and practice.

In 1991, I founded the first U.S. academic health center program for integrative medicine with the goal of putting science behind this new approach and catalyzing a profound change in medical practice. An approach that focuses on the whole person and an expanded view of healing and treating patients. Sixteen years later, I launched the Institute for Integrative Health. Since then, we have brought together extraordinary people with shining hearts and minds—Scholars and Fellows, community partners, forum participants—to break down barriers and examine the full context of people's lives and how we can truly thrive as individuals, as communities, and as a planet.

The Nova Institute for Health, as it is now known, reaches its 15-year anniversary at a critical moment, as we face cataclysmic challenges—the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that laid bare acute health inequities, increasing social unrest, and accelerating impacts from climate change. And there is a growing acknowledgment of the inadequacies of a disease-centered approach to medicine. The Nova Institute is ready to rise to the challenge, be a creative catalyst for change, and advance new approaches to promote well-being.

In this milestone year, we feel immense gratitude for the legion of partners and supporters who have joined us in this journey, helping to shape our vision and bring it to life. And while we take a look back on what we've accomplished, we continue to dream and plan for a better future. Together, we are forging the conditions necessary for new ideas to burst forth at extraordinary rates, illuminating our understanding of people, places, and the planet. Thank you for being part of this brilliant starburst.

Here's to the next 15 years!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Berman".