scene occurred in Northeastern’s Arnold S. Goldstein Simulation Laboratories Suite, it gave the student an opportunity to learn from mistakes with no human consequences.

The suite in the Bouvé College of Health Sciences contains state-of-the-art medical equipment and supplies to transform each of its four rooms into any environment: a hospital room, a home-care situation, or even a street scene. The sophisticated simulators are programmed to bleed, have heart attacks, give birth, talk to their caregivers, and mimic countless diseases and conditions.

Marlene Goldstein invested $2 million into the cutting-edge enterprise, which was named after her husband, Arnold, P’61, Ph’D’90, who was a Northeastern professor of pharmacy, acting dean, and champion of “learning by doing.” Orbis Education, which has partnered with Bouvé to provide online healthcare education programs, invested $500,000 in the endeavor.

Every interactive training session is captured on video, which is fed to two other rooms within the suite. Students and faculty gather to debrief and evaluate the decision-making process at different stages of each scenario.

“That’s where the real learning comes in,” says Jamie Musler, director of the simulation lab. “Patient safety is job one, and this suite allows us to enhance the critical thinking necessary in healthcare environments.”

It’s not just clinical skills that benefit from simulation; it’s also the interprofessional and communication skills needed when a student must deal with two doctors disagreeing over patient care or when a physician assistant needs to demonstrate compassion with parents after their child dies.

“With our new suite, by the time students graduate, they can immediately enter the workforce and practice as clinicians at a very high level,” says Musler.

WHEN REBECCA RICCIO talks, the Buffett family listens—at least when the topic is charitable giving. When multibillionaire Warren Buffett’s sister, Doris, decided to create a free online course about philanthropy, her foundation tapped Riccio, director of Northeastern’s Social Impact Lab, to lead the class.

“Giving With Purpose,” the world’s first massive open online course, or MOOC, on charitable giving, provides students with “a conduit between theory and practice—a platform to apply what they are learning in the classroom to real-world opportunities,” says Riccio.

Last spring, students were entrusted with giving away $150,000 of Doris Buffett’s money. Before handing out the cash, they learned how to evaluate the intentions and the effectiveness of a nonprofit. After nominating potential grant recipients, they learned to rigorously evaluate the organizations using criteria Riccio taught. Based on these evaluations, they narrowed the list of recipients to 30 nonprofits, which received the awards in June 2014.

“This class provides students with a comprehensive toolkit for translating good intentions into effective, financially sustainable strategies for achieving social change,” says Riccio.

The online course included more than 7,500 students worldwide last spring and 10,000 students the previous summer. It will be offered again in the spring.

In addition to Warren and Doris Buffett, guest speakers have included Hall of Fame shortstop Cal Ripken Jr., former CNN anchor Soledad O’Brien, actor Patrick Dempsey, and Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield of Ben & Jerry’s ice cream. Riccio, who has 20 years’ experience in the philanthropic field, served as the primary lecturer.

In a press release issued when the course began, Dempsey said, “Philanthropy can drive change by empowering everyone in the room to play a role. The MOOC gives us a bigger room and lets us invite more people into it.”

The course has been featured in Forbes, Fortune, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal.

In November, Riccio plans to spread the good work to Australia, where she will introduce the concept for her innovative course at Northeastern’s partner, Swinburne University in Melbourne.