



# A Message from the President

July 22, 2005

To: All Employees, Volunteers and Students at Upstate

A Smoke-Free Upstate Medical University

Dear Colleague:

I am pleased to inform you that we remain on course to be smoke-free beginning August 1. Over the last several months the Advisory Committee for a Smoke-Free Upstate, comprised of individuals from across the institution, has worked diligently to accomplish this goal. Upstate will have the distinction of being the first entirely smoke-free SUNY campus. Success in this endeavor has been dependent on a number of contributors to the effort that understand that this is a major health initiative with positive implications for Upstate Medical University and the community we serve.

While moving through this process, we have been fortunate to receive input and guidance from institutions that have previously made a successful smoke-free transition. The University of Michigan Health System has been smoke-free since 1999 and was led through their transition by Linda Thomas MS, LLP, where she presently serves as the director of the Tobacco Consultation Service. She spent two days at Upstate in May and provided her expertise to help us finalize our plans.

Negotiations with all five of our unions were successful. They each showed their leadership on this important issue by signing Memorandums of Understanding regarding the August 1, 2005 smoke-free policy implementation.

The Smoking Cessation Program has been a success with participation by over 200 staff so far. Our smoking cessation counselors, Cynthia Cary and Susan Greetham, have now received national certification after completion of their training at the Mayo Clinic.

The expectation is that all staff and students be informed of the campus smoke-free policy (1.19) and the hospital smoke-free policy (S-03). One important provision is that ***“all employees, faculty, volunteers, and students share in the responsibility for adhering to and enforcing this policy, and for bringing it to the attention of Upstate visitors.”*** The measures to achieve this were addressed in the training materials and educational sessions conducted for managers and staff, and now must be put into practice.

On August 1, all designated smoking areas will be eliminated, ash receptacles will be removed, and new no smoking signs will be revealed. This will represent a milestone. However, the goal of making Upstate truly smoke-free lies before us and will require ongoing cooperation and participation by the entire Upstate community.

Sincerely,

Gregory L. Eastwood, MD  
President