



UPSTATE'S NEW ACADEMIC BUILDING SUPPORTS A RENEWED EDUCATIONAL COMMITMENT TO TEACHING CLINICAL SKILLS AND LEADERSHIP IN MEDICAL EDUCATION.

BUILDING ON THE PROFESSION

RENEWING OUR COMMITMENT TO TEACHING EXCELLENCE

The five-story 46,000-square-foot addition to the north end of Weiskotten Hall will be the first new classroom space built at Upstate since the late 1970s. When completed in 2007, the building will contain state-of-the-art space that supports and reflects medical education in the 21st century.

At Upstate Medical University, like many medical schools, curricular reform has dramatically changed the way medical students learn their profession. In the late 1980s, instructional changes decreased the number of large lecture courses and placed greater emphasis on small group teaching. Curriculum Reform 2000 went even further, integrating the traditional disciplines and the basic and clinical sciences.



Sara Jo Grethlein, MD

“All of medical education is re-emphasizing bedside skills, communication skills, and physical diagnosis,” says Upstate Professor of Medicine Sara Jo Grethlein, MD, who was a director of Upstate’s Practice of Medicine (POM) course and is associate dean for graduate medical education. “For a while, medical education got sidetracked by technology and downplayed the importance of those skills. As a profession, we’ve recognized how crucial these skills are and have rededicated ourselves to teaching them.” To do that well, she says, means bricks and mortar to create spaces to support a modern-day medical curriculum.

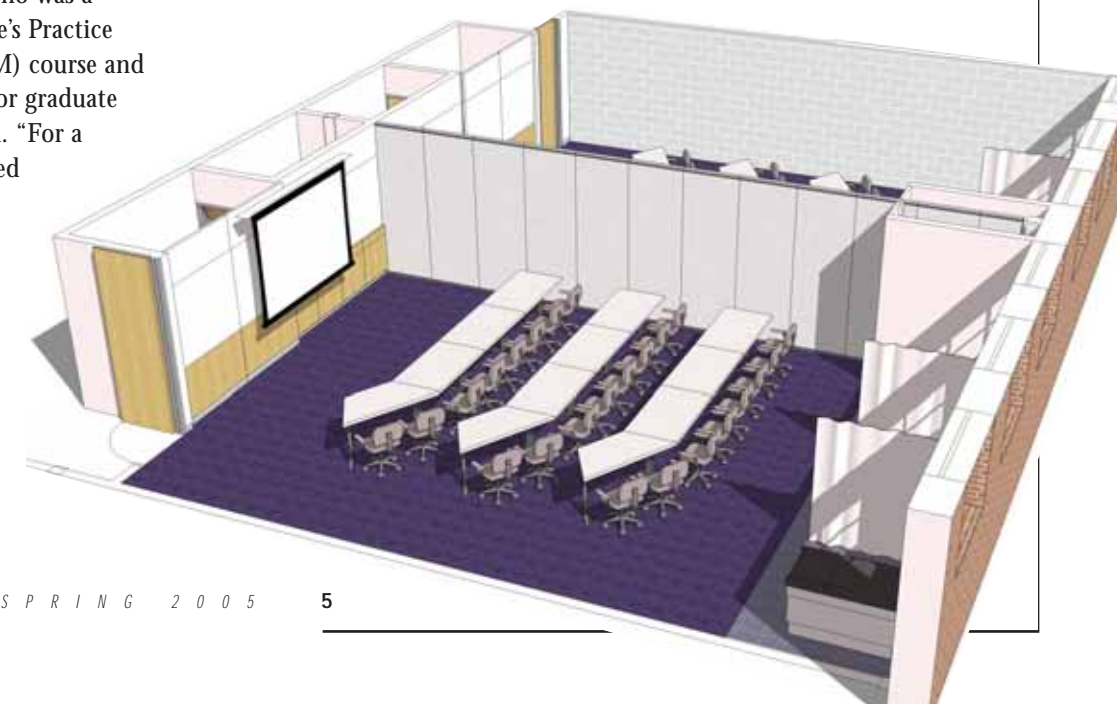
Upstate Associate Dean for Curriculum and SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor Lynn Cleary, MD, notes that “We made a decision that we want to be a leader in medical education at Upstate. We don’t want to be behind the curve.”



Lynn Cleary, MD

“There is a tradition of excellence in teaching at Upstate. Whether it’s the teacher in the room, or now the room itself, all of these factors enhance the experiences students have while here and enhances what they take to their future careers,” adds Dr. Cleary.

Left, architect’s rendering of glass atrium connecting to north side of Weiskotten Hall. Below, divided classroom. Images from Holt Architects, PC.





A BUILDING FOR EXCELLENCE

Planned by a steering committee of students and faculty from all four colleges at Upstate (Graduate Studies, Health Professions, Medicine and Nursing), the Academic Building is also the beneficiary of visits to and reviews of other clinical skills teaching facilities in the Northeast and across the country.

In addition to a floor devoted to a Clinical Skills Teaching Center with 22 exam rooms and a closed-circuit video monitoring area, the building will feature flexible space that can be used for many different needs as the curriculum evolves.

“One of our challenges with curriculum reform has been that we lacked certain facilities on campus,” says Cleary. “We need flexible space that can work for a class of 60 or a group of 25.”

The new building will solve that need. There are six new classrooms. Five of them can be divided with the touch of a switch, and three will have alcoves for small-group demonstration of physical exams. State-of-the-art technological support will be available throughout the building, including wireless access and LCD projectors.

Robert F. Rohner, MD '52



Frederick B. Parker, MD



Elinor Spring-Mills, PhD



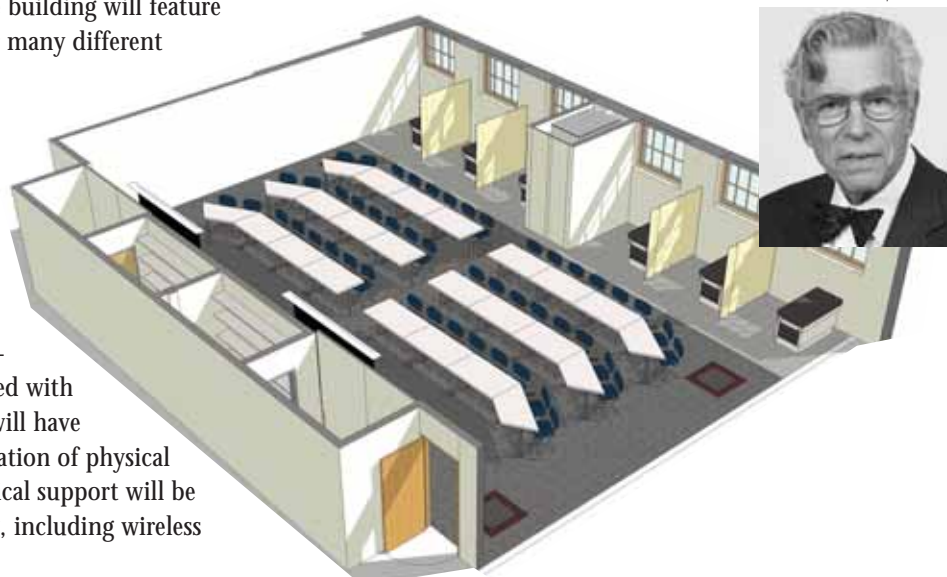
Maxwell M. Mozell, PhD



William J. Williams, MD



Irwin (Ike) Weiner, MD '56



The glass atrium, called the “Winter Commons,” connects the new building to Weiskotten Hall, and is conducive to informal study groups or interaction with faculty. A coffee bar provides refreshments and will become a casual gathering place.

A bridge over the atrium at the third-floor level connects to a renovated classroom corridor of Weiskotten, creating a natural collection of rooms perfect for conferences.

The building will feature an office suite for faculty in the Practice of Medicine course, and a new home for the Medical Alumni Association. Located on the first floor, close to the entrance of the new Academic Building, the office is easily accessible to alumni visiting campus, and students using the Career Advisory Network.



HONORING REVERED TEACHERS

The six teaching classrooms will be named in honor of revered medical educators associated with various clinical and basic science departments. All gifts to these naming campaigns will be matched on a one-to-one basis by sponsoring departments and private gifts.

The classroom honorees are: Robert F. Rohner, MD '52, HS '56 (Department of Pathology); Frederick B. Parker, MD (Department of Surgery); Elinor Spring-Mills, PhD (Department of Cell and Developmental Biology); Maxwell M. Mozell, PhD (College of Graduate Studies); William J. Williams, MD (Department of Medicine) and Irwin (Ike) Weiner, MD '56 (Department of Pharmacology).

“These teachers were chosen because of their lasting influence on countless physicians they taught and mentored,” says Carole Novick, executive director of the Medical Alumni Association. “Their names are ones I hear alumni refer to over and over.”

“As an alumna and a faculty member, I’m proud

TEACHING CLINICAL SKILLS

The patient is not breathing. The medical student struggles to intubate the airway. He elevates the patient’s head and extends the atlanto-occipital joint. He uses the scissor technique to further open the patient’s mouth. He still can’t get the tube in. Precious time is ticking away.

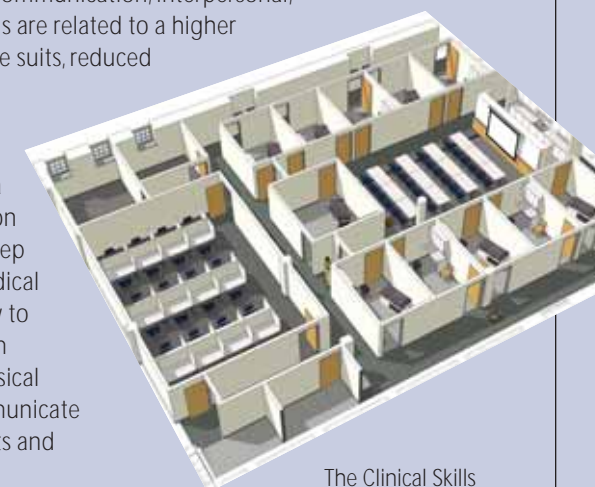
If the patient were a live human being, each second without oxygen could compromise brain function. But since the “patient” is a sophisticated medical mannequin, the student is able to practice the skill until he gets it right, practice without fear of leaving his patient brain damaged—or worse—while learning the skills necessary to practice his chosen profession.

Down the hall, another student examines a patient (an actor) who complains of abdominal pain. The student takes the patient’s history and carefully probes her abdomen. In an adjoining room, the student’s instructor watches the exam via video monitor. Later, the instructor and

student watch the videotape and discuss ways the student can improve communication with her patient.

While clinical-skills training has always been an important part of medical education, it is now front and center, spurring curricular reform at medical schools across the nation. Numerous studies have shown that poor communication, interpersonal, and general clinical skills are related to a higher incidence of malpractice suits, reduced treatment compliance by patients, and decreased patient satisfaction. In answer, a clinical skills examination was added to USMLE Step 2 in 2004 that tests medical students on their ability to gather information from patients, perform a physical examination, and communicate their findings to patients and colleagues.

Perhaps the greatest value of using standardized patients is in evaluating student performance. “We can train a group of standardized patients to play the same role, so that each student sees the same type of presenting patient. It’s a way to objectify an evaluation experience. And the new facility will provide better acoustics, privacy and logistics of scheduling,” says Steve Harris, who directs Upstate’s Standardized Patient Program.



The Clinical Skills Teaching Center with 22 exam rooms, closed-circuit monitoring, and state-of-the-art equipment occupies the lower level of the Academic Building.

that Upstate is a growing and changing institution,” says Anne Barash, MD, HS 1995, associate professor of family medicine and one of the coordinators of the Practice of Medicine course. “Improving the quality of the school reflects well on all of us who are graduates of Upstate.”

FUNDING

Funding for the \$11 million project will come from a variety of sources, including New York State, Upstate, and the promise of a \$3 million bequest from a College of Medicine alumnus and his wife, whose names will be announced at the building’s groundbreaking in May.

The Medical Alumni Association is fundraising to help defray costs for the interior needs of the building: furnishings, equipment, and technology. “The institution has stretched itself to make this building a reality because we believe so strongly in its mission and importance,” says Novick. “The more money we can raise, the more



New home of the Medical Alumni Association. “We are thrilled to have this larger, convenient space and are working hard to ‘earn’ it by taking the leadership role in raising funds,” says Novick.

we can contribute to making this building the state-of-the-art facility we envision without taxing other needs on campus.”

According to Gregory Eastwood, MD, president of Upstate Medical University, the Medical Alumni Association and its members have traditionally been strong supporters of current students, raising money for scholarships, and capital projects, such as the renovation of Medical Alumni Auditorium and the 9th Floor of Weiskotten Hall. “The Academic Building is tangible evidence of Upstate’s commitment to education,” he says. “We trust that our alumni, faculty, parents and friends of Upstate will see it as a significant opportunity to support medical education and all of our students.”

Designed by Holt Architects, PC of Ithaca, NY, the new Academic Building addresses the historically sensitive context of Weiskotten Hall.

ONE GENERATION’S GIFT TO ANOTHER



Robert Quencer, MD '67

In 1965, at the beginning of their third year of medical school, the Upstate Medical University Class of 1967 was divided into small groups that would move through the clinical rotations together for the next

two years. Robert Quencer, MD '67, fondly recalls his group as “like a little fraternity. We were all very close,” he says.

So when Dr. Quencer heard about the death of classmate Paul LoGerfo, a member of that group, it made an impact.

Dr. LoGerfo, who died of metastatic melanoma in September 2003, was the David V. Habib Professor of Surgery at Columbia University and co-director of the New York Thyroid Center. A world-renowned leader in the field of thyroid and parathyroid surgery, he developed the throglobulin assay, one of the most commonly used methods for detecting recurrent thyroid cancer, and was president of the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons.

LoGerfo was the third “comrade” the group had lost. Classmates John Weatherly and Bob Carangi had both passed away in the mid-1990s. Both physicians were trained as radiologists. Weatherly practiced in the Army in Maryland and later worked in the field of emergency medicine. Carangi served on the faculty at UCLA and later left medical practice to pursue entrepreneurial business ventures in medical imaging.

In memory of all three, Quencer organized the remaining nine members of their rotation group to make a donation to the Medical Alumni Association’s campaign for the new Academic Building at Upstate Medical University. The group’s \$10,000 gift names a standardized patient staging room in the Clinical Skills Teaching Center.

“I thought this would be an appropriate way to honor all three of them,” says Quencer, chair of radiology at the University of Miami-Jackson



John Weatherly, MD '67



Bob Carangi, MD '67



Paul LoGerfo, MD '67

Memorial Medical Center. “We supported each other in many ways during those two years. This is a way of continuing that tradition while giving back to Upstate.”

In addition to Quencer, donors include: John Bennett, Chuck Converse, Joe Martino, Dan McDonald, Alan Press, Steve Salsburg, Bob Wald, and Bert Zarins, all members of the Class of 1967

“This gift was a meaningful way for this group to support current students while honoring their classmates,” says Carole Novick, executive director of the Medical Alumni Association.

“By supporting the new Academic Building, alumni can help raise the caliber of the institution, adding value to their own Upstate degree in the process.”

Photos from the 1967 *Auricle*

