



# UPSTATE

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

EDUCATION • HEALTHCARE • RESEARCH

## Office of the President

February 1, 2016

### A message to the Upstate Medical University community

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

As the calendar turns to February, our 2016 spring semester is well under way.

One of the goals I have set for myself is to visit every area of the campus and to meet all of you. This may take several months to accomplish, but it's important to do and, quite honestly, one of the most rewarding aspects of my early service as president.

This past week I was able to visit with our University Police (thank you for keeping our campus safe) and attended a luncheon celebrating our Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (commonly known as CSTEP) students. This program, sponsored by the state Education Department, helps state residents who are economically disadvantaged and from historically underrepresented groups prepare for careers in science and health-related fields. This is an important program to support as we commit ourselves to a diverse, talented and inclusive student body and workforce.

During the past week, Dean Duggan, Dan Hurley, Assistant Dean Thompson and I went to Washington, DC. Our visit had multiple purposes. It was an opportunity for me to introduce myself as the new President of Upstate and, in that vein, we met with Senators Gillibrand and Schumer's staff, Congressman's Katko's chief of staff, and had a luncheon with President Bruce Siegel and senior staff of America's Essential Hospitals (formerly the National Association of Public Hospitals). Deans Duggan and Thompson also met with the staff of the Indian Health Service to explore ways to work effectively in support of our Native American communities. These meetings also allowed me to discuss the academic mission of our university and ways we could partner with each of our representatives and agencies to improve health outcomes for our populations.

An important meeting during our Washington trip was our meeting with the Secretary of the Veterans Affairs, Robert A. McDonald. We thank the Secretary for taking the time to meet and talk. The highlights of the meeting included the following: a confirmation of our joint endorsement of academics and our current affiliation as our top priorities; our endorsement of our longstanding commitment to veterans and their families; our endorsement that the best science needs to address the health needs of veterans including mental health, clinical integration, and support for innovative health research in the neurosciences, genomics and information technology. Our commitment to veterans dates back to the inception of the College of Medicine and is reflected in our robust efforts in the training of medical students, residents and involvement of our faculty in large numbers at the Syracuse VA. We left the meeting with a renewed sense of our joint purpose in supporting veterans and their families. Stay tune for more.

Starred on my calendar for this week is a visit Tuesday with our research faculty. I am so very much looking forward to meeting our faculty who are on the frontlines of scientific discovery. And, on Thursday I look forward to my official welcome reception.

In closing, I want to reiterate how important it is that we have ongoing communications among all of us and to listen carefully to each other's ideas. I am deeply committed to respectful communications across campus. Your voice will be important as we move forward with our strategic planning process.

Thank you to those who have sent me messages at [President@upstate.edu](mailto:President@upstate.edu). We will follow-up on your suggestions.

Have a great week,

Sincerely,

Danielle Laraque-Arena, MD, FAAP  
President, Upstate Medical University

*In Washington, from left, David B. Duggan MD, Dean, College of Medicine; Robert A. McDonald, Secretary, US Department of Veterans Affairs; Danielle Laraque-Arena, MD, FAAP, President, SUNY Upstate Medical University; and David J. Shulkin MD, Undersecretary of Health, Veterans Health Administration.*

