



# UPSTATE

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

EDUCATION • HEALTHCARE • RESEARCH

## *Office of the President*

May 2, 2016

### **A message to the Upstate Medical University community**

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

As promised, I am resuming my communication with you and will do so on a monthly basis. It's hard to believe it's already been two weeks since the inauguration. April 15, 2016 was indeed an incredible day for me and I hope for all at Upstate Medical University. We have reaffirmed our commitment to the mission of one university, serving our communities through the best science, education and health care delivery.

The calendar has turned to May and Commencement is less than three weeks away. I want to offer early congratulations to our students. I have been fortunate to have met many of you since I arrived on campus in January. I know you will do Upstate proud in your next chapter of life.

### **Offering ideas for a stronger Upstate**

This past week, I continued my fireside chats with employees and faculty.

Selected at large, the group of employees represented all areas of the institution, from outpatient clinics, to patient support and shared services, with employees whose service to Upstate spanned a couple months to a couple decades.

I came away with an understanding of the immense pride you take in your work here and how that pride fuels a realization that you want the best for Upstate. Some of you highlighted areas where Upstate can do better and we talked about developing ways to make that happen. That's what I want to encourage all of us to do. We cannot only define our problems, or get mired in "can't do"; we can work together and take action that moves us forward in all areas of our mission.

Our strategic planning process will do just that: give us all the opportunity to craft greater success for Upstate. As part of our strategic planning, we will bring together those at Upstate in a broad, inclusive discussion of what we want to achieve and how to get there. The five areas of our focus will be progressive, responsive healthcare; transformational education; world-class research; community engagement; and financial stewardship. The specific actions that we will take will be informed and evaluated with data.

Overseeing our work will be our institutional values, especially our values of diversity and inclusion, as we ensure our process is equitable and rooted in fairness.

I met with the faculty, administrative staff and leadership of three clinical departments in the past week. I also met with members of the faculty senate in line with my commitment for active engagement of the faculty in the strategic planning process and key recruitments.

I will be speaking more about our strategic planning process at my first Upstate Community Town Hall on Wednesday, May 18. Of course, much more communications will follow on our strategic planning process. Thank you for being engaged.

### Dean Search Under Way

The national search for the next dean of the College of Medicine is underway and I want your input on this decision, too. You will soon receive a message from the Search Committee co-chairs Patricia Kane, PhD, professor and chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, and Luis Mejico, MD, professor and chair of the Department of Neurology, with information on how to participate in the search process. The Executive Search firm of Merritt-Hawkins has been engaged to support the search process.

### Kudos all around

I want to offer my highest praise and support for our Center for Global Health and Translational Science which last week announced the creation of the Global Maternal Child and Pediatric Health Program. This program will build on our global health, outreach and focus our efforts on the most vulnerable and vital among us: pregnant women, infants, children and adolescents. This is a timely program as it focuses on the theme of Upstate's inauguration celebration: Local and Global Connectivity.

Please continue to provide feedback regarding our processes as these evolve. The [President@upstate.edu](mailto:President@upstate.edu) email address will remain active. Talk to you next month and see you at our Town Hall meeting!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Danielle', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

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