



# UPSTATE

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

EDUCATION • HEALTHCARE • RESEARCH

## *Office of the President & Health System CEO*

June 21, 2018

Dear Upstate Community:

As I reflect over this past year, I think it is a moment in time to reflect and remind all of us of the marvelous things that have been accomplished with the work that each and every one of you does every day. From our frontline workers to the leadership across our clinical enterprise and colleges your passion for Upstate has and will continue to make a difference. Here is a sampling of your work strongly aligned with our strategic priorities.

—I had the pleasure of celebrating the induction of the 2017 and Spring 2018 Distinguished Faculty in Albany on May 22, 2018. Upstate can be proud of Andras Perl, a member of the Department of Medicine and noted Rheumatologist; Paula Trief, member of Psychiatry & Behavioral Science and Clinical Professor of Orthopedic Surgery; Leonard Weiner, Vice Chair for Academic Affairs, Director of the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases; and Ann Botash, Professor and interim Chair of the Department of Pediatrics. More information on 2017 honorees is here <http://www.upstate.edu/news/article.php?title=10740>. For 2018 honorees visit: <http://www.suny.edu/suny-news/press-releases/04-2018/4-11-18/15-faculty-to-distinguished-ranks.html>.

—Our Violence Education, Prevention Outreach Program (VEPOP) is committed to raising awareness of resources and options available for victims of violent injuries and their families, as it focuses on partnering with other stakeholders to decrease street violence in the city of Syracuse and surrounding areas. In 2017, Upstate received a donation from Sam and Carol Nappi to fund a dedicated social worker for this program—attending to mental health and social needs to assist in rebuilding lives harmed by violence.

—This past week, Gennady Bratslavsky, his research team, Jeffrey Bogart, and Robert Corona and few others met with the Queen's University team in Clayton, N.Y., with the result being a collaborative agreement in urologic cancers that will focus on team funding initiatives and economic development. Other efforts in our region will offer the opportunity to expand our focus in lung cancer in the fall and build on physician-physician longstanding relationships.

—The UUMAS practice plan is exploring extending its reach in meeting regional health network needs. Much of the past many days has been spent talking to potential patients in a truly patient-centered approach.

—The medical faculty has been thankful for sponsorship support to attend the Cornell Leadership Course. This could not have been accomplished without Dean Licinio's and the College of Medicine chair's leadership and commitment. Strategic outreach, academic excellence and extraordinary efforts in patient care...these are things to celebrate.

—We are moving ahead with an institution-wide program modeled after the Upstate Cancer Center’s Thrivership program, which helps patients and caregivers shift their mindsets from “survive” to “thrive.” We will use this model with a goal of optimizing quality of life by providing evidence-guided services and resources that support healthy life choices enabling community members to thrive. This wellness focus will link a wide range of programming already in place—from Oasis-based education, socialization and fitness programming, to Vitality, health screenings provided at the Farmer’s Market and Toomey Abbott, the Monday Mile and Tranquility Tuesday. Through these, and related programs, Thrivership strives to root our communities in health and wellness. It is right that we share our expertise on matters of wellness or Thrivership beyond our campus boundaries. Guided by the inspirational leadership of Kaushal Nanavati, the institutional expansion of Thrivership was one of several recommendations of the Task Force for Effective Leadership in Action (ELIA), which concluded its work earlier this year. Led by SUNY Distinguished Service Professor Mantosh Dewan, the panel featured 22 members, representing Upstate employees, students and members of the Syracuse community. The task force was thoughtful and thorough in its review of important issues and I appreciate the members’ service and guidance. The full executive summary is available here: <http://www.upstate.edu/president/pdf/intra/task-force-exec-summary-0418.pdf>. Stay tuned, as full implementation plans already on the way.

—We are also moving ahead with another capstone project presented by our Leadership Academy and supported by the ELIA recommendations—a Downtown Campus hospital lobby renovation to create more welcoming and accommodating main entrance to our patients and their families. The design plans include the creation of a Patient and Family Service Center that will consolidate major services, such as parking, patient records, patient relations, in one location. Construction on this project is due to begin in August. As part of this plan, we officially opened our new outpatient pharmacy today. Thank you to all who made this possible, especially Luke Probst and all our colleagues in Pharmacy.

—We will break ground on the Nappi Longevity Institute this fall, now that preparatory site work has been completed on the lot across the street from the Upstate Cancer Center. This building will change the way we deliver healthcare by offering an array of wellness services under one roof, following the philosophy that preventive health and promotion of good health and full integration of behavioral health services can help reduce hospitalization, readmissions and emergency treatment. This building will also be home to our work related to healthy aging including a focus on Alzheimer’s disease. On that note, we welcomed Sharon Brangman as the inaugural Chair of the new Department of Geriatrics.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate again Vice President for Research David C. Amberg on his appointment by the SUNY Board of Trustees this past week as interim president of the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. He is an outstanding campus leader and I know that he will continue to seek collaborative relationships between our two campuses. A plan outlining a transition research administration structure will be developed and announced over the next couple of weeks.

In closing, I thank you all for your support of Upstate, the pride you take in your work, and for the work you do every day to fulfill our mission of improving the health of our communities. Furthermore, having leadership that embrace and promote the values that we cherish—including transparency, respect, shared governance, and integrity—is my top priority. I will continue to share the good news of your many accomplishments and our plans to make Upstate all that it can be.

Photograph of today's Upstate Outpatient Pharmacy opening



Sincerely,

Danielle Laraque-Arena, MD, FAAP  
President & Health System CEO  
SUNY Upstate Medical University