



# UPSTATE

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

EDUCATION • HEALTHCARE • RESEARCH

## Office of the President

March 7, 2016

### A message to the Upstate Medical University community

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

Reflections as I approach two months at Upstate.

My first thoughts are how happy I am to be with you. Interestingly, life takes us in many different directions — some never contemplated and we discover incredible individuals and renewed purpose. That is what the move to Syracuse and Upstate has represented for me.

We are at a moment in time to consolidate our efforts, to excel and to make a difference.

A glimpse of this past week's events that makes this fact evident are:

- I travelled to Albany on Monday of last week and spent two days with five students from each of the colleges advocating for the resources needed to keep Upstate competitive in the healthcare market. The best part of the trip was learning about the motivation of each of the students for seeking to become a nurse practitioner, a physician, a radiation oncology technician, or a professor of biochemistry. All had grown up in Central New York, had strong feelings of loyalty to their hometowns, had overcome obstacles to be at the university, and are fiercely proud of Upstate.
- On Friday we received news that Upstate had received \$70.6 million. The funding comes through the Capital Restructuring Financing Program and Essential Health Care Provider Support Program, created to support the goals of the Delivery System Reform Incentive Program (DSRIP). Providing funds for a state-of-the-art ambulatory pavilion, the monies will support the goals of DSRIP to reduce health care costs, reduce avoidable hospital admissions and



*Clockwise from President Danielle Laraque-Arena, MD (front center) are Aisha Lubega (Nursing), Linda Veit (Public Affairs), LeAnn Spingler (Health Professions), Nick Stam (Graduate Studies), George Thatvihane MSI (Medicine), Alicia Marhefka MSIII (Clinical Campus), Dan Hurley (Public Affairs) and Debra Buchan, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine.*

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emergency department visits by 25 percent by 2020, and ensure the financial sustainability of safety-net health care providers such as Upstate. DSRIP is a healthcare redesign meant to better integrate the full scope of patient- and family-centered health, including mental health services, in collaboration with community-based organizations. I extend a debt of gratitude to all the individuals who worked on this application.

- As noted in last week's message, Upstate and our partner institution, SUNY Downstate, will receive \$1.3 million in Empire Innovation Program Funds to staff a combined genomic medicine program. Also from EIP funds, Upstate will receive \$650,000 to help establish the SUNY Institute for Precision Cancer Research, Education and Care. This institute will be a collaborative-effort program with other SUNY campuses throughout the region.

Combined, those two announcements showcase a nearly \$75 million commitment from the State and SUNY to this institution and its mission, its people and its role as leader in guiding the future of medicine. We should all take great pride in these accomplishments.

- Lastly, on Friday evening my husband and I had the great honor of having dinner with the spiritual leader and Head Chief of the Six Nations, Sidney Hill, and his wife, Betty Lyons, President and Executive Director of the American Indian Law Alliance, Dr. Brian Thompson, and his wife, Matilda Thompson. Renewed purpose comes from rediscovering humility and caring for each other. Our university can only be great if it is focused on strengthening the ties between us as individuals, communities and Nations, respecting each other, doing good, and diligently seeking to live as one mind in peace.

This week, I will stand with leaders from Syracuse businesses and other health care organizations in support of the American Cancer Society's 80 by 2018 campaign. It's a campaign to get 80 percent of the adults older than 50 in our county screened for colon cancer. Early detection is one of the best ways to win the fight against this cancer.

Yes, there is much for us to do — and I am confident that together, all is possible. Talk to you next week.

Sincerely,



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