



UPSTATE

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

EDUCATION • HEALTHCARE • RESEARCH

Office of the President

February 15, 2016

A message to the Upstate Medical University community

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

Last week for me began in Albany as I attended SUNY Chancellor Zimpher's budget testimony at the joint hearing of the State Senate Finance Committee and the State Assembly Ways & Means Committee, where I also met with State Senator Kenneth LaValle, who chairs the Higher Education Committee.

The need for support for Upstate from our elected officials is of vital importance, especially during state budget negotiations that continue for the next several weeks.

I was delighted last week to receive a copy of a letter addressed to Speaker Carl Heastie signed by Assembly majority members who applauded Upstate's vital role in the region and urged support for the funding that Upstate is requesting this year. Some of these requests, such as the need for more capital improvement support, we make with our fellow SUNY institutions. You can read the letter at www.upstate.edu/president/pdf/assembly-letter.pdf.

The letter states that just five percent of Upstate's budget comes from direct state support (\$68.89 million). It's an investment that is leveraged to support our \$1.3 billion enterprise, and more than 9,000 employees.

That fact might be reason enough to support Upstate, but we must ensure that our actions everyday — the delivery of outstanding medical care, medical education, research, and our actions in the community — send a strong message that Upstate is an outstanding investment for the state and our local community.

Each one us, no matter what we do at Upstate, can be an advocate for our mission.

How we interact with each other and the public, our patients, their families, can help us build support for this institution.

Also, while in Albany, I had an opportunity to attend my first SUNY Presidents' meeting. It was a pleasure to start to know my fellow Presidents, 63 in all with a breadth of experience that truly reflects the strength of the SUNY system. We discussed vital educational issues such as applied learning and novel educational methods to increase college readiness, as well as key issues for rapid response to campus crises.

My week concluded with an opportunity to meet with former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher at the Satcher Health Leadership Institute. Dr. Satcher's vision for purposeful leadership is one that I have mentioned in many of my remarks and is in line with my focus on continued strong support for faculty and staff development here at Upstate.

In closing, I want to extend congratulations to Upstate's nursing staff and all those who support the incredible team of frontline caregivers. In the past year, both of our campuses have achieved Exemplar Status as a Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE) hospital. It's an accomplishment that recognizes our high-level dedication to geriatric care and our work to implement system-wide support for our nurses to provide the highest level of care for our older adults.

Thank you all. I look forward to meeting more of you.

Sincerely,

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