



# UPSTATE

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

EDUCATION • HEALTHCARE • RESEARCH

## *Office of the President*

March 21, 2016

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

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

This week we welcome spring. My first winter in Syracuse was mild but as today reflects, some areas of the state are covered with snow, with climate change in full swing.

As I glance at the activities of last week and those to come this week, I have the following thoughts. I have continued my conversations with faculty, staff, and new employees, and engaged in some of the hot issues of the day — such as universal health care — with the presentation of that topic at the AOA Visiting Professorship. These discussions emphasize for me the need to create opportunities for open dialogue among the various sectors of the university to share ideas, share data and come to consensus on the tough decisions ahead.

A highlight of one visit across campus was the meeting of the Upstate Foundation Board. The Foundation is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. The board members are some of our most ardent community supporters. These individuals have remained steadfast in their support for Upstate, knowing our incredible mission. Their leadership is reflected in the ongoing successful fundraising endeavors that have helped raise more than \$40 million to build the Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital and the Upstate Cancer Center. Along with providing funding for our capital projects, Foundation donors help support research, and student- and patient-care initiatives. Matching our resources to our aspirations is not easy. The Foundation is helping to make some of our top priorities a reality. Thank you.

Last week culminated with Friday's celebration of our Match Day, when our fourth-year medical students found out where they will do their residencies. This event was everything I remember it being when I matched many years ago: emotional and inspiring. Dean of Students Julie White, PhD, reported at the Match Day festivities that the match rate for our fourth-year class was 98 percent, well above the national average. That speaks volumes about how well we prepare our future physicians. Additionally, I want to thank the Medical Alumni Association for its support of the Pre-Match Dinner Dance for students, held Thursday at Drumlins. A terrific time was had by all.

This week I will attend a United Nations meeting, with the forum title of Indigenous Women's Empowerment: Combating the Global Epidemic of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women. This meeting also will be attended by our Assistant Dean for Diversity Brian Thompson, MD, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology.

Lastly, I have heard from many of you that you are reading my weekly messages and appreciate the active communication. As we embark on our strategic planning that will be data-driven, I will look forward to sharing data with you — at first baseline, then continued monitoring of our progress. Our challenges are many, but together we can succeed in this ever-changing health care environment.

Be well and keep the questions coming.

Sincerely,

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