

**To Support the Public Hearing in Preparation for the 2008-2009 Budget
November 27, 2007**

Testimony by:
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SUNY Upstate Medical University, located in Syracuse, NY, is the only academic medical center in the Central New York region and one of 125 in the nation. It consists of four colleges, a biomedical research enterprise, and University Hospital. It will also home to the Golisano Children's Hospital, currently under construction, and to open in 2009. SUNY Upstate is more than destination for patients and students; we go to the community as well, bringing our education, clinical care, and outreach to dozens of locations. Our service mission is reflected in our name — Upstate — and we are poised for responsive growth to meet the needs of our region.

SUNY Upstate Medical University is investing in several proposals that will bring improved medical services, economic growth, and job and education opportunities to the people of Central New York. The plans include activities on our campus, in our city, and in the region. We ask that the upcoming budget include support for these health and education initiatives that would do so much good for the people in New York state.

On our campus, we are pursuing funding for two significant projects:

- To expand the Institute for Human Performance (IHP) which currently is anchored by basic and clinical research in: Neurosciences; Orthopedics; Cell & Developmental Biology; and Psychiatry. The IHP was designed to be built upon for future growth. Our NIH-funded research has doubled in the last 10 years to nearly \$40 million and new lab and office space is needed to attract new researchers as well as to accommodate current investigations. In addition, our ability to accept biomedical graduate students is defined by our lab space. It is estimated that SUNY Upstate's research spending in 2007-2008 will generate \$89 million within the state's economy. (Building expansion: \$43 million.)
- We are pursuing the establishment of a dedicated cancer center. Cancer is one of the leading chronic health problems for the nearly 2 million people in our 17-county service area, and the number-two killer. A cancer center would provide greater access and efficiencies as it consolidates care, and patients benefit by having key services under one roof. SUNY Upstate would be building on existing strengths for the center:
 - We are the leader in clinical cancer trials in the region;
 - We are home to strong basic cancer research; and
 - Our own University Hospital was named among the top six percent of cancer care facilities nationwide by the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons. (Cancer Center: \$38.5 million)

In Syracuse, SUNY Upstate is expanding its campus footprint with two projects:

- Recently we purchased the long-vacant “Four Winds” building — a former psychiatric hospital. The space will house our day care facility and other campus services, including our electronic medical record project. Not only will the space provide expanded high-quality day care, which is a draw for prospective employees and students (who may be eligible for subsidized rates and allow them to go back to school), but the increase in children cared for will provide new jobs. The building will bring a SUNY Upstate presence to downtown Syracuse whose near neighbors include the Syracuse Community Health Center and the Salvation Army.
- We plan to move some of our facilities and campus housing westward, across Route 81, to build upon services already in place at the University Health Care Center (UHCC) and outpatient services at 550 Harrison. Plans include a new ambulatory surgery teaching center to support both our clinical and education mission, and improved downtown living space for students, for which we currently have a demand that outpaces our supply.

In the Central New York region, SUNY Upstate is expanding its educational mission with both infrastructure and programs:

- In Binghamton we would like to renovate the historic “Castle on the Hill” to be a home to our clinical campus activities — including the yearly training of 80 third- and fourth-year medical students and to serve as the site of our Physician Assistant degree program, which plans to accept its first students in 2009. The site would also be a place for continuing medical and nursing education for professionals in the region, and for public and community health events. (Building refurbishment: \$20 million)
- We are developing programs to respond to serious health professional shortages in New York state. This includes the expansion our Rural Medical Education program to place doctors in underserved communities, and to examine ways to increase our overall student body by 30% over the next five years—with an eye to providing professionals in shortage areas. In addition we are planning degree programs for our region, which plan to accept students in 2009: a Nurse Practitioner program in Mental Health for the North Country; a Physician Assistant master’s program at our clinical campus in Binghamton (with a possible Northern location as well); a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist master’s degree; and a Master’s of Public Health in conjunction with Syracuse University. Each of these degree programs would have a positive impact on health, either through direct patient care, serving as a “physician extender”, or in contributing to public health policy and preventative care.

At a time when young professionals are leaving the region in dramatic numbers, SUNY Upstate brings them here for education and keeps many of them here for rewarding careers. SUNY Upstate has built its reputation in many vital areas. Becoming a stronger campus and healthcare resource will, in turn, draw professionals, students, and patients.