

**Press release**

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## **SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, N.Y., and the Medical Faculty of Ludwig Maximilians-University (LMU), Munich, Germany, inked MoU to collaborate on educational programs and student exchange**

The focus is on the international contact and exchange of students

**The goals of the MOU are to promote global education and health and to further develop academic and cultural exchange for students, researchers, and staff of the two institutions. With the main focus lying on clinical, basic, and translational research, the internationalization of higher education and professional development are also part of the agreement.**

Thomas G. Schulze, MD, professor of psychiatry and behavioural sciences at Upstate, and director of the Institute of Psychiatric Phenomics and Genomics at LMU's University Hospital initiated this university cooperation. Two deans of the medical schools signed the MoU.

Lawrence Chin, MD, dean of the College of Medicine at Upstate Medical University, applauded the collaborative relationship: "The College of Medicine has launched several initiatives in international medical education in recent years, both virtual and in-person, with more planned. LMU Munich is a world-class academic institution, with whom we will be uniquely positioned to build on these previous successes and grow new opportunities. If COVID-19 has taught us anything, it's that the future of medical education and training lies in international cooperation."

Prof. Dr. Reinhard Hickel, Dean at Munich, said of the collaboration: "International exchange and networking are decisive factors for the further development of our students, but also of the curricula. With SUNY Upstate Medical University, we have gained a strategically important partner that also brings in the North American perspective."



In addition to the medical school, LMU's University Hospital is also part of the agreement, allowing for the establishment of joint programs or workshops. Initially, the exchange will be virtual, but in the future it will also take the form of face-to-face meetings. The latter, however, are dependent on the lifting of restrictions on travel by Europeans to the U.S. due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the top of the list is the exchange of medical students in their last year of training, the "Practical Year (PJ)" in the German system and the "fourth year medical rotation" in the U.S. system.

The virtual exchange will take place with the assistance of the SUNY COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) program that assists with collaborations that connect students and faculty in different countries for collaborative projects and classroom discussions.

**Prof. Martin Fischer, Dean of Studies at the LMU Faculty of Medicine:** "I am grateful for a sustainable expansion of our international network for our students. We will benefit greatly from offering opportunities with such strong partner universities as SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse to our students. They will be able to experience a change of perspective and a different clinical care system during their studies, providing important experiences for the personal development of our students to become critical physicians. Travel and international exchange will remain important building blocks for this, despite the pandemic and climate crisis."

The pandemic in particular has once again underscored that medicine and health have an international dimension. The impact of global climate change on the health of people around the world is another example. Likewise, free access to medical care regardless of cultural, ethnic, political and other individual characteristics are topics that can be discussed in the context of an international exchange.

"We hope that very soon we will be able to welcome the first students from Syracuse to Munich and vice versa," said Schulze. "As someone who calls both cities his professional home, I would encourage our young colleagues from Munich to get to know Upstate Medical University with its state-of-the-art, hands-on medical education, including a rural health program, and rigorous training in scientific, laboratory and clinical practices. Syracuse is ideally located to enjoy the natural beauty of central New York and is a perfect starting point for all kinds of leisure activities all year round."

Another attraction for Upstate, Schulze noted, is its proximity to New York City, Boston, Toronto and Montreal, giving the area a cultural vivacity and other amenities of Munich.

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**Gemeinsam. Fürsorglich. Wegweisend.**

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### **LMU Klinikum**

The LMU University Hospital is one of the largest university hospitals in Germany and Europe. Every year, around 500,000 patients trust the competence, care and commitment of 11,000 employees in over 50 specialist clinics, institutes and departments.

Outstanding facilities of the LMU University Hospital include the oncological center CCC M and Bavaria's largest transplant center TxM

The LMU University Hospital is represented in all German centers of health research.

The Medical Faculty of Ludwig Maximilians-University Munich and the LMU University Hospital make a significant contribution to the excellence strategy of the Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich.

Please visit [www.lmu-klinikum.de](http://www.lmu-klinikum.de) for further information.

### **SUNY Upstate Medical University**

Upstate Medical University is one of about 120 academic medical centers in the country that lead the nation in conducting medical research, educating health professionals, and providing the most complex care to patients. Upstate features four colleges (Medicine, Nursing, Health Professions and Graduate Studies), enrolling 1,600 students, and two hospitals, a 409-bed teaching hospital, Upstate University Hospital, which includes the 71-bed Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital, and the 306-bed Upstate University Hospital at Community General. Upstate is the region's largest employer, providing more than 9,000 jobs. Upstate, located in Syracuse, N.Y., is part of the State University of New York system.