

IMPACT

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STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

January 2023 - June 2024

SUNY Downstate
Health Sciences University



DOWNSTATE
HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

IMPACT 2030 Strategic Plan: Progress Update

This update documents Downstate's ongoing implementation of our IMPACT 2030 Strategic Plan, highlighting key developments in our efforts to carry out our mission as a health sciences university. Our strategic initiatives continue to strengthen our capabilities across our five verticals of educational excellence, research and discovery, clinical care, community engagement, and organizational culture and transformation.

The IMPACT 2030 progress and accomplishments reflected in this report include the time period immediately following the launch of the strategic plan in 2022 to the end of most recent 2023- 2024 fiscal year. Spanning approximately 18 months and approaching the midway point of the ten-year plan, it is a beneficial reflection point for assessing progress to date and for synchronizing subsequent reporting with future budgeting cycles. Downstate has attained growth under each of the plan's fifteen goals. Accomplishment highlights include new and ongoing affiliations and partnerships, workgroups and taskforces focused on key areas of interest, conferences and symposia to address community needs, and resources and funding to sustain and enhance programming.

This document presents our measured progress in aligning our educational offerings with workforce needs, advancing our research agenda, addressing health equity challenges, and partnering with our stakeholders for improved collaboration and institutional culture. Each documented achievement represents a step toward fulfilling Downstate's IMPACT 2030 strategic goals and objectives. We invite you to review these developments as evidence of our commitment to systematic improvement, taking pride in our progress to date and using this momentum to continue our work and realize our desired impact in the coming years.

In this document, school names are abbreviated for clarity. Please refer to the table below for their corresponding full names:

Abbreviation	Full Name
COM	College of Medicine
CON	College of Nursing
SPH	School of Public Health
SOHP	School of Health Professions
SGS	School of Graduate Studies

Goal 1.

Achieve active learning excellence through access to a broad and distinctive range of clinical, practical and research experiences.

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Objective 1

Establish new affiliations and partnerships with SUNY schools and organizations to offer a broader range of learning opportunities.

- COM: Update of affiliate contracts to accept students as juniors instead of freshmen.
- CON: Partnerships with SUNY Old Westbury, Brooklyn College, and Queensborough Community College.
- CON: Engaging in collaborative research with SUNY Binghamton School of Engineering.
- SGS: Connections with local high schools and Medgar Evers College.
- SOHP: Renewal of the SUNY Old Westbury affiliation.
- SOHP: New affiliation with Queensborough Community College.

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Objective 2

Utilize our status as a health sciences university and leverage our clinical faculty, residents, research expertise and other resources to develop high-quality opportunities for our learners.

- Various conferences and symposia open to the campus community and offered in conjunction with other entities, including Plant Based Lifestyle conference, Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health programming, Brooklyn Center for Health Disparities conference, and the Downstate Global Neuroscience Initiative annual symposium.

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Objective 3

Increase scholarship support to underrepresented students to enable participation in clinical, practical, and research-based learning.

- COM: Funding from the Associated Medical Schools of New York for the Bridges to Medicine (MS in Physiology) program. This funding provides full scholarships for students who enter the program and upon successful completion, for medical school. Enrollment in the program doubled due to increased funding.
- CON: Awarded \$5 million in HRSA funding to provide scholarships for underrepresented students.
- CON: Received scholarships from private donors to support entry level nursing students.
- Annual enrollment of two students in the SUNY Buffalo postbaccalaureate program.
- Addition of new pathway programs including STRIDES, Pre-med Educational Opportunity with SUNY undergraduates, and other linkages with other schools, many of which focus on underrepresented student populations.

Goal 2. Engage in interprofessional learning activities that advance academic, clinical, and research excellence.

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Objective 1

Identify interprofessional teaching and learning priorities.

- Institutional Learning Objectives refreshed to assure alignment across all programs and courses.
- Annual Research Day expanded beyond the SGS to include other schools/colleges.
- Annual Research Day hosted by the SOHP across all of its programs with a forum for both faculty and student presentations.
- Annual Research Day hosted by the CON for both undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Annual Ethics Day for all first-year students enrolled in the SOHP programs.
- Interprofessional Education Clinical Case Study Roundtable event held annually, which includes all SOHP disciplines, as well as the SPH, and the CON.
- The Simulation Center selected a new executive director, Dr. Roberts, who is a member of the CON faculty. She along with Dr. Haggerty, also a CON faculty member, provide simulation opportunities for students from the various Downstate clinical programs under the supervision of the COM.
- Expansion of the Office of Academic Support Services to provide support to all five schools/colleges.

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Objective 2

Develop innovative interprofessional curricula.

- Physician's Assistant (PA) Master of Science Completion Program offered by the School of Health Professions in conjunction with the School of Public Health.
- Completion certificate offered by the School of Public Health.
- MD/MHA (Master in Health Administration) degree approval for Fall 2024 enrollment.

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Objective 3

Implement strategies for the responsible allocation and dissemination of educational resources.

- Current library planning includes collaborative learning spaces.
- Equipment installed to enable cross-platform courses for all schools/colleges.

Goal 3. Expand Downstate’s academic programs through innovation and strategic partnerships.

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Objective 1

Develop innovative strategies to recruit, retain, and graduate students.

- Utilizing centralized recruitment platforms to reach a broader applicant pool (SPH – SOPHAS; PT – PTCAS; SGS – BIOMEDCAS).
- CON: Extension of the Master of Science for Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and Women’s Health Nurse Practitioner (WHNP) degree programs.
- CON: Established multiple partnerships, including a reciprocal partnership with Catholic Charities of New York to educate staff on the care of the older adult population and provide clinical placements for students across all nursing programs.
- Established the Downstate Student Research Internship in Disparities and Equity Studies (STRIDES) program. STRIDES is a paid internship designed to increase the number of SUNY students who participate in structured and mentored research training programs. The program places special emphasis on health disparities and health equity related research studies.

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Objective 2

Create novel programs that meet the needs of our communities of interest and prepare students for current and future workforce needs.

- SOHP: New degree programs approved with a Fall 2024 start – Applied Behavioral Analysis MS degree and Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD).
- SOHP: Added the option for distance learning for both the Health Informatics Advanced Certificate and MS programs.
- SPH: Began enrollment in the Master’s degree in Healthcare Administration program.

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Objective 3

Build a technological infrastructure that supports learners with diverse needs.

- Conversion to the BrightSpace learning management tool.
- Ongoing upgrade of most classrooms to smart classrooms.
- Design of specific Public Health Academic Building classrooms for hybrid teaching and learning.
- CON, SOHP, and SPH contracted an Instructional Designer.

Goal 1.

Achieve the highest ratings for the quality of patient care experiences among Brooklyn hospitals.

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Objective 1

Improve the patient experience.

- Development of a comprehensive service excellence training program that implements best practices consistently across all nursing units, including deployment of an electronic rounding solution called iROUND with employees recognized for their efforts.
- Implementation of a hospital senior leadership rounding initiative with a corresponding tracker and debriefing meeting to identify and ensure hospital environmental issues are addressed in a timely manner.
- Implementation of hourly rounding by nurse leaders, nurses, and aides to address patient and family preferences.
- Whiteboard placement in all medical/surgical patient rooms to keep patients informed of critical care information.
- Upon discharge, all inpatients receive automated texts inquiring about their stay.
- Patient Relations shares data and comments at unit huddles (NS81, NS61) to rapidly respond to patient concerns and complaints.
- Specialized programs started including Start with Heart, No Passing Zone, and concierge services including welcome kits, teatime, mother/baby gifts.

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Objective 2

Increase the Leapfrog rating.

- Taskforce working to improve coding and documentation.
- Made pressure injuries a priority by including capture upon admission, turning at-risk patients every hour, and setting standards for wound care supplies for each floor.
- Increased focus on medication errors, including weekly barcoding report, analyzing near misses, and preoperative barcoding.
- Instituted daily interdepartmental safety huddles.

Goal 2. Grow surgical case volume by six percent within three years and enhance other clinical programs.

Objective 1

Increase surgical volume by six percent within three years.

- Recruitment of a surgical Chair and other key positions (thoracic surgeon, vascular surgeon, gastroenterology chief, neurosurgeon, pediatric surgeon).
- Hematology/Oncology Division and Cardiology Division integration with Maimonides.
- Wound Care Center Program Partnership in place.
- Refining the Operating Room to enhance Inpatient and Ambulatory Surgery schedules.

Objective 2

Increase the volumes of general ambulatory care and specialty care.

- Hiring of an AVP for Ambulatory Care who is addressing capacity and scheduling.
- Downstate Health Physicians, our private practice plan, is working to improve access for the Orthopedics service line.
- Initiative developed to improve the internal referral rate with Gastroenterology as the pilot service line.
- Implementation of Flare Health, a physician referral application, to increase external referrals.
- Relocation of our community family health practice location to a larger, more modern site on Empire Boulevard.
- Placement of clinicians in the community with BeWell, a Primary Health Care Center, as well as federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and diagnostic and treatment centers.
- Affiliation agreements with FQHCs, skilled nursing facilities, and medical groups.
- Distributed brochures and a resource guide to encourage referrals to Downstate by community physicians.

Goal 3. Improve clinical operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Objective 1

Increase throughput efficiency to achieve expected length of stay.

- Clinical rounding to expedite work-up and discharge decisions with patient flow monitored to prioritize patient care.
- Reconstituted the Length of Stay Committee.
- Providing clinical decision support technology to better manage patient care.
- Reducing turnaround times on clinical service to improve throughput.
- Minimizing inpatient work-up of incidental findings.
- Minimizing overutilization of labs/unit monitors to visualize patient test schedules.
- Instituting monthly review of physician/department scorecards for average length-of-stay and case-mix index.
- Implemented digital tools for post-discharge, ambulatory care, and dictation support.
- Implemented a Radiology community interface portal.

Objective 2

Reduce hospital readmission rates to the national average.

- Implemented social determinants of health infrastructure to identify factors that impact health and health equity, and provide appropriate community-based organization referral to address housing, food insecurity, transportation issues, etc.
- Nursing leadership working to improve post discharge communication with patients.
- Utilizing whiteboards in patient rooms to facilitate discharge.
- Assisting with transportation at patient discharge.
- Twig Health care management instituted to support outpatient screening to address HEDIS (Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set) measures.
- Instituted Palliative Care and Hospice program on-site to facilitate end-of-life transition and provide a pathway to home-based hospice as requested.

Objective 3

Strengthen the validity and consistency of the hospital case-mix index (CMI).

- Partnering with Optum on a Clinical Documentation Improvement (CDI) program and utilizing the CDI plan.
- Instituted physician education to improve documentation.
- Focus on the Clinical Documentation department to improve processes and workflows.

Goal 1.

Become a Center of Excellence in Interprofessional Translational Research with an emphasis on research that impacts the health and well-being of the communities that we serve, and which targets the elimination of health inequities.

Objective 1

Establish the areas where Downstate is best positioned to fill important gaps in research and compete for federal funding.

- Multiple research-specific councils and committees in place.
- \$10 million renewal grant for the Translational Program of Health Disparities Research Training (TRANSPORT), which is focused on recruiting and training health equity researchers from underrepresented groups in the biomedical sciences. A symposium highlighting the research is held annually.
- Hiring additional faculty in the College of Medicine and School of Public Health.
- Seed Grant Program initiated that advances the Downstate research enterprise via targeted investments deemed to be competitive for federal extramural research support.
- Recently published article in Commentary reflects Downstate as a thought-leader on the importance of multi-institutional research initiatives protecting the primacy of Downstate and its researchers in studies using our patient data.



Goal 2. Expand and diversify Downstate’s research infrastructure.

Objective 1

Develop a research leadership structure for capacity building.

- Research Pulse newsletter published regularly throughout the year, including updates from the Senior Vice President for Research (SVPR), as well as noteworthy research happenings pertaining to the campus.
- Annual Research "Open Forum" held each December with the Downstate research community.
- Grant-Writing Consultancy Service Initiative that enables faculty to request assistance from recommended grant writing consultancy firms.
- Mentorship Financial Support Request that enables faculty to work with a newly identified grant-writing mentor and request funds to compensate the mentor for their time and effort.
- Collaboration with the University at Albany's Data Management & Analytics Center (DMAC) to provide consultations and support to SUNY Downstate researchers.
- Introduction of PIVOT, a tool that provides access to hundreds of funding opportunities, and also allows searching for specific funding opportunities based on a faculty member's profile, as well as find collaborators.
- Listing of research areas of interest among faculty to encourage collaboration.
- SPH conducts community outreach for support with research.
- See Seed Grant Program (Research and Discovery Goal 1, Objective 1).
- See TRANSPORT grant (Research and Discovery Goal 1, Objective 1).

Objective 2

Develop and maintain a repository of resources available to Downstate researchers.

- Close collaboration with the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health (AAIUH) that has robust community connections.
- The Director of Clinical Trials now handles the negotiation of clinical trials pricing.
- See PIVOT tool (Goal 2, Objective 1).
- See TRANSPORT grant (Research and Discovery Goal 1, Objective 1).

Objective 3

Expand core research support services across Downstate.

- High Performance Computing Faculty Advisory Committee includes research and Information Technology (IT) leadership to advance computing support for research.
- Recruited a Director of Training in Research Ethics and Scientific Integrity who serves on the Financial Conflicts of Interest body and teaches Responsible Conduct of Research, with two other supporting recruitments underway.
- See DMAC collaboration (Research and Discovery Goal 2, Objective 1).

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Objective 4

Increase Downstate's Federally-funded projects by 5 percent annually.

- Funding provided with the establishment of the SVPR position and supporting staff positions.

Goal 3. Create and sustain a research culture that drives discovery and innovation that is supportive of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

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Objective 1

Expand research faculty recruitment and diversity with emphasis on those from underrepresented populations (URP).

- Funding received from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities for the Clinical Research Scholars Training Program (CREST). Each recipient receives \$50,000 for their pilot initiative, and these funds are designed to serve as catalysts, propelling the recipients forward by enabling them to generate preliminary data crucial for future NIH applications.
- See TRANSPORT grant (Research and Discovery Goal 1, Objective 1).

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Objective 2

Increase research excellence, equity, diversity, and retention and evaluate annually.

- In process

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Objective 3

Establish common standards for evaluation of research activity across the Downstate schools/colleges with the intention of eliminating disparities in promotion, including but not limited to race, gender, sexual orientation, and age.

- Contract execution with the Consortium for Applied Research Ethics Quality (CARE-Q). This quality assurance program ensures that the IRB's operating procedures follow current regulations and guidance as required by Federal regulations.
- See CREST program (Research and Discovery Goal 3, Objective 1).

Objective 4

Improve the responsiveness of processes that support research grant submission and administration.

- Revision of the organizational hierarchy for MyResearch, the Research Foundation's grants management system, to accommodate online submissions and streamline grant development and administration processes.
- To remove administrative burden for faculty, Department Administrators in the Office of Research Administration (ORA), a division of Downstate's Research Foundation, prepare electronic grant applications for researchers.
- Grant managers provide quarterly financial reports so researchers can more easily manage the fiscal component of their awards.
- Applicant Tracking and Onboarding System called Interview Exchange implemented to shorten the timeframe required to hire Research Foundation (RF) employees.
- Purchased Jaggaer, a digital procurement solution, and established system workflows to simplify and expedite purchasing processes.
- Decentralization from the SUNY-level RF to the local RF for review and signature of all Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) subawards and Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting.



Goal 1. Improve community health outcomes through Downstate's urban health education, prevention, and clinical care.

Objective 1

The local community and Downstate's research programs partner to tackle local health priorities with engaged research.

- Collaboration with the University of Albany and elected officials around the connection between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and mental health.
- Focus group with the Patient Family Advisory Council and a local older adult center on the topic of colorectal screening.
- Promotion of the Clinical Trials Symposium.

Objective 2

Conduct periodic community needs assessments to determine the impact of our programs and identify emerging community needs.

- Establishment of the Patient Family Advisory Council (PFAC). Membership includes 16 patients and members of the community who provide input and recommendations on the development and improvement of hospital programs, policies, and procedures.

Objective 3

Partner with elected officials on local, state, and federal health initiatives to meet community health priorities.

- Tour of the hospital and campus by members of the NYS Assembly government officials in August 2023.
- Award of \$2.758M in Congressional funding to establish a community Birthing Center.
- Participation in community outreach through participation in multiple elected official sponsored events.

Objective 4

Downstate and local industry develop multiple innovative partnerships to benefit the community.

- Partnership between University Hospital's Patient Education department and HealthFirst for community events.
- Participation in community health talks with older adult centers and faith-based organizations.
- Participation in the NYPD Brooklyn Baby Shower.
- Reigniting the annual Lifestyle Medicine hospital health fair.
- Participation in a maternal health panel led by the Brooklyn Public Library with discussion around forming a coalition.



Keep Care Close
with University Hospital at Downstate



DOWNSTATE
HEALTH

**University
Hospital at
Downstate**

445 Lenox Rd,
Brooklyn, NY 11203
(718) 270-7207

Goal 2. Strengthen communication with Downstate's community and stakeholders.

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Objective 1

Develop marketing, social media, and direct mail programs promoting Downstate's work in the community and impact in healthcare and research.

- Expansion of the community mailing list and e-mail list, which includes elected officials, community-based organizations, and community board leadership, to share information about Downstate activities and events.
- Development of a new media campaign, Keep Care Close, highlighting University Hospital and our clinical enterprise.

Goal 3. Strengthen alumni/ae engagement.

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Objective 1

Create an alumni/ae engagement strategy.

- Ongoing meetings among the COM Alumni Executive Director, AVP for Government and Constituent Relations, and Executive Director of Development and Research for the Research Foundation at Downstate to find avenues for engaging alumni.
- Collaboration with alumni on events, including the 140th COM Alumni Reunion, SUNY Day in Washington DC, and Food Panty Give-Back.

Goal 1. Ensure a healthy and equitable organizational culture grounded in values that reflect the concerns and aspirations of Downstate’s people and those they serve.

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Objective 1

Integrate values critical to Downstate’s success: accountability, recognition, respect, transparency, involvement, and trust.

- In May 2023, the Downstate Resiliency Awards were introduced. These awards recognize Downstate faculty, staff, and students who demonstrate exceptional leadership, advocacy, innovation, and teamwork contributing to Downstate’s mission’s overall success and spirit, vision, values, and strategic goals.
- As part of the Oracle Enterprise Resource Planning rollout, performance evaluations are now available online and incorporate institutional values.

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Objective 2

Embed the values in hiring, promoting, assessing, developing, and recognizing staff throughout Downstate.

- See Resiliency Awards (Organizational Culture and Transformation Goal 1, Objective 1).
- Human Resources began a Buddy program in January 2024 which pairs existing Downstate employees with new hires during New Employee Orientation to improve the onboarding experience and introduction to the institution.

Goal 2. Implement operational processes that enhance efficiency, strengthen fiscal health, and enable academic, clinical, and research excellence.

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Objective 1

Improve critical business processes by adopting and deploying effective methods for streamlining work.

- Adoption of PageUp talent acquisition software to facilitate the hiring process.
- New contract with LinkedIn that includes branded pages to attract applicants to Downstate.
- Partnership with Strive and similar community organizations to increase our applicant pool.
- Expansion of the HealthStream workforce learning platform to ensure compliance and facilitate orientation and required trainings.

Goal 3. Promote a culture of faculty, staff, and student development and advancement.

Objective 1

Select and develop faculty and other leaders, managers, and supervisors who have the commitment and capacity to develop those who work with them

- Hospital employees are participating in Greenbelt training in Lean Six Sigma, which is a data-driven method for improving performance by examining and streamlining processes using a team-work approach.
- New research training for faculty from the office of the SVPR.
- Individual Development Awards program supports various professional development projects and activities for eligible academic and professional staff to support individual growth and career advancement.
- Development training offerings from the unions for MC, UUP, and CSEA employees.
- Varied programming among the schools/colleges including:
- COM
 - Multiple Symposia – topics include mental health, neuroscience research, Black maternal health, and clinical trials
 - Leadership Development – focused on both education and healthcare
 - NIH and HRSA Funded Faculty Development –training in health disparities and equity-focused research training and health policy
- CON
 - Research Meeting – monthly faculty meeting about research and peer-reviewed research activities
 - Research Day – students enrolled in Research and Evidence-Base Practice





..... Objective 1 cont.

Select and develop faculty and other leaders, managers, and supervisors who have the commitment and capacity to develop those who work with them

- SUNY Nursing, Engineering, and Applied Research Collaborative – in partnership with SUNY Binghamton, students actively participate in data collection, analyses, and preparation for dissemination
- SGS
 - Research Day – annual event consisting of a platform session, poster sessions, and a keynote address open to all Downstate faculty and students
- SOHP
 - Dean's Lecture Series – monthly series for faculty and students to learn about data-driven decision-making and telehealth
 - Interprofessional Education Clinical Case Study Roundtable – annual event for faculty and students to collaborate and develop clinical interventions using a challenging case scenario
 - Research Capacity Building – three meetings for Downstate faculty to learn about a research topic, brainstorm new research ideas, and form unique research collaborations
- SPH
 - Promoting Online Student Success and Belonging – programming to direct online students toward resources and strengthen community
 - Faculty Workshops and Training Sessions – to further develop pedagogical skills and keep abreast of the latest trends in the field
 - Career Development Staffer – to provide career guidance to students

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Strengthen systems and structures that support staff and student development.

- No activity to date