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### **First Niagara Provides Land for New UB Medical School Project**

***Parcel at Main and High streets is an essential acquisition needed for medical school's historic move downtown***

BUFFALO, N.Y. – The University at Buffalo and First Niagara Financial Group Inc. announced today that First Niagara has given to UB a parcel of land to be used in the construction of the university's new School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.

The parcel is one of three properties UB is acquiring in downtown Buffalo for its new medical school. The .85-acre parcel, appraised at approximately \$2 million, is at 973 Main St., where a First Niagara retail bank branch is currently located.

Under the terms of the donation, UB purchased the parcel for \$1 dollar.

“The magnitude of First Niagara’s generosity far surpasses the physical boundaries of the land that is changing hands,” said UB President Satish K. Tripathi. “With this acquisition, UB can move ahead with its plans for the new medical school, which will help to dramatically improve health care and medical education in our region while providing a significant boost to the local economy.”

“When we were made aware of how important the land was to the university, we jumped at the chance to help,” said Gary Crosby, First Niagara's interim president and chief executive officer. “We are committed to doing great things in our community and we are proud to collaborate with UB in order to provide the final piece of the puzzle for the new medical school to move forward. Western New York is a globally recognized leader in life sciences, innovation and research, and we are thrilled to help make the medical school a reality, as it will positively impact our area for many generations to come.”

With the First Niagara parcel completing land acquisition for the site, UB will take the next steps in the medical school project. A design for the 520,000 gross-square-foot building at the southeast corner of Main and High streets is being prepared by HOK, one of the world's leading architectural firms, in consultation with UB and community stakeholders. A groundbreaking for the new building is set for September, and construction is expected to be completed in 2016.

First Niagara will turn over the site of its branch at 973 Main St. Oct. 1. The company is committed to the neighborhood and will open a new permanent branch on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. In the meantime, a temporary branch will be located at 1031 Main Street. First Niagara is communicating with customers on the details of the changes.

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The \$375 million new medical school is being funded by a variety of sources, including University and SUNY resources, a university fundraising campaign and a \$35 million challenge grant provided through the NYSUNY 2020 bill signed into law by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo.

“By moving UB’s medical school to larger, world-class teaching and research facilities, UB will attract the most promising medical students and world-class faculty,” said Michael E. Cain, MD, UB vice president for health sciences and dean of the medical school. “The prospect of a brand new, 21<sup>st</sup> century medical school next to teaching hospitals and state-of-the-art research laboratories in downtown Buffalo is helping UB to recruit top physicians and scientists, some of whom are already here.

“The new medical school will allow us to boost the class size of first-year medical students to 180 from 140, so we can graduate more physicians, many of whom will stay and practice in Western New York,” Cain added. “It allows the medical school and its faculty to pursue cutting-edge research with cross-disciplinary synergies that are critical to medical advances today.”

The medical school move and expansion will improve health care in Western New York. UB will add several new clinical service areas within the new medical school, providing specialty care and health services not currently offered in the region.

“This will significantly improve health care for all Western New Yorkers and will make Buffalo a health care destination, attracting patients from outside our region who seek the very best in specialized medical care,” Cain said.

For UB medical students, relocating the medical school to the downtown medical campus adjacent to John R. Oishei Children’s Hospital, Buffalo General Medical Center, Gates Vascular Institute, Roswell Park Cancer Institute and the UB Clinical and Translational Research Center and other research labs offers a full-immersion medical education experience.

The relocation and expansion of the medical school also will significantly benefit the downtown and regional economies because health care is a major growth sector in the U.S. Recent state and national studies found that one out of every 11 jobs in New York State is supported by the medical schools and their teaching hospitals. Nationally, the number is one in 46.

The relocation of the UB medical school to the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus will bring thousands more people downtown every day, creating economic growth from spin-off biotech companies and new opportunities for businesses and community members in surrounding neighborhoods.

In 2002, there were 7,000 employees on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus; at the end of 2012, there were approximately 12,000 employees. By 2017, there are projected to be 17,000 employees working within institutions and organizations on the medical campus.