



# UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH

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**West Hartford, CT – July 27, 2021** - The University of Saint Joseph recently made the decision to bring USJ's Doctor of Pharmacy program to the main West Hartford campus when its lease at the XL Center in Hartford ends in August 2022.

The move comes as USJ is expanding its emphasis on Interprofessional Education (IPE) between the Nursing, Nutrition, Physician Assistant Studies, Health Science, Exercise Science, Counseling, Public Health, and Social Work programs at its West Hartford campus.

IPE offers planned experiences that allow students from two or more professions in health and social services to learn together during their professional training, with the objective of cultivating collaborative practice for providing patient-centered care. Evidence shows that in clinical settings, interprofessional teams enhance the quality of patient care, lower costs, decrease patients' length of stay, and reduce medical errors.

"The XL Center, in the heart of the city, has been a valued home for Pharmacy, but having the Pharmacy students and faculty on our West Hartford campus will enrich the IPE experience for all of our students in health care," stated USJ President Rhona C. Free, Ph.D.

While specially-designed labs will be constructed in existing buildings on the main West Hartford campus for the Doctor of Pharmacy program, the relocation will give Pharmacy students access to state-of-the-art facilities built on the main campus in the last four years for the Nursing and Physician Assistant Studies programs.

Brand-new facilities for Nursing will open this summer, including a Hospital and Nursing Unit, Health Assessment and Skill lab, and a Simulation Lab with high-fidelity mannikins reflecting a diverse and multi-generational patient experience.

Debriefing rooms in the Nursing wing, along with those in the Physician Assistant Studies building, are designed to support IPE and will more frequently include Pharmacy students in the teams of students in health and social services programs who practice the collaboration vital for optimal patient care and outcomes.

"At USJ, we prepare health care practitioners to be agents of change and promote collaboration among all members of the health care team, with the ultimate goal of decreasing medical errors and improving patient care," stated Michelle M. Kalis, Ph.D., provost & professor of Biology and Pharmaceutical Sciences. "Co-locating the PharmD program on the West Hartford campus with our many other health care and social service programs will enhance students' education and will provide for greater collaboration among faculty."

"We are excited to be on our main campus in West Hartford and be integrated into an educational environment that fosters collaboration and innovation," stated Ahmed Abdelmageed, PharmD, Dean, School of Pharmacy and Physician Assistant Studies. "The opportunities for interdisciplinary engagement are immensely beneficial to both faculty and students and will, in turn, help us advance and expand the skillset of our graduates."

The relocation will also facilitate collaborative research among USJ's faculty already located on the West Hartford campus and Pharmacy faculty who will move into office, teaching, research, and lab spaces comparable to facilities in the XL Center.

Recently, USJ has updated, renovated, and expanded other campus facilities – its McGovern Student Center, dining facilities, O'Connell Athletic Center, the Beekley Center for Student Health and Wellness, and the Counseling and Wellness Center – that will meet the needs of all students, including those in the Pharmacy program. With increased opportunities for remote work and access to public transportation, existing parking will accommodate faculty and students.