

UAMS News Bureau

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**UAMS Chancellor Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA, Invested
in Harry P. Ward Chancellor's Distinguished Chair**

LITTLE ROCK — Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA, chancellor of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), was invested June 3 as the third recipient of the Harry P. Ward Chancellor's Distinguished Chair.

Created in 2005, the Ward chair became the first chancellor's chair endowed at an Arkansas university. I. Dodd Wilson, M.D., who succeeded Harry P. Ward as chancellor in 2000, was the inaugural recipient, followed by Daniel W. Rahn, M.D., who succeeded Wilson in 2009. Patterson has served as chancellor since June 1, 2018.

Gov. Asa Hutchinson praised Patterson's accomplishments since he joined UAMS, saying, "You've been able to build confidence in UAMS in terms of the budget and in terms of legislative support. We wanted to see answers, we wanted to see solutions and Dr. Patterson came to us and he said, 'This is what we want to do, and this is how we're going to get there.'"

"I'm so proud to be one of the many great people who have had the chance to hold the Harry Ward Distinguished Chair," Patterson said. "The medals that we wear to exemplify these distinguished chairs contain connections to each of these individuals, and the work that they did to make UAMS what it is, and these connections will continue as we do big things. We have so much more that we need to do."

"These connections ensure that we do what is necessary to provide for every Arkansan, and to ensure that, day by day and year by year, the people of Arkansas have better health and better health care," Patterson said. "To me, that is what this medal embodies."

Patterson thanked Gov. Hutchinson, who attended with his wife, Susan, as well as University of Arkansas System President Donald R. Bobbitt, Ph.D., for bringing him and his family to Arkansas. Patterson thanked his wife, Kris Patterson, M.D., their children Celia, Anna and Graham, and his mother Audrey, who were seated in the front row. He

also thanked a host of mentors, friends, extended family members, legislators, the UA Board of Trustees and each of his predecessors as chancellor.

Bobbitt presided over the investiture ceremony, held in the Fred W. Smith Conference Center at the UAMS Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute.

“UAMS has had very unique and talented leaders in its long history, but Dr. Patterson is poised to give them a run for their money,” Bobbitt said. “UAMS, the UA System, and indeed the entire state of Arkansas are lucky to have found Dr. Patterson, his wife Kris and their lovely family. I am thrilled about the bright future that lies ahead for them and for this institution.”

Bobbitt and John Goodson, chairman of the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees, presented Patterson with the chair medallion.

“I’ve known Cam for 30 years and he is bright, friendly, and an incredibly great friend,” said Steve Carpenter, M.D., with the Center for Digestive and Liver Health in Savannah, Georgia, and academic chair of the Department of Internal Medicine in the Mercer University School of Medicine at the Savannah Campus of the Memorial Health University Medical Center. “Dr. Patterson has said, ‘The mission of UAMS is not to make money. The mission of UAMS is to serve the people of Arkansas. We’ve got to be sure we stay on that.’ So if you stick with that, Cam, I think it’s going to work out just fine.”

In a video message, Nancy DeMore, M.D., professor of surgery and medical director of the breast program at the Medical University of South Carolina, credited Patterson as a strong mentor who helped advance her career as a physician scientist.

“Cam, I want to congratulate you on your endowed chair – it is very well deserved, and I know that you’re going to do spectacular things as chancellor,” DeMore said.

Friend and mentor Michael E. Mendelsohn, M.D., executive chairman of Cardurion Pharmaceuticals and adjunct professor of medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine, offered his congratulations to Patterson and UAMS.

“He’s an innovative, caring and devoted leader,” Mendelsohn said. “He’s keenly focused on team building, he’s a brilliant and creative thinker and he is tireless in his commitment to his people at every level of an organization, and to patience and to excellence in every way.”

The chair is named for Harry P. Ward, M.D., UAMS chancellor from 1979 to 2000, who is remembered as a giant in the history of health care and higher education in Arkansas. Ward led UAMS’ transformation from a small medical school with a charity hospital into a health sciences university and research leader, with an annual economic impact in Arkansas of more than \$4.5 billion. His wife, Betty Jo, attended Patterson’s investiture.

An endowed chair is among the highest academic honors a university can bestow on a faculty member. A distinguished chair is established with gifts of at least \$1.5 million, which are invested and the interest proceeds used to support the educational, research and clinical activities of the chair holder. Those named to a chair are among the most highly regarded scientists, physicians and professors in their fields.

The Willard and Pat Walker Charitable Foundation provided the lead gift of \$1 million for the chancellor's distinguished chair, with support from other donors reaching \$2.5 million. The chair provides funding for the UAMS chancellor to use in recruiting faculty and administrators of the greatest possible caliber and vision.

During the 21 years Ward was at its helm, UAMS evolved into an internationally recognized academic health center – it saw transforming growth in student enrollment, a tenfold increase in external research dollars and the completion of over \$200 million in major construction projects.

Wilson, the inaugural recipient of the chair, led UAMS through a period of growth and success unprecedented in its 140-year history, completing more than \$460 million in construction and bolstering the main campus in Little Rock as well as UAMS resources around the state. Academic programs and research funding both reached record levels, and patient care programs attracted patients from across the state and around the world.

Rahn, who retired in 2017, was the chair's second recipient. He oversaw the reorganization of clinical programs into service lines, helped establish landmark programs for underserved populations, and was instrumental in the success of the Arkansas Research Alliance. Under his leadership, UAMS strengthened its statewide presence, increasing programs and services at its Northwest Regional Campus and opening new or upgraded facilities for regional campuses and family medical centers.

Prior to arriving at UAMS in 2018, Patterson was senior vice president and chief operating officer at Weill-Cornell Medical Center and Komansky Children's Hospital/New York Presbyterian Hospital in New York.

In his first year as chancellor, Patterson led efforts to trim a potential \$72 million deficit to produce a balanced budget. In February, UAMS established the Institute for Digital Health & Innovation to increase health care access across the state through technology, one of Patterson's key priorities. Patterson has also worked alongside the governor and the Arkansas General Assembly to receive a commitment of at least \$10 million in annual state support in UAMS' quest for National Cancer Institute designation for the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute.

A renowned cardiologist, Patterson earned his Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Vanderbilt University, his medical degree from Emory University School of Medicine and his Master of Business Administration from the University of North Carolina Kenan-Flagler School of Business.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; hospital; a main campus in Little Rock; a Northwest Arkansas regional campus in Fayetteville; a statewide network of regional campuses; and seven institutes: the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, Psychiatric Research Institute, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, Translational Research Institute and Institute for Digital Health & Innovation. It is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. UAMS has 2,727 students, 870 medical residents and five dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 10,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses, Arkansas Children's Hospital, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).