

**News Release**  
**August 2, 2019**

**Media Contacts:**

Andrea Peel, 501-686-8996  
Wireless phone: 501-351-7903  
[leslie@uams.edu](mailto:leslie@uams.edu)

Liz Caldwell, 501-686-8995  
Wireless phone: 501-350-4364  
[liz@uams.edu](mailto:liz@uams.edu)

## **\$100,000 Estate Gift Enhances UAMS College of Medicine Scholarship**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has received a \$100,000 gift from the estate of Ambrose T. Walker Jr., M.D. to enhance the A.T. and Gladys Walker Memorial Scholarship in the UAMS College of Medicine.

“We are profoundly grateful for the enduring generosity of the late Dr. Walker and his family,” said Christopher T. Westfall, M.D., FACS, executive vice chancellor of UAMS and dean of the college. “Scholarships make all the difference in easing the burden of medical school debt while helping us recruit the very best students. Many outstanding physicians have benefited from the A.T. and Gladys Walker Memorial Scholarship over the past 25 years, and this new gift will help make medical school possible for countless more.”

The scholarship, awarded to a medical student with financial need and moral character, was established in 1994 in memory of Walker’s parents, with an initial gift of \$30,000.

Walker was a 1946 College of Medicine graduate. He was a family practitioner in Thayer, Missouri before retiring to Springfield, Missouri. He passed away in 2018.

His mother, Gladys McKamie, taught school in a small rural community near the Red River in Texarkana. A.T. Walker was a salesman and worked for a family-owned wholesale grocery company in Stamps, Arkansas. “My parents were very supportive of me,” Walker said when the initial gift was established. “They helped me financially the best they could and encouraged me in every way. One of the happiest moments was when I received my M.D. degree. They were proud of me and I am proud of them.”

Walker was the eldest of three sons. As a child, he witnessed his brother, Jimmy, die of meningitis within a 24-hour period, and soon after, his youngest brother, Billy, became gravely ill. Although the family traveled to Shreveport, Louisiana to get Billy the best available medical treatment, he died of leukemia. These deaths affected Walker greatly.

Although Walker attended college on a musical scholarship, he switched his studies to pre-med and completed his medical degree in three years. After interning at Lutheran Hospital in Cleveland, he was assigned to the National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda, Maryland, for six months. Thereafter his postwar duties took him to the Caroline Islands in the western Pacific Ocean, where he served for two years.

Upon his honorable discharge from the Navy, Walker served an obstetrics/gynecology residency at St. Vincent Infirmary in Little Rock before beginning his general practice in Mammoth Springs, Arkansas, and then in Thayer, where he practiced for 40 years.

“There was no one like him – he was so caring about his patients,” said his wife, Carol. “What Ambrose wanted to do was serve people who needed medical attention, who may or may not have been able to afford it. He accepted people for who they were and valued them, and they knew it. I hope this scholarship can help students to focus less on making money in their careers and more on really caring about people.”

The College of Medicine has educated and trained more than 10,000 physicians since 1879, and has an annual enrollment of nearly 700 students. It is regularly listed in the top 10 nationwide for the percentage of its graduating class that pursue a career in family medicine. More than half of the practicing physicians in Arkansas are UAMS graduates.

More than two-thirds of Arkansas’ 75 counties include federally designated Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Areas. Primary care physician shortages are projected to increase substantially as the state’s population continues to age and require more medical care, and as more Arkansans seek primary care services.

The high cost of medical school and the burden of educational debt that most medical students face when entering their postgraduate residency training can be a factor in choosing higher-paying specialties instead of primary care and practicing in rural areas. The average medical school debt of recent UAMS graduates who have educational debt is about \$190,000.

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. U.S. News & World Report named UAMS Medical Center the state’s Best Hospital; ranked its ear, nose and throat program among the top 50 nationwide; and named six areas as high performing — cancer, colon cancer surgery, heart failure, hip replacement, knee replacement and lung cancer surgery. 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](http://www.uams.edu) or [www.uamshealth.com](http://www.uamshealth.com). Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

Like us, we’re social:    

###