

**UAMS News Bureau**

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**News Release**  
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**Scott Dickson, M.D., Invested in Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, George K. Mitchell, M.D., Endowed Chair in Primary Care**

JONESBORO — Scott Dickson, M.D., residency program director for the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Northeast Regional Campus, was invested Feb. 6 in the Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, George K. Mitchell, M.D., Endowed Chair in Primary Care.

“My words really can’t express my gratitude and my deep appreciation for this recognition today,” said Dickson. “I feel very undeserving of such a high academic honor, particularly to follow in the footsteps of such outstanding physicians as Dr. George Mitchell and Dr. Mark Jansen. I feel so very privileged to be a part of the UAMS family, and particularly to be able to work with all of the caring and compassionate members at the UAMS Northeast Regional Campus.”

Dickson, who joined UAMS in 2001, is an assistant professor in the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine in the UAMS College of Medicine. He is also chief of staff at St. Bernards Medical Center in Jonesboro.

Dickson has worked to develop clinical programs for medication reconciliation, which aims to create the most accurate list possible of all medications a patient is taking. By providing drug name, dosage, frequency and route information from the patient, physicians can compare it to their own records and ensure they provide correct medications to patient at all transition points within the hospital. This helps prevent harm from medications and remains a top safety priority for patient care.

An endowed chair is among the highest academic honors a university can bestow on a faculty member. A chair is established with gifts of at least \$1 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.

“Scott Dickson exemplifies the ideal hometown physician: knowledgeable, compassionate and hard-working,” said UAMS Chancellor Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA. “He has continued a tradition of excellence in northeast Arkansas for quality primary care and built a strong residency program that is an example for the rest of the state. We are extremely proud of his contributions to patient care and education.”

“This partnership between UAMS and Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield has been vibrant and extremely positive for our citizens,” said Stephanie Gardner, Pharm.D., Ed.D., UAMS senior vice chancellor for academic affairs, provost and chief strategy officer. “We’re grateful first for their investment in primary care, and we’re thankful for their longstanding support of our institution, our faculty, our students and our state.”

The chair was established with a \$1 million grant to UAMS in 2015 from Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield. It honors Mitchell — a UAMS graduate and Arkansas Blue Cross board member and retired president who led the health insurance company for nearly 20 years. Mitchell, who graduated with honors from the UAMS College of Medicine in 1956, was president and chief executive officer of Arkansas Blue Cross from 1975 until his 1993 retirement. Prior to joining Arkansas Blue Cross as medical director in 1968, he was a co-founder and senior partner of the Little Rock Diagnostic Clinic. He served on the Arkansas Blue Cross board for several decades.

“The establishment of this chair is a collaboration between Arkansas Blue Cross and UAMS to provide health care statewide, but also to ensure that the future of excellent primary care is secure for all Arkansans,” said Todd Holt, northeast regional executive for Arkansas Blue Cross. “We are confident that Dr. Dickson will carry on the commitment to focus on innovations in primary care.”

Founded in 1948, Arkansas Blue Cross is the largest health insurer in Arkansas. Arkansas Blue Cross and its affiliates have more than 3,000 employees. The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association is comprised of 36 independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans that collectively provide health care coverage for nearly 106 million members – one in three Americans.

The endowment calls for the chair holder to focus on innovations to meet the Triple Aim of health system reform — better patient experience, improving the health of the population and decreasing the cost of care — through the incorporation of team-based care, health promotion, health literacy and population health strategies into primary care settings. It is a UAMS-wide chair with a chair holder to be appointed on a three-year, rotating basis.

“It truly is most fitting that Dr. Dickson is receiving this chair today,” said Mark Jansen, M.D., vice president and chief medical officer for Arkansas Blue Cross, who was the inaugural chair holder before leaving UAMS. “If you have received primary medical care in northeast Arkansas in this corridor, Dr. Dickson’s prints are on that in some way, shape or form. His leadership has created a highly successful residency program for UAMS, which has the highest retention level in the state.”

“Scott Dickson is the best – if you don’t believe it, ask anyone, and they’ll agree,” said Joe Stallings, M.D., associate professor with the UAMS Department of Family and Preventive Medicine, and former residency program director at the UAMS Northeast Regional Campus. “He is the kind of doctor anyone would want.”

Mark Brown, M.D., assistant professor with the UAMS Department of Family and Preventive Medicine and medical director for the UAMS Northeast Regional Campus, was still in private practice when he met Dickson, who had just completed his first year of medical school.

“I remember being impressed by his knowledge, his maturity, his compassion and his work ethic,” Brown said. “It was clear to me that Scott was going to become the outstanding physician that he has become.”

Patterson and Gardner presented Dickson with a commemorative medallion.

Dickson thanked Mitchell and Jansen for their example, as well as Arkansas Blue Cross for its vision in creating the endowed chair to advance primary care. He singled out Stallings for inspiring him to pursue a career in academic medicine.





“I have always continued to be so grateful for his guidance, wisdom, and his friendship – and I can only hope that I can serve as that person for others in my current role as residency program director, and through the activities of this endowment,” Dickson said. “I see such opportunity to reach bright young men and women in rural communities throughout Arkansas, to hopefully encourage them to consider careers in medicine in the same way that these mentors have done for me.”

Dickson attended Arkansas State University in Jonesboro and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in zoology in 1994. He received his medical degree from UAMS in 1998 and completed his internship and residency training at UAMS Northeast Regional Campus in 2001, then joined the faculty there. He spent eight years as assistant residency director there before being named residency director in 2009. Since becoming residency director, the regional campus has graduated 71 residents, with over 80% of those remaining in northeast Arkansas.

Dickson previously was chief of the Department of Family Medicine at St. Bernards from 2007 to 2009, and served on a number of other committees including the Physician’s Health Committee, the Medical Executive Committee and the Hospital Advisory Board. In 2018, he was named president of the Arkansas Chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians and serves on its board of directors. He has also served on the board of directors for the Jonesboro Church Health Clinic. He is a member of the Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors, the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine, the American Medical Association and the Arkansas Medical Society.

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. UAMS includes UAMS Health, a statewide health system that encompasses all of UAMS’ clinical enterprise including its hospital, regional clinics and clinics it operates or staffs in cooperation with other providers. UAMS 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](#).

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