

**UAMS News Bureau**

Office of Communications & Marketing  
4301 West Markham # 890  
Little Rock, AR 72205-7199

[uamshealth.com/news](http://uamshealth.com/news)



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**Media Contacts:**

Leslie W. Taylor, 501-686-8998  
Wireless phone: 501-951-7260  
[leslie@uams.edu](mailto:leslie@uams.edu)

Yavonda Chase, 501-686-8994  
Wireless phone: 501-416-0354  
[Yavonda@uams.edu](mailto:Yavonda@uams.edu)

**UAMS Alumnus Honors Father  
with \$1 Million College of Medicine Scholarship**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has received a \$1,050,000 gift commitment from Primepares “Prime” G. Pal, M.D., to create a College of Medicine scholarship in honor of his late father.

The Dr. Agaton P. Pal Scholarship is designed to support medical students with an academic background in the social sciences, or medical students with a demonstrated commitment and passion to community service or social work. It will initially award \$10,000 annually to one UAMS medical student.

“We are grateful to Dr. Pal and his wife, Jacqueline, for their investment in UAMS medical students who are dedicated to their communities and social change as well as making a difference through outstanding clinical care,” said Susan S. Smyth, M.D., Ph.D., executive vice chancellor of UAMS and dean of the College of Medicine. “Scholarships help us recruit the very best students with the aim of producing extraordinary physicians, and this scholarship is visionary in that regard.”

Prime Pal and Jacqueline S. Pal, CNP, funded the scholarship to ease the financial burden of deserving medical students. They hope that Agaton Pal’s life story and works will inspire recipients to aim for excellence in their field and enable them to participate in community service.

“My parents encouraged me to work hard and supported me in my education,” said Prime Pal. “While in medical school, I was a recipient of a UAMS Research Scholarship, which spurred my interest in medical research. With the financial burden partially lifted, I was able to undertake 10 years of postgraduate medical training and serve with the Indian Health Service for three and a half years after fellowship training. This was a rewarding and personally enriching experience in providing medical care to a medically underserved community. Philanthropy is our way of paying it forward.

“It is our hope that the recipient of the Agaton P. Pal Scholarship, preferably one who has a social science background, would be able to undertake a journey in medicine characterized by lifelong education and service to patients and the community.”

Prime Pal graduated from UAMS in 1984. After medical school, he completed an internal medicine residency at the University of Michigan, followed by postgraduate work in infectious diseases at the University of California, Los Angeles and in virology and molecular genetics at the University of California, San Diego. His wife, Jacqueline S. Pal, is a nurse practitioner. In 2004, the Pals founded the Minnesota Vein Center in North Oaks, Minnesota, a clinic dedicated to bringing state-of-the-art, minimally invasive treatments to patients with symptomatic or cosmetic vein problems.

Agaton Pal retired as faculty emeritus from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. He was professor of sociology at the university for 17 years and was chair of the then-Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Gerontology for a decade. He died in 2017.

“My father encouraged me to see things from the other person’s point of view,” said Prime Pal. “As a sociologist, he would have known that there are multiple views when it comes to the experience of a patient.”

Agaton Pal was born in the Philippines and served with the United States Army Forces in the Far East, assisting Filipino guerrilla forces on the island of Leyte during World War II. In recognition of his service, he received the Congressional Gold Medal.

After the war, Agaton Pal received his Ph.D. from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. Prior to accepting his position in Little Rock, he was professor of sociology at Silliman University in Dumaguete City, Philippines, and professor of rural sociology and Southeastern Asian studies at Cornell. His scholarly works helped enhance understanding of Philippine sociology and social life.

Agaton Pal was also active in the communities in which he lived. In Arkansas, he and his wife founded the Philippine-American Association of Arkansas before moving to Texas in 1993. They were later honored by the Little Rock Board of Directors as honorary citizens and ambassadors of goodwill and fellowship to represent the city abroad.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; a 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. UAMS is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. *U.S. News & World Report* recognized UAMS Medical Center as a Best Hospital for 2021-22; ranked its ear, nose and throat program among the top 50 nationwide for the third year; and named five areas as high performing — colon cancer surgery, diabetes, hip replacement, knee replacement and stroke. *Forbes* magazine ranked UAMS as seventh in the nation on its Best Employers for Diversity list. UAMS also ranked in the top 30% nationwide on *Forbes*' Best Employers for Women list and was the only Arkansas employer included. UAMS has 3,047 students, 873 medical residents and fellows, and six 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, the VA Medical Center

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