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**UAMS Invests Jonathan Laryea, M.D.,
in Nolie and Norma Mumey Endowed Chair in Surgery**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) College of Medicine invested Jonathan Laryea, M.D., chief of the Division of Colorectal Surgery in the Department of Surgery and medical director of cancer services at UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, in the Nolie and Norma Mumey Endowed Chair in Surgery during a Sept. 7 ceremony.

“It’s an incredible honor and privilege to be recipient of the Nolie and Norma Mumey Endowed Chair in Surgery,” said Laryea. “I want to thank all the people in this room and around the world who have contributed to my career. Every journey begins with one step, and we have to be able to own and tell our stories. I have been blessed because I came from humble beginnings in Ghana but had a dream and goal, and thank God that I am here.”

Since joining UAMS as the only colorectal surgeon, Laryea has helped build the Division of Colorectal Surgery, which currently has three surgeons. Throughout his career, he has been committed to patients with colorectal diseases, especially those with colorectal cancer. He has a particular interest in racial disparities in cancer outcomes. He is board certified in general surgery, colorectal surgery and clinical informatics.

“If the purpose of this investiture is to symbolize and recognize the pursuit of knowledge, then I cannot think of a more deserving recipient than Dr. Laryea,” said Fiemu Nwariaku, M.D., professor of surgery and chair of the Department of Surgery at the Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine, University of Utah. “In my estimation, Jonathan is one of the most intelligent, hard-working and kind men that I know and is a consummate academic surgeon with a strong passion for excellence in clinical care and surgical education.”

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, with 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.

“I want to congratulate Dr. Laryea as this honor is incredibly well deserved,” said Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA, UAMS chancellor and CEO of UAMS Health. “Thank you very much for what you do for the people of Arkansas, for UAMS and for our civilization as a whole.”

The chair was established in 2009 through a bequest by Norma and Nolie Mumey, M.D., to the College of Medicine. John B. Cone, M.D., known as a pioneer in working toward establishing the state’s first trauma system at UAMS, was the inaugural holder of the chair.

“Investitures are also an opportunity to reflect on the namesakes for the endowed chairs and the generous supporters who made them possible,” said Susan S. Smyth, M.D., Ph.D., executive vice chancellor of UAMS and dean of the College of Medicine. “We have enduring gratitude for the late Norma and Dr. Nolie Mumey, whose bequest supports the chair that Dr. Laryea will hold, as well as scholarships and the UAMS Historical Research Center.”

Laryea grew up in Ghana in West Africa. He graduated from the University of Ghana Medical School in 1998. During his senior year, he spent a semester at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine doing research in neurosurgery. After his housemanship in Ghana, he immigrated to the United States to complete his residency, first in internal medicine at Yale New Haven Hospital, Saint Raphael Campus in New Haven, Connecticut, and then in general surgery at Waterbury Hospital – Yale School of Medicine in Waterbury, Connecticut. He moved to Atlanta for a fellowship in colon and rectal surgery at the Georgia Colon and Rectal Surgical Associates. He was recruited to UAMS as an assistant professor in the Department of Surgery in 2008. He was promoted to associate professor in 2013 and professor in 2018.

Laryea has served in various roles in national and international organizations including the executive council on the Association for Academic Surgery, the Surgical Section of the National Medical Association and the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons. He is currently the chair of the Surgical Section of the National Medical Association. Since 2019, he has served as the Arkansas chair for the Commission on Cancer for the American College of Surgeons. He is also the vice chair of education and international collaboration for the West African College of Surgeons. He has served on numerous committees at UAMS, including chair of the Medical School Admissions Committee and currently sits on the Promotion & Tenure Committee.

Laryea is also passionate about surgical missions, serving underserved communities in Ghana, Benin, Liberia, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo throughout his career.

“Over the 16 years that I’ve known Dr. Laryea, he has shown to have an intrinsic leadership ability. I understand why he is the recipient of this chair because he worked for it, deserves it, and he will honor it,” said Guy Orangio, M.D., chief of the Division of Colon & Rectal Surgery at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center New Orleans. “Watching from the sidelines, I can’t wait to see where his destiny will take him in the future.”

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. 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 11,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses, Arkansas Children's, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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