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**Jim Wallis Pledges More Than \$100,000 to Elevate
UAMS' Bates Professorship to Endowed Chair**

LITTLE ROCK — Jim Wallis, former president and CEO of ExOK Inc., pledged \$102,948 towards the Joseph H. Bates III, M.D., M.S., Chair in Academic Public Health Practice at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS). Wallis' gift helped elevate the professorship to a fully endowed chair.

UAMS created the professorship in 2017 to recognize the accomplishments of Joseph H. Bates, M.D., M.S., and his dedication to public health in Arkansas, Wallis' gift will expand the impact of the Dr. Bates' significant work and legacy.

The chair's work stems from the need for physicians to be educated in the discipline of public health to enable them to assume leadership roles in academic public health practice. The chair will support the teaching, research, service and other activities of an academic public health practice leader in the UAMS Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health in furtherance of developing a model of public health practice.

An endowed chair is among the highest academic honors a university can bestow on a faculty member. An endowed 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.

"Mr. Wallis' gift to the Joseph H. Bates Chair in Public Health Practice is not only generous but also transforming," said Mark Williams, Ph.D., dean of the College of Public Health. "The chair will support the research of a nationally recognized scholar on how to best provide public health services in efficient and meaningful ways. As we encounter greater public health challenges, developing public health practices for diseases will be increasingly urgent. Mr. Wallis' gift and the gifts of the other contributors to the Joseph H. Bates chair will transform how this research is conducted in Arkansas."

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Bates, a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and UAMS, is nationally recognized as a pioneer of public health. He has served as a physician, scientist, leader and researcher, with a reputation of being a trailblazer focused on building networks that encourage academic and public health practice collaborations. He is known for recruiting health care practitioners to both policy and public health practice. He has strengthened the professionalism of public health practice and its leadership in Arkansas by working with public health practitioners, health care service providers, academics and communities. Bates was part of the group that campaigned for the inclusion of public health efforts in the Arkansas Tobaccos Settlement Act of 2001, which led to the creation of the UAMS Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health. He worked for the Arkansas Department of Health from 2005-2017 and has since served at UAMS as a professor and the associate dean for Public Health Practice.

“Joe Bates is certainly a great Arkansan, a true pioneer for public health not just in Arkansas but the U.S.,” said Wallis. “I am honored to contribute to the Joseph H. Bates Chair knowing that it will contribute to the improvement of health care in Arkansas.”

Wallis, a Little Rock native, attended the University of Tulsa and received a bachelor's degree in petroleum engineering and later a law degree. He worked for several oil companies in Oklahoma before establishing ExOK Inc., in 1979, serving as chairman, president and CEO. He was also a founding member of Western National Bank where he served as director, later selling his stake in the company. He also served as a University of Tulsa Trustee from 2001-2017. Upon retirement in 2017, Wallis returned to Arkansas with his wife Patricia.

“Jim Wallis, a dedicated Arkansan, is concerned that the health of Arkansans ranks near the bottom in state health rankings,” said Bates. “Being aware that the most effective measures to improve Arkansans' health are to reduce tobacco use, promote moderate exercise for people of all ages and ensure that people with high blood pressure have it controlled. The holder of this endowed chair will lead the effort to secure these goals.”

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 3,240 students, 913 medical residents and fellows, and five 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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