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**Ronnel Family Gift Creates First Full-Ride
Scholarship in UAMS College of Medicine**

First 'Ronnel Scholar' Named

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has received a gift from the estate of E. Lee Ronnel to create the Ronnel Family Endowed Chancellor's Scholarship in the UAMS College of Medicine.

Members of the Ronnel family joined UAMS leadership at an Aug. 24 ceremony to announce the creation of the scholarship. UAMS also announced that Edward Morris of Little Rock will be the inaugural Ronnel Scholar.

The scholarship is the largest gift received by the College of Medicine's scholarship program. It is the first four-year, full-ride scholarship in the 150-year history of the College of Medicine, covering tuition, fees, housing and meals for the duration of medical school. Recipients of the scholarship will be known as Ronnel Scholars.

"The Ronnel Family Endowed Chancellor's Scholarship is a transformative gift that will have a profound impact on the College of Medicine," said Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA, UAMS chancellor and CEO of UAMS Health. "We are continually humbled by the Ronnel family's generosity toward UAMS, as this gift certainly continues the philanthropic legacy of Lee Ronnel."

At the request of the Ronnel family, the amount of the gift will not be disclosed.

Ronnel Scholars will be Arkansas residents who exhibit high academic achievement and ultimately intend to practice medicine in Arkansas. It is the hope of the Ronnel family that the gift will help add physicians in Arkansas, especially in rural areas of the state, and that the scholarship program can be expanded in future years. Initially, one Ronnel Scholar will be designated in each class of the UAMS College of Medicine.

“Our family is honored to be affiliated with this new scholarship program at UAMS,” said Dale Ronnel, Lee’s wife of 61 years. “We hope this gift inspires others to help UAMS grow the number of young Arkansans receiving full-ride medical school scholarships and expand access to quality health care for everyone in our state.”

“The Ronnel scholarship endowment will help us recruit the most promising Arkansas students, and it will be life-changing for these aspiring physicians,” said G. Richard Smith, M.D., interim dean of the College of Medicine and executive vice chancellor of UAMS. “By alleviating the burden of medical school debt, full-tuition scholarships can provide a path for future physicians to practice in Arkansas communities where they are needed most.”

Lee Ronnel was a devoted advocate of UAMS for more than three decades. He served as the chairman of the UAMS Foundation Fund Board of Directors and as UAMS’ representative to the University of Arkansas Foundation, Inc. His personal generosity to UAMS included scholarships for medical school students, cardiovascular fellowships and research funds, as well as gifts for UAMS campus construction and beautification projects. UAMS honored Ronnel with lifetime membership to the UAMS Board of Advisors.

The Ronnel family continues to be active volunteers committed to the future of UAMS. Lee’s wife, Dale, served for over a decade on the UAMS Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging Board of Directors, including a term as president of the board, and his daughter-in-law Stacey Ronnel is currently serving on this board. His daughter-in-law Jennifer Ronnel has served for over a decade on the UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute Board of Advisors, including two years as chairman, and currently serves on the UAMS Board of Advisors. Lee’s son Steve Ronnel served alongside his wife, Jennifer, as co-chairs of the Cancer Institute’s Gala for Life fundraiser.

Born in Shanghai, China, Lee Ronnel arrived in America in 1948 at age 11 and became a naturalized U.S. citizen at 14. After serving in the United States Air Force, Ronnel moved to Little Rock in 1964 with wife, Dale, and daughter, Karen, to join a scrap metal recycling company owned by his wife’s uncle. In 1979, he founded Metal Recycling Corporation, a successful company that operates three recycling centers in Little Rock, North Little Rock and Searcy, and two metal commodity trading companies in Little Rock. Under his management, the company would employ 90 people. The family business is now run by Ronnel’s two sons, Mike and Steve.

Lee Ronnel passed away Jan. 29, 2022.

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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