

UAMS News Bureau

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

news.uams.edu



**News Release
April 23, 2026**

Media Contacts:

Leslie W. Taylor, 501-686-8998
Wireless phone: 501-951-7260
leslie@uams.edu

Yavonda Chase, 501-686-8994
Wireless phone: 501-416-0354
yavonda@uams.edu

**Jackye and Curtis Finch Jr. Commission Sculptures
for The Orthopaedic and Spine Hospital at UAMS**

LITTLE ROCK — The Orthopaedic and Spine Hospital at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) received two sculptures by Ryan Schmidt that were commissioned by Jackye and Curtis Finch Jr. The sculptures, titled “Persistence” and “Stupendous,” are in the first-floor lobby and on the fourth floors, respectively, of the hospital, and are together valued at \$150,000.

“I am grateful for the Finch’s continued commitment and support of UAMS — their generous philanthropy is a reason to celebrate as they help to change the lives of so many for years to come,” said C. Lowry Barnes, M.D., UAMS chancellor. “These sculptures by Ryan Schmidt will enhance not only the beauty of the building but also the patient experience. Countless people will have the privilege of admiring them for generations to come.”

The gift was made in recognition of the impact that UAMS has and will continue to have on Arkansas.

Curtis Finch Jr. graduated with a business degree from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1955, and was a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity and officer in the Army ROTC. He served in the U.S. Army in Germany from 1955 to 1957, returning to Little Rock after his honorable discharge. He then joined his family’s businesses in warehousing, moving, and storage, and foodservice distribution, becoming sole owner of his family’s collective companies in 1975. He retired in 1985 after selling Porter Foods Inc. to a division of Sara Lee Corp. At the time of the sale, Porter Foods was the largest institutional food service distributor in Arkansas. In 1995, he sold his warehousing business to Arkansas Best Freight Line.

Jackye Finch graduated from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (U of A) in 1966, majoring in journalism and English. She worked for the U of A student newspaper, the *Arkansas Traveler*, serving as feature editor, copy editor, and managing editor. She served as president of the 4-H House and senior counselor at Fulbright Hall women’s

dormitory. After graduating from the U of A, she worked in public information at Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas, and later as feature writer for the *Arkansas Democrat* and copywriter at Cranford, Johnson & Hunt advertising agency in Little Rock.

The Finches have been patrons of the arts for many years and own an extensive collection of original works on paper with special emphasis on artists' self-portraits. Some of these works have been exhibited at the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts and the Baker Museum / Artis—Naples, in addition to other museums. They have donated more than 150 works of art to the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts. Additionally, they served as co-chairs of the committee to select art for the UAMS Medical Center that opened in 2009.

Further, they have been great supporters of education, endowing a scholarship and travel stipend at the U of A — a full scholarship in memory of Jackye Finch's parents, Bob and Ruth Shipley, for an English or journalism student, and a travel stipend named for Curtis Finch's mother, Libby Finch, for students in the Honors College. More than 60 students have benefited from these scholastic awards.

Ryan Schmidt is an artist from Little Rock who has been sculpting stainless steel pieces since 2002. His sculptures are instantly recognizable in their triangular relationships of sweeping arcs and curves capturing the reflections of the surrounding landscapes. He currently lives and works in Arizona.

"We are grateful for the care that UAMS has provided us through the years, but we are also thankful for the service and care it delivers to the people of Arkansas," said Curtis Finch. "The Orthopaedic and Spine Hospital is a world-class facility, and we are happy to contribute to the beautification of the space."

"We have been fortunate to have exposure to art and artists, which has provided comfort and calm in our lives. It is important to us that other people, especially those experiencing their most vulnerable times, also have access to the benefits of art," added Jackye Finch. "We believe that Ryan Schmidt's wonderful sculpture will provide relief to many people for years to come."

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 eight 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, Institute for Digital Health & Innovation and the Institute for Community 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 3,553 students and 1,015 medical residents and fellows. It is the state's largest public employer

Jackye and Curtis Finch Jr. Commission Sculptures for The Orthopaedic and Spine
Hospital at UAMS

Page 3

with about 12,000 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](#), [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

Like us, we're social: [!\[\]\(4729e517bc6a7cd81c8025b9646574fb_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(90a2fb2f2c617b26262139ae4159c0a0_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(40394d85fb59f1a516df36b5a2680ad2_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(053a9c97005e586ce890308421354101_img.jpg\)](#)