

## L.D. Britt, MD, MPH

Henry Ford and Brickhouse Professor and Chairman, Department of Surgery, Eastern Virginia Medical School

JNMA is featuring a series on African Americans holding endowed chairs in American medical schools in recognition of the outstanding accomplishments of these very special people. These chairs are usually funded from generous benefactors and may include grateful patients or parents of patients (children), executives from the business world and industry, foundations, anonymous donors and even faculty members. The common denominator amongst these philanthropists is to recognize the institution for the opportunities afforded them in some way as a way of "giving back" to insure that the school can continue to recruit the most talented individuals to the institution.

The Henry Ford Chair in Surgery was established in 1981 as Eastern Virginia Medical School's first endowed faculty position. The endowment was established by the Ford Motor Company to support the Eastern Virginia Medical School. Ford Motor Company has a production plant in Norfolk that built the company's first Model T, and today the plant builds the popular F-150 trucks. The company has been very supportive of the growth and development of the community. L.D. Britt, MD, MPH was the second faculty member to be appointed to this endowed faculty position. He was appointed in 1993 and continues to hold the title.

Edward J. Brickhouse Chair in Surgery was established in 1992 with a gift from the estate of one of the Eastern Virginia Medical School founding contributors. Mr. Brickhouse was a local businessman who was very supportive of the idea of establishing a medical school in Norfolk. He left a large portion of his estate to Eastern Virginia Medical School to establish this endowment.

**Key words:** National Medical Association

© 2008. From Eastern Virginia Medical School, Norfolk, VA. Send correspondence and reprint requests for *J Natl Med Assoc.* 2008;100:259-260 to: Dr. L.D. Britt, c/o Karen E. Dillich, Assistant; e-mail: dillicke@evms.edu

**L**.D. Britt, MD, MPH, a native of Suffolk, VA, was the valedictorian of Booker T. Washington High School. He received a B.A. degree (with distinction) from the University of Virginia and was a member of the coveted Raven Society. A graduate of Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Public Health, Britt has had extensive surgical and critical care training.

Britt, Brickhouse professor and chairman of the department of surgery at Eastern Virginia Medical School, is the first African American in the country to have an endowed chair in surgery. Britt is the author of more than 170 scientific publications. In addition to being a reviewer for the *New England Journal of Medicine*, he serves on numerous editorial boards, including the *Annals of Surgery*, *Journal of the American College of Surgeons*, the *American Journal of Surgery*, *Surgery*,



*Shock*, the *Journal of Trauma*, *Current Surgery* and others. He is a member of several national and international organizations, including Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society, Society of University Surgeons, Southern Surgical Association, Société Internationale de Chirurgie, Halsted Society and American Surgical Association. He has served on the National Institutes of Health SOH Study Review Panel.

Britt has had many national and international leadership positions, including being the president of the Society of Surgical Chairs, past chairman of the ACGME Residency Review Committee for Surgery, Secretary of the Southern Surgical Association and the executive director of the Society of Black Academic Surgeons. He is on the executive committee of the Board of Regents of the American College of Surgeons. He also sits on the executive board of the National Board of Medical Examiners. Britt is a former member of the Examination Committee of the American Board of Surgery. He was also a member of the Executive Council of the American College of Surgeons National Committee on Trauma and was the chairman of all the regional committees of the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma, which includes all 50 states and the interna-

tional community. Also, Britt, the past vice president of the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma, is now the recorder/program chair for the organization. He was most recently elected president of the Southeastern Surgical Congress, vice president of the Halsted Society and vice chairman of the Board of Regents of the American College of Surgeons. In addition, Britt was elected director of the American Board of Surgery and was also appointed to the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar Program National Advisory Committee.

Britt is the recipient of the nation's highest teaching award in medicine, the Robert J. Glaser Distinguished Teaching Award, which is given by the American Association of Medical Colleges in conjunction with the national medical honor society, AQA. Each medical school, in both the United States and Canada, submits its best faculty member to compete for this top award given for medical education. He was also selected to be the AQA Visiting Professor. The Association for Surgical Education chose Britt to be the recipient of the 2004 Distinguished Educator Award, presented annually to one individual who has attained national prominence and demonstrated excellence as a master educator. In addition, on eight occasions, Eastern Virginia Medical School has awarded Britt the Sir William Osler Award as the outstanding teacher of the year. In addition, he was the recipient of the Dean's Faculty Achievement Award for excellence in the clinical sciences and, subsequently, received the highest award given by the medical school, the Dean's Outstanding Faculty Award. He is the youngest faculty member ever to be given this award. Britt received Virginia's most prestigious award, The Outstanding Faculty Award, which is presented by the governor and State Council of Higher Education for excellence in teaching, research and public service. The recipient of this award is selected from more than 15,000 faculty members of the 160 state-supported and private institutions. In addition, Britt has been honored with an Emmy Award by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for his contribution to the television special: *Youth/Violence: A Call To Disarm*. Britt has participated in over 100 visiting professorships and distinguished lectureships throughout the world, including the A. Clifford Barger-Hinton Wright Lecture, which is given by a distinguished physician to both the faculty and entire student assembly at Harvard Medical School. Also, he was named the Edward Richardson Visiting Professor at Massachusetts General Hospital. This is considered one of the oldest lectureships at Harvard Medical School. In addition, he was named the Deryl Hart Visiting Professor at Duke University, the Woodward Visiting Professor at the University of Florida, the Will C. Moore Visiting Professor at Indiana University, the Altemeier Visiting Professor at the University of Cincinnati, the Erb Lecturer for the Philadelphia

Academy of Surgery, the Drew-Syphax Visiting Professor for Howard University Hospital, the William R. Drucker Visiting Professor at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, the Felda Hightower Lecturer at Wake Forest University. Britt was selected to be the Foundation Visiting Professor for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh for their first combined Clinical Congress, which was held in Adelaide, Australia. He has also been a visiting professor at both the Royal College of Surgeons of England and Ireland. Britt was named the 2003 Maurice Galante Visiting Professor for the University of California at San Francisco. In 2004, he was the Distinguished Sherman Lecturer for Southeastern Surgical Clinical Congress. Britt was the 2005 James Rives Visiting Professor at Louisiana State University and the Robert Zollinger Visiting Professor at Ohio State University. Most recently, he completed the Miller Visiting Professorship at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Governor Mark R. Warner appointed Britt to serve on the board of trustees for the Virginia Capitol Foundation. Britt is an appointed member to the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program National Advisory Committee. Along with his academic pursuits, Britt is an "active" participant in the community. He is the former rector of the Board of Visitors at Norfolk State University and a former executive council member of the Board of Managers at the University of Virginia. He has been the recipient of the B'NAI B'RITH Great American Traditions Award, the NAACP Man of the Year recognition and the Community Service Award presented by the Boy Scouts of America for his support of urban scouting. Britt received an honorary doctorate degree from Norfolk State University for both his professional and community achievements. In addition, he was the honoree featured in the Strong Men and Women: Excellence in Leadership series sponsored by Virginia Power/North Carolina Power. Community leaders have established both a medical school scholarship and community service award in his name. Britt serves on several other state, national and international boards and is involved in numerous church and community activities.

President George W. Bush recognized Britt's leadership role in medicine and nominated him to the Board of Regents of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, and he was subsequently confirmed by the U.S. Senate. At the end of his tenure, Britt was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal.

The National Library of Medicine of the National Institutes of Medicine in collaboration with the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African-American History and Culture recently featured Britt for his contributions to academic surgery.