

## **Opening Doors: Contemporary African American Academic Surgeons**

Opening Doors celebrates the contributions of African American academic surgeons to medicine and medical education. It tells the stories of four pioneering African American surgeons and educators who exemplify excellence in their fields and believe in continuing the journey of excellence through the education and mentoring of younger physicians and surgeons.

Through contemporary and historical images, the exhibition takes the visitor on a journey through the lives and achievements of these academic surgeons, and provides a glimpse into the stories of those that came before them and those that continue the tradition today.

The four pioneers are Alexa I. Canady, the first African American woman pediatric neurosurgeon; LaSalle D. Leffall, Jr., cancer surgeon, and the first African American President of the American College of Surgeons and the American Cancer Society; Claude H. Organ, Jr., general surgeon, and the first African American to chair a department of surgery at a predominantly white medical school; and Rosalyn P. Scott, the first African American woman cardiothoracic surgeon.

The exhibition also features other academic surgeons from around the country that follow in the tradition of sharing their knowledge and passing the torch to younger surgeons. These include Levi Watkins, Jr. of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine who performed the first implantation of a automatic defibrillator in a human in 1980; Carla M. Pugh of Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine who holds a patent for a method of simulation used to design the pelvic exam simulator, a teaching tool for medical students; and Claudia L. Thomas, the first African American woman orthopaedic surgeon.

Opening Doors is not intended to be an encyclopedic look at African American academic surgeons, but is intended to provide only a glimpse into the contributions that African American academic surgeons have made to medicine and medical education. We hope that through this exhibition we can bring these stories to light and inspire others to pursue careers in academic surgery.

This exhibition was developed and produced by the National Library of Medicine and the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture. Curated by Margaret A. Hutto and Jill L. Newmark

The exhibition, located in the Lobby area of the first floor in Abbott Hall (<http://www.buffalo.edu/buildings/building?id=abbott>) on UB's South Campus, features six graphic panels describing the contributions of these fine physicians and surgeons, and will run through July 28, 2008. Free brochures accompany the exhibit including one especially for kids! Parking is freely available during the summer in Diefendorf Lot.

Contact Pamela Rose, [pmrose@buffalo.edu](mailto:pmrose@buffalo.edu), 829-3900 x129 for details and more information.

An online web version of the exhibition is also available at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/aframsurgeons>