

# The Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc. Historical Moments from the First 30 Years

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# Greetings from the ABC Leadership



As the ABC continues to grow, we are able to continue to protect and advance public health advocacy, professional and patient education, clinical research, and community development. Our goal is simple: we strive to ensure that every African America patient receives the care he or she is entitled to receive. This synopsis from our soon to be released first edition book, "Healers of the Heart: The History of the Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc.," is based on the scholarly work of its author, ABC Life Member, Luther T. Clark, MD. Dr. Clark, who has lived through much of the Association's history, and his team conducted years of research and lengthy interviews for this important project. The insights that were captured are invaluable in recalling our history and bringing a spark of living memory to it.

—Paul L. Underwood, MD, President



This year, the ABC celebrates the thirtieth anniversary of our founding. Thirty years of growth in any endeavor deserves some measure of recognition. This important milestone gives us an opportunity to not only look back on the achievements of the Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc., but the phenomenal growth of the attention to cardiovascular disease in African Americans. Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to all the supporters of the organization who are part of the ABC Family. This is your story, and we thank you all for 30 wonderful years of promoting the prevention and reduction of cardiovascular diseases for all citizens.

—Jesse McGee, MD, Chairman of the Board of Directors



The state of affairs was morally untenable, so, thirty years ago, Dr. Richard Allen Williams and sixteen colleagues met in Dallas to address the cardiovascular health care disparities that was apparent to them but little noticed by the larger society. With great effort, the world is now taking notice and seems to be committed to improving the quality of healthcare for all our citizens. On the strength of this pursuit, our organization has grown rapidly over the past ten years. Our upcoming first edition history book, "Healers of the Heart: The History of the Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc.," will chronicle and herald the innovations and achievements of a small organization who believed it could. We have the unique insights that have now fired the conscience and imagination of government, academic institutions and sister organizations and we are poised to provide the leadership that will take us to the promised land of no disparities in health care and health care providers.

—B. Wayne Kong, PhD, JD, Chief Executive Officer

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ABC

# Founding Members



Richard Allen Williams, MD  
Founder



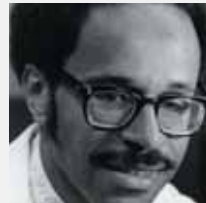
Boisey O. Barnes, MD



Paul T. Batties, MD



Major Geer, MD



Richard F. Gillum, MD



L. Julian Haywood, MD



Alphonzo Jordan, MD\*



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Levi S. Perry, MD



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Hannibal E. Howell, MD



Paul M. Jackson, MD



Edith Irby Jones, MD



Elijah Saunders, MD



Daniel D. Savage, MD, PhD\*

*\*Deceased*

# The Founding of the ABC: The Legacy Begins

Tens of thousands of the most prominent physicians and scientists in the world gather each year at the annual scientific sessions of the American Heart Association (AHA). They gather to present new scientific studies, discuss landmark clinical breakthroughs, and debate recent advances in cardiovascular medicine. Among the tens of thousands of attendees at the 47th Annual Scientific Sessions of the AHA in Dallas, Texas, November 18-21, 1974, was a handful of Black physicians and scientists, most of whom had traveled from urban academic medical centers across the United States. Although easily identifiable amidst the large convention crowds, few of the Black physician-scientists at this, or any previous AHA meetings, knew each other. They rushed from meeting to meeting and from exhibit to exhibit; and beyond prideful glancing smiles or ethnic nods of greeting, there was little contact.

Dr. Richard Allen Williams changed all that. Williams, a cardiologist and assistant medical director at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital in the Watts section of Los Angeles, arrived in Dallas from Los Angeles on Sunday, November 17, 1974. As he observed the few "brown" faces appear and disappear, Williams decided to attempt at gathering the Black cardiologists for dinner and a meeting. Over a meal, they could get to know each other, share camaraderie, and discuss issues of mutual concern to them and their patients. Williams, who received his AB from Harvard University (1958; Cambridge, MA) and his MD from Downstate Medical Center (1962; Brooklyn, NY), had begun attending the AHA annual meetings on a regular basis in 1968 while a fellow in cardiology training at Harvard Medical School's Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston, MA. After scouting around the down-

town Dallas area, Williams identified an easily accessible restaurant that could accommodate a small group. He then began to spread by word of mouth that there would be a meeting of all the Black cardiologists the next evening. He had no idea how many were actually present at the AHA or how many might attend the proposed meeting. One of the first people he spoke to about the idea, Dr. Charles Curry, provided encouragement when he enthusiastically endorsed the idea, agreed to attend and help recruit others. Dr. Curry was key to a successful turnout because he could alert the small contingency from Howard University School of Medicine, where Curry was the recently appointed Chief of Cardiology. Attendance by the Howard contingency alone would create a substantial core gathering. In addition to Drs. Williams and Curry, other contributors to the success of the ABC inaugural

meeting included "AHA regulars" like Drs. L. Julian Haywood, Hannibal Howell, Alphonzo Jordan, and Elijah Saunders as well as newcomers like Dr. Richard F. Gillum (who presented two scientific abstracts). Although there is some uncertainty about the exact number of participants, it appears that approximately two-thirds of the seventeen ABC Founders were actually at the AHA in 1974. By any measure however, the fledgling group was truly a "who's who" among African American physicians and scientists.

Before the ABC, there had been occasional small informal gatherings of Black physicians and scientists at scientific meetings. However, none of the individuals who decided to attend this particular dinner could have anticipated the magnitude of what would happen. The moment was opportune. The nation's most prominent African American cardiovascular specialists were assembled and primed for action. An ambitious, tenacious leader had emerged who was eager to take the reins. Streams were converging. A surging river was forming; one that flowed with energy, dedication, commitment, and ethnic pride—and guided by a set of core values and principles

that would endure for decades to come.

And so it happened. The Association of Black Cardiologists was founded on Monday evening, November 18, 1974, at a local steak and ribs restaurant in Downtown Dallas. The birth of the ABC at the AHA scientific meeting in 1974 was fortuitous, but not accidental. Rather, it resulted from the propitious convergence of issues, venue, people, and timing; and from thoughtful, reasoned organization. The ABC was created to address issues that the American Heart Association, the American College of Cardiology, and the general cardiology community had long ignored: the disproportionate burden of cardiovascular disease and inequities in cardiovascular care for African Americans.

The history of the founding, growth, and rise to prominence of the ABC, Inc., the coming together of these *Healers of the Heart*, is a story of principles, vision, passion, and dedication. It has taken unwavering effort, bold determination, and dedicated commitment to get to where we are today. And yet, in the end, it was "... as easy as ABC."

# Presidents

## of the Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc.



Richard Allen Williams, MD  
1974-1984  
Chairman of the Board (1984-1986)



Paul L. Douglass, MD  
1994-1998



Daniel D. Savage, MD, PhD\*  
1984-1986  
Chairman of the Board (1986-1988)



Frank S. James, MD  
1998-2000



Elijah Saunders, MD  
1986-1988  
Chairman of the Board (1988-1990)



Elizabeth O. Ofili, MD, MPH  
2000-2002



Jay Brown, MD\*  
1988-1992



Malcolm P. Taylor, MD  
2002-2004



Augustus O. Grant, MD, PhD  
1992-1994



Paul L. Underwood, MD  
2004-2006



# Chairmen of the Board of Directors



Keith C. Ferdinand, MD  
1990-1994



F. Roosevelt Gilliam, III, MD  
2000-2002



Joe L. Hargrove, MD  
1994-1996



Calvin W. McLarin, MD  
2002-2004



Charles K. Francis, MD  
1996-2000



Jesse E. McGee, MD  
2004-2006

*\* Deceased*

# Historical Milestones and Highlights from the History of the ABC

*Throughout its history, the Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc. (ABC) has been a leader in the promotion of cardiovascular disease prevention and reduction in African American and other high-risk populations. During its 30 year existence, the ABC's pioneering efforts in conquest of cardiovascular disease have been highlighted by many important organizational milestones. These demonstrate the passions and talents, foresight and leadership of this non-profit, professional organization, from its fledgling founding to its role today as one of the preeminent medical societies in the world.*

## **1974-1984: The Founding, Dismantling Myths, Building Bridges**

### **1974**

The Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc. (ABC) was founded in Dallas, Texas on November 18, 1974, during the 47th Annual Scientific Sessions of the American Heart Association.

### **1975**

Richard Allen Williams, MD, ABC Founder and first President, was "summoned" to meet with the American Heart Association's (AHA) leadership in Dallas to answer questions and explain why there was a need for an ABC. The AHA had a long tradition of being concerned and suspicious about any new organization that latched on to any part of the cardiovascular system. After persuasively describing

why the ABC was needed, and that the group would be "noninvasive," there was not only a great sigh of relief by the AHA, but the beginning of a long relationship of collaboration and cooperation. The founding and early years of the ABC were largely ignored by the American College of Cardiology (ACC) but over time, the ABC/ACC relationship has also become strong and collaborative.

### **1977**

Glen Bennett, MPH was recruited to join the national staff of the AHA in Dallas, Texas, upon the recommendation and urging of Drs. Elijah Saunders and Charles Curry. As Minority Involvement Specialist, Bennett was responsible for AHA's involvement in minority affairs for the nation. He worked closely with key members of ABC to build an enduring ABC/AHA collaboration

and liaison. As his activities with the ABC increased, Bennett assumed the role of coordinator, thus becoming the ABC's first staff member – a voluntary position which he held for the next decade.

### **1978**

The ABC co-sponsored its first ever joint symposium with the American Heart Association. The symposium, entitled "Cardiovascular Disease in Blacks," was held in conjunction with the AHA Epidemiology Conference in Orlando, FL.

### **1979**

B. Wayne Kong, PhD, an assistant professor at the University of the District of Columbia in Washington D.C., took a leave of absence to assume the position of Director of Research and Grants with Dr. Elijah Saunders at Provident Hospital in

Baltimore, Maryland. When the Urban Cardiology Research Center was created in 1982 (Elijah Saunders, President), Dr. Kong was appointed Director.

### 1980

The ABC, in conjunction with Founding Member, Daniel D. Savage, MD, PhD, helped create the Framingham Minority Study. Drs. Savage and Peter Wilson were principal investigators of the study which evaluated coronary risk factors in a minority population near Framingham, MA. The study's key findings were published in the journal *Metabolism* in 1982.

### 1983

Two of ABC's Founding members helped organize and chaired two landmark conferences focusing on CHD in Black populations. A symposium on "Coronary Heart Disease in Black Populations," chaired by Richard F. Gillum, MD, was held on March 5, 1983, in San Diego, California. Also, the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) sponsored a Working Conference on Coronary Heart Disease in Black Populations on September 29-30, 1983, at the American College of Cardiology's Heart House in Bethesda, Maryland, chaired by Elijah Saunders, MD with Katrina Johnson, PhD, Gerald Payne, MD, and Steven Clyburn, MPA from the NHLBI serving as

convenors. The proceedings from the two conferences were published together in 1984 in the *American Heart Journal*. These conferences and their subsequent proceedings launched a new era of inquiry into the problem of cardiovascular disease in American Blacks. They also helped set a new agenda of priorities at the NIH for research in the areas of basic, clinical, and applied studies.

### 1984-1994: Ascent to National Leadership

#### 1984

The ABC was first incorporated (California).

The ABC celebrated its 10th Anniversary by sponsoring its First Annual Scientific Sessions and Symposium at the Nassau Beach Hotel on Cable Beach in Nassau, Bahamas.

The inaugural issue of the *ABC Newsletter* was published (Richard A. Williams, MD, First Editor)

The ABC's first Scholarship Award, the *Dr. Richard Allen Williams Scholarship* (named in honor of ABC Founder) was established. The first recipient was Alan A. Garvin, a medical student at the UCLA-Charles R. Drew Postgraduate Medical School in Los Angeles. Dr. Garvin, an ABC Life member, currently practices cardiovascular medicine in Modesto, CA.

# Historical Milestones and Highlights from the History of the ABC

**1985**

The ABC commissioned and funded its first cardiovascular awareness survey entitled "ABC Chicago Survey" which found that many Blacks were unaware of the dangers of hypertension. Shiriki Kumanyika, PhD, MPH authored the first publication from the survey, "Awareness of Risk Factors for Coronary Heart Disease and High Blood Pressure in a Random Sample of Urban Black and Hispanic Adults." This paper was published in *Urban Health* and presented at the AHA Scientific Sessions.

The ABC held its first Regional Program during the National Conference on High Blood Pressure Control at the Palmer House in Chicago, IL. The concept flourished and the ABC now sponsors more than 25 regional programs annually.

The ABC was granted permanent membership status on two national policy making committees of the NHLBI—the National High Blood Pressure Education Program and the National Cholesterol Education Program

The ABC membership increased dramatically from several dozen to several hundred. This included cardiologists, internists, cardiovascular researchers, epidemiologists, and an increasing number of allied health professionals.

The Department of Health and Human Services' Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Black and Minority Health was released. Founding member, Daniel D. Savage, MD, PhD, and members Drs. Laurence Watkins and Shiriki Kumanyika wrote manuscripts for the Task Force. The report highlighted continuing disparity in the burden of death and illness experienced by Black and other minority groups.

**1986**

Dr. B. Wayne Kong was hired as ABC's first paid employee and subsequently became Executive Director. He replaced Glen Bennett, MPH, who had served as volunteer staff assistant since 1977.

The ABC conducted its first community outreach and health promotional program, HealthPITCH, a coalition of the ABC, National

Council of Negro Women and ER Squibb and Sons, Inc.

**1988**

The ABC produced a limited edition poster entitled, "Black Pioneers in the Conquest of Heart Disease." The poster featured the achievements and contributions of Drs. Daniel Hale Williams, Charles Drew, Julian Haywood, Edward Hawthorne, and J.B. Johnson.

**1990**

On March 15-18, the ABC's held its Second Annual Scientific Sessions in New Orleans, LA, in conjunction with the Annual Scientific Sessions of the American College of Cardiology (ACC). This was the first symposium held in conjunction with the ACC. All of ABC's subsequent annual scientific sessions have been held in conjunction with the ACC.

The ABC established its first named lectureship—the *Dr. Daniel D. Savage Memorial Scientific Lecture*. The prestigious spring lecture is presented during the Annual Scientific Sessions, in honor of renowned cardiologist, researcher, ABC Founding member and 2nd

President, Daniel D. Savage, MD, PhD. Claude Lenfant, MD, Director of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, was the first distinguished lecturer. In addition to the lecture, the ABC created its highest honor and most prestigious award, the *Dr. Daniel D. Savage Memorial Scientific Award*, in recognition of Dr. Savage's extraordinary achievements in cardiovascular disease research. The first award was given to Dr. Savage posthumously, and accepted by his widow, Sandra Savage.

The Dr. Walter M. Booker, Sr. Memorial Symposium was created as an annual symposium to be held in conjunction with the National Medical Association's Annual Convention and Scientific Assembly. The *Dr. Walter M. Booker, Sr. Memorial Innovation Award* was also established. Dr. Booker was a founding member of the ABC and a leading proponent of community-based cardiovascular disease prevention and reduction programs. L. Julian Haywood, MD received the first award.

The ABC Cardiologists-in-Training (CIT) Program was founded under the leadership of ABC's President, Dr. Jay Brown. This mentorship program evolved from the need to develop innovative and creative solutions to increase the number of cardiologists who serve minority communities and to provide a forum for minority cardiology fellows to inter-

act with each other and members of the ABC.

**1994** The ABC moved its permanent headquarters to Atlanta and was incorporated in the state of Georgia.

The February/March premier edition of the *ABC Digest of Urban Cardiology* was published. This bi-monthly journal is circulated to ABC members and over 25,000 primary care physicians in zip codes with high African American populations. (Keith Ferdinand, MD, Editor)

#### **1994-2004: The New Millennium, Opportunities and Challenges**

**1995** The ABC commemorative calendar, *Pioneering African-Americans in Conquest of Heart Disease*, was produced as a tribute to African Americans who made pioneering contributions to the understanding of the heart and blood vessels and to the diagnosis and treatment of diseases affecting them. The calendar was produced in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Association of Black Cardiologists and the 100th anniversary of the National Medical Association. In addition to the 15 pioneers who appear annually on the calendar, one additional individual is honored each year for outstanding achievements and contributions to the ideals of the ABC. Luther T. Clark, MD championed this

# Historical Milestones and Highlights from the History of the ABC

important documentary and served as first editor.

The ABC was granted accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) as a provider of Continuing Medical Education (CME) for physicians. After an initial two-year provisional status, full accrediting status was granted.

## 1996

November 9-10, New Orleans, LA, the ABC inaugurated a new annual symposium, the *Congress on the Treatment of Cardiovascular Diseases (in African Americans)* to be held each year in conjunction with the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions. This completed the triad of major ABC symposia in conjunction with the ACC, NMA, and AHA annual meetings.

## 1997

The ABC established its second named lectureship—the *Dr. Alphonzo Jordan Memorial Lecture*. The summer lecture, presented annually at the Dr. Walter M. Booker, Sr. Memorial Symposium during the NMA annual meeting, honors the lifetime achievements of Alphonzo Jordan, MD, an invasive and interventional cardiologist, highly respected educa-

tor, and Founding Member of the ABC. Randas J.V. Batista, MD presented the inaugural lecture on August 2nd entitled "Surgical Management of End-Stage Dilated Cardiomyopathy."

The ABC achieved full, four-year accreditation status from the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME).

## 1998

The ABC began to celebrate its 25th Anniversary on November 7, at the Adams Mark Hotel in Dallas, TX, in conjunction with the Third Congress on the Treatment of Cardiovascular Diseases in African Americans and the Annual Scientific Session of the American Heart Association. The gala's keynote speaker was U.S. Surgeon General, David Satcher, MD, PhD. Other special guests and honorees for this Silver Anniversary included renowned pioneers in cardiovascular surgery, Denton A. Cooley, MD and Michael E. DeBakey, MD, NHLBI Director, Claude Lenfant, MD, and U.S. Congressman Louis Stokes.

On October 27, the ABC acquired a 7,000 square foot, 2-story office building for the new National

Headquarters north of Atlanta in Sandy Springs, GA.

## 2000

The millennium celebration was highlighted by ABC's election of its first female president, Elizabeth Ofili, MD, MPH.

The first two Centers of Excellence, The *Center for Women's Health* and *Center for Epidemiology* were established.

On June 30, the Harlem Hospital Cardiology Fellowship Program lost its accreditation because of the new Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) requirement that cardiology fellowship training programs must have cardiovascular surgical services at the primary training site. Prior to its closure, the Harlem Hospital fellowship was one of the major training sites for African American cardiologists. Among the graduates of this program was Dr. Jay Brown, past president of the ABC.

The ABC acquired 125 acres of land in Atlanta to be used for the new national headquarters and the ABC International Library, Research and Conference Center.

**2001**

The *Dr. Herbert W. Nickens Epidemiology Award* was created to honor this outstanding scientist for his scholarship in cardiovascular epidemiology and leadership in the promotion of research and projects that promote cardiovascular disease prevention and reduction. This award is presented annually at the Congress on the Treatment of Cardiovascular Diseases in African Americans. Kevin Schulman, MD was the first recipient of the award.

In November, the ABC was recertified by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) for an additional four years to sponsor continuing education for physicians.

**2002**

The ABC established its third Center of Excellence, The *Center for Continuing Education and Professional Development (CCEPD)*.

**2004**

Paul Lester Underwood, MD was elected ABC's tenth President. Jesse McGee, MD was elected Chairman of the Board of Directors.

On November 6, the Association of Black Cardiologists Working Group Report, *Eliminating Disparities in Cardiovascular Care and Outcomes: Roadmap to 2010* was presented at its Ninth Congress on the Treatment of Cardiovascular Diseases.

### **ABC's Centers of Excellence contribute to unprecedented growth and successes:**

#### *Center for Continuing Education and Professional Development (CCEPD):*

>> A record number (approximately 315,000) health professionals were reached by ABC's educational programs (conferences, symposia, online and enduring materials) during calendar year 2003.

>> The numbers and variety of educational programs and partnerships have expanded to include directly and jointly-sponsored Internet-based educational programs, videotapes and CD ROMs, and print materials.

>> In addition to CME for physicians, plans are underway to obtain accreditation status of ABC educational programs for nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, and physician assistants.

#### *Center for Women's Health:*

>> The Center launched *Generations* (2002), a faith-based cardiovascular disease prevention program targeting women of all ages, their families and communities, funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health.

>> *Heart Health for the Generations* video/guidebook featuring poet and author, Maya Angelou was released (2003).

# Historical Milestones and Highlights

## from the History of the ABC

>> The 2004 Annual Cardiovascular Disease in Women's Symposium became an official satellite symposium of the American College of Physicians (ACP) Annual Session. Dr. Frank James spearheaded this ABC/ACP collaboration.

>> "The African American Women's Guide to a Healthy Heart" (Anne L. Taylor, MD, lead author) was published (2004).

>> The *ABC's of Nutrition and Exercise* was launched (2004). This community program is designed to educate children about proper nutrition and the importance of daily physical activity to prevent obesity.

### *Epidemiology Center (EpiCenter):*

>> *Changing Health Outcomes by Improving Cardiovascular Education and Screenings (CHOICES)* was designed in 2003 to provide churches with education, training, and equipment needed to aid in the awareness and prevention of CVD. In 2005, the program will be launched in five U.S. cities.

>> Not In Mama's Kitchen (NIMK): Healthy Lungs Begin at Home Secondhand Smoke

Awareness Campaign (2003) was funded by the Georgia Cancer Coalition and the Georgia Department of Human Resources Tobacco Use Prevention Section, in partnership with the National Black Leadership Initiative on Cancer II. The goal of the campaign was to educate Blacks about the dangers of exposure to secondhand smoke. The ABC received an award from the Georgia Alliance for Tobacco Prevention for its 2003 contributions.

>> Epi's Community Programs division received the 2003 award for outstanding training and development of church-based Cardiovascular Wellness Centers as a partner with the REACH for Wellness program.

>> The ABC served as a co-sponsor of A-HeFT. The trial concluded successfully in 2004. Anne Taylor, MD (Principal Investigator)

>> ABC members represented 44% of the investigator pool and randomized 49% of patients for the ARIES Study with coordinated efforts by the EpiCenter. Keith Ferdinand, MD (Principal Investigator)

### *Membership:*

>> ABC membership exceeds 600.

>> During the past five years, ABC members were afforded new online services and educational programs including ABCDOCS.org, Doctor Yellow Pages, and Cardiac HealthNet, an NIH-sponsored educational program.

### >> Recent Initiatives:

ABC Member Center. A members only section of abcario.org allowing access to educational resources such as downloadable ABC-sponsored slide presentations, online CME programs, ABC publications, and other member benefits

ABC Forum. A new online feature designed to encourage exchange between members and committees in a password-protected area of abcario.org.

Online Reporting. A web-based reporting tool permitting members to update their own demographic information. The online module will interact with the live membership database.



# Pioneering African-Americans in Conquest of Heart Disease



During the past 100 years, African-Americans have made important contributions to our understanding of the heart and blood vessels, and to the diagnosis and treatment of diseases affecting them. Contributions have been made in the areas of patient care, education, research, and technical innovations. In tribute to these pioneering African Americans, the Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc. produces a commemorative calendar celebrating the lives and accomplishments of 15 of those whose contributions are especially distinguished. Our pioneers are Walter M. Booker, Sr., Edward S. Cooper, Charles L. Curry, Janice E.G. Douglas, Charles R. Drew, Richard F. Gillum, Edward W. Hawthorne, L. Julian Haywood, John B. Johnson, Alphonzo Jordan, Elijah Saunders, Daniel D. Savage, John Thomas, Jr., Daniel Hale Williams and Richard Allen Williams.

*Portraits of the pioneers were painted by highly acclaimed artist, Desmond McFarlane. The actual portraits are on permanent display at the ABC headquarters in Atlanta.*

# Outstanding Achievement in Cardiovascular Medicine

In addition to our 15 pioneers, the ABC calendar, *Pioneering African Americans in Conquest of Heart Disease*, pays tribute to an outstanding individual for his/her efforts to reduce cardiovascular morbidity and mortality. The original portraits for these important contributors to the advancement of cardiovascular medicine are on display at the ABC headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia.



1997  
Keith C. Ferdinand, MD



2001  
Levi Watkins, Jr., MD



1998  
Huerta C. Neals, MD



2002  
Mr. Vivien Thomas



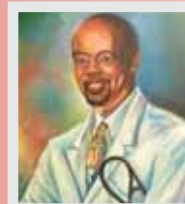
1999  
David B. Todd, Jr., MD, PhD



2003  
Augustus O. Grant, MD, PhD



2000  
James L. Potts, MD



2004  
Herman A. Taylor, Jr., MD

## Lectureships and Awards

### **Dr. Daniel D. Savage Memorial Scientific Lecture**

The Dr. Daniel D. Savage Memorial Scientific Lecture is presented annually in conjunction with the Annual Scientific Sessions. Initiated in 1990, this prestigious lecture, honors renowned cardiologist and researcher, Daniel D. Savage, M.D., Ph.D.

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**1990** *"Health in Minorities and the Role of Minority Scientists in Cardiovascular Research"*  
**Claude Lenfant, MD.**

**1991** *"Role of Nuclear Magnetic Resonance in the Diagnosis of Cardiovascular Disease"*  
**Roderic I. Pettigrew, PhD, MD**

**1992** *"Myocardial Receptors, Molecular Biology in Normal and Disease States"*  
**Eugene Nwosu, MD**

**1993** *"The Causes of Heart Failure in Africa"*  
**Lucas Mohlala, MD**

**1994** *"Basic Mechanisms in Congestive Heart Failure"*  
**Judith K. Gwathmey, V.M.D., Ph.D.**

**1995** *"Preventive Cardiology: Twenty Year Retrospective"*  
**Otelio Randall, M.D.**

**1996** *"Dyslipidemia: Pathophysiology, Lpa Polymorphism"*  
**Luther T. Clark, M.D.**

**1997** *"Hypertension Care and Control in Young Urban African American Men"*  
**Martha N. Hill, R.N., Ph.D.**

**1998** *"The Impact of Nuclear Cardiology on Cardiovascular Care"*  
**Kim A. Williams, M.D.**

**1999** *"Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story"*  
**Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., M.D.**

**2000** *"The Global Problem of Atherosclerosis and Related Cerebral Vascular Disease"*  
**Salim Yusuf, M.D.**

**2001** *"Epidemiology of Cardiovascular Disease"*  
**Darwin Labarthe, M.D.**

**2002** *"Congestive Heart Failure: A Half Century Perspective"*  
**Eugene Braunwald, MD**

**2003** *"Inflammation and Emerging Risk Factors"*  
**Paul M. Ridker, MD, MPH**

**2004** *"The Future of Cardiovascular Specialty Care: Will There be an Adequate Supply of Cardiovascular Specialists?"*  
**Carl J. Pepine, MD**

# ABC Lectureships and Awards

## ***Dr. Alphonzo Jordan Memorial Lecture***

In 1997, the ABC named its summer lecture to honor the lifetime achievements of Alphonzo Jordan, M.D., an invasive and interventional cardiologist, highly respected educator, and founding member of the ABC. Dr. Jordan was one of the first physicians in America skilled in the technique of Percutaneous Transluminal Coronary Angioplasty (PTCA). The Dr. Alphonzo Jordan Memorial Lecture is presented annually at the Dr. Walter M. Booker, Sr. Memorial Symposium.

**1997** "Surgical Management of End Stage Dilated Cardiomyopathy"

**Randas J.V. Batista, MD**

**1998** "Coronary Artery Disease in the African American Patient: Issues Regarding Access to Care and Long-Term Results of Surgical Intervention"

**Levi Watkins, Jr., MD**

**1999** "Women's Health Issues"

**Vivian W. Pinn, MD**

**2000** "Do Heart Failure Trials Predict Survival Benefits in African Americans"

**Robert L. Scott, MD, PhD**

**2001** "New Strategies in Heart Failure Management" Implications of Recent Clinical Trial Data"

**Keith C. Ferdinand, MD**

**2002** "The Evolving Atherosclerosis Paradigm"

**Karol E. Watson, MD, PhD**

**2003** "Low-Carbohydrate, High Fat (Atkins) Diets for Weight Loss"

**Eric Westman, MD, MHS**

**2004** "Primary Prevention for the Masses"

**Augustus O. Grant, MD, PhD**

## ***Dr. Daniel D. Savage Memorial Science Award***

The annual award (ABC's highest honor), initiated in 1990, is given based on scientific achievement in the areas of cardiovascular disease and research. In recognition of his life and work, the award is named

after Daniel D. Savage, MD, PhD, who was heralded by his peers as the first to determine the role of Left Ventricular Hypertrophy (LVH) plays in cardiovascular disease.

**1990** *Daniel D. Savage, MD, PhD (posthumous)*

**1991** John Thomas, Jr., MD

**1992** Charles K. Francis, MD

**1993** Kim A. Williams, MD

**1994** Richard S. Cooper, MD

**1995** Richard F. Gillum, MD

**1996** Luther T. Clark, MD

**1997** Judith Gwathmey, VMD, PhD

**1998** John M. Flack, MD, MPH

**1999** Elizabeth O. Ofili, MD, MPH

**2000** Augustus O. Grant, MD, PhD

**2001** James R. Gavin, MD, PhD

**2002** Clyde W. Yancy, MD

**2003** Herman A. Taylor, Jr., MD

**2004** Gary H. Gibbons, MD

## ***Dr. Walter M. Booker, Sr. Health Promotion Award***

The Dr. Walter M. Booker, Sr. Health Promotion Award (formerly the Dr. Walter M. Booker, Sr. Innovation Award), created in 1990, is given annually to a physician who has established innovative programs

which prevent and reduce cardiovascular diseases in African Americans. Dr. Walter M. Booker, Sr. the award's namesake, was a founding member of the ABC and a leading proponent of community-based cardiovascular disease prevention and reduction programs.

- 1990** L. Julian Haywood, MD
- 1991** Luther T. Clark, MD
- 1992** Tazwell Banks, MD
- 1993** Richard A. Williams, MD
- 1995** James L. Potts, MD
- 1997** George A. Mensah, MD
- 1998** Louis T. Kanda, MD
- 1999** Paul L. Underwood, MD
- 2000** Anne L. Taylor, MD
- 2001** Henry W. Foster, MD
- 2002** Keith C. Ferdinand, MD
- 2003** Lynne Perry-Bottinger, MD
- 2004** Jackson T. Wright, Jr., MD, PhD

***Dr. Herbert W. Nickens Epidemiology Award/Lecture/***

The Dr. Herbert W. Nickens Epidemiology Award and Lecture, initiated in 2001, are presented annually to outstanding scholars of epidemiology, and leaders in the promotion of epidemiologic research and projects that promote the prevention and reduction of

cardiovascular disease. In honor of Herbert W. Nickens, M.D., a pioneer leader in the promotion of medical education and healthcare, the epidemiology award/lecture is conferred annually at the Congress on the Treatment of Cardiovascular Diseases in African Americans.

**Awardee**

- 2001** Kevin A. Schulman, MD
- 2004** Michelle Albert, MD, MPH

**Named Lecturer/Awardee**

- 2002** "Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities"  
**Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, MD, MBA**
- 2003** "Marketing the Evidence on Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Care to Physicians"  
**Marsha Lillie-Blanton, DrPH**
- 2004** "Jackson Heart Study: Hope for the Future of Cardiovascular Disease Prevention"  
**Herman A. Taylor, Jr., MD**

# African American "Firsts" in Cardiovascular Medicine

*The Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc. (ABC) celebrates not only its organizational accomplishments over the past three decades, but also the historic achievements of African Americans in Cardiovascular medicine. Below, we chronicle some of the pioneering "firsts" made by African Americans to the advancement of this field.*

**1893**

Daniel Hale Williams, MD performed the first successful operation on the human heart when he closed wounds of the heart and pericardium in a victim of a knife stabbing. The surgery was performed in Chicago's Provident Hospital, the oldest free-standing black-owned hospital in the U.S., which was founded in 1891 by Dr. Daniel Hale Williams.

**1927**

Dr. Arthur Hugh Simmons (1899-1983) became the first African American physician to own, learn how to use, and put into routine use, an electrocardiogram machine. Dr. Simmons is credited as being the first black cardiologist. He was the "electrocardiologist" at Freedmen's Hospital in Washington, D.C., from 1927 to 1938. The electrocardiograph was invented in 1901 by the Dutch physiologist Willem Einthoven. In 1909, clinical scientist Thomas Lewis introduced it to the English speaking world (University College Hospital, London) and Alfred Cohen installed the first one in the United States at Mt Sinai Hospital in New York

**1951**

John B. Johnson, MD, widely regarded as the most distinguished Black cardiologist of his time, became the first Black Fellow of the American College of Cardiology (ACC). In 1972, Johnson was the first Black elected Governor of an ACC Chapter (Washington, DC). Since then there have been five others, including: Herman Price, MD (1983-1986); Charles Curry, MD (1985-1988); Charles K. Francis, MD (1986-1987); Paul Douglass, MD (1995-1998); and Malcolm Taylor, MD (1999-2002).

*The J.B. Johnson Chair at the American College of Cardiology Heart House is the only chair named for a Black person. (1977)*

**1955**

F. Pearl Riley McBroom, MD (1926-2004) is believed to have been the first African American female to practice solo office based cardiology. Dr. McBroom earned her MD from Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons (1953) and completed her internal medicine and cardiology training at the Veteran

Affairs Medical Center in Los Angeles and the New York University Hospitals (including Bellevue) in New York City. Dr. McBroom practiced cardiology, preventive and alternative medicine for many years in Century City and Marina del Rey, California.

**1958**

John Thomas, MD began the Meharry Cohort Study to evaluate the determinants of cardiovascular disease in a cohort of medical students from the classes of 1958-65 of Meharry Medical College. This was the first prospective, long-term study of Hypertension and Atherosclerosis in middle class Black Americans. Initiated in 1958 as the "Student Hypertension Research Program Project," Dr. Thomas conceived the idea for the project during his residency training in 1946. In 1988, Dr. Thomas began a collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine Precursors Study, which allowed racial comparisons in the epidemiology of coronary heart disease and other vascular diseases. Because of this study and his other research, Dr. Thomas is considered

by many to be the first Black Cardiovascular Epidemiologist.

### 1968

Louis B. Russell, Jr., an African American industrial arts educator, acquired international recognition after he became the world longest living heart transplant patient. Mr. Russell was the thirty-fourth person in medical history (and believed to be the first African American) to undergo heart transplant surgery. He lived for six years with a new heart, longer than any previous transplant patient. Mr. Russell died on November 27, 1974 at age 49 at the Medical College of Virginia Hospital. The first heart transplant was performed by Christiaan Barnard in Capetown, South Africa in 1967.

### 1969

Josephine B. Isabel-Jones, MD completed her Pediatric Cardiology Fellowship at UCLA, and in 1972 became the first board-certified, Black female Pediatric Cardiologist in the United States. Dr. Isabel-Jones earned her MD from Meharry Medical College School of Medicine in 1964. In 2004, there are only 30 Black Pediatric Cardiologists in the U.S., 12 of whom are females.

### 1975

ABC Founder, first President and first Chairman of the Board, Richard Allen Williams, MD published what is highly regarded as the first comprehensive textbook on diseases in African-Americans, the Textbook of Black-Related Diseases (McGraw-Hill, 1975).

### 1977

The American Heart Association created an

award in honor of Louis B. Russell, Jr., the first African American heart transplant recipient. The award recognizes AHA volunteers who have demonstrated outstanding service to minority and underserved populations. ABC member recipients of the Louis B. Russell, Jr. Memorial Award include: Frank L. Douglas, MD, PhD (1987); L. Julian Haywood, MD (1988); Charles K. Francis, MD (1992); Louis L. Cregler, MD (1995); Elijah Saunders, MD (1998); Albert Olivier, MD (1998); Richard Allen Williams, MD (2001); and Keith C. Ferdinand, MD (2002); and Shiriki K. Kumanyika, PhD, MPH (2003).

### 1980

Levi Watkins, Jr., MD performed the world's first human implantation of the automatic implantable defibrillator in February of 1980 and subsequently developed several different techniques for the implantation of this device. Earlier in 1966, Dr. Watkins was the first African American to matriculate and graduate from the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine

### 1981

Alphonzo Jordan, MD is believed to be the first African American to perform percutaneous coronary angioplasty procedures on a regular basis. Dr. Jordan learned the technique when he and about 100 other prominent invasive cardiologists from around the world traveled to Zurich, Switzerland for training by the inventor of the procedure, Dr. Andreas Gruentzig (who introduced the technique three years previously).

### 1982

ABC Founding member, Richard F. Gillum, MD performed the first comprehensive systematic literature review of "Coronary Heart Disease in

# African American "Firsts" in Cardiovascular Medicine

Blacks," which he published as a two-part series in the *American Heart Journal* (1982). Still widely quoted today, this review documented the magnitude of the problem of CHD in Blacks and is credited with beginning the dismantling of the longstanding myth that Blacks did not suffer from CHD.

## 1985

ABC Founding member, Edith Irby Jones, MD became the first woman to be elected President of the National Medical Association. Dr. Jones has a long tradition of firsts. She was the first Black student to matriculate and graduate from the University of Arkansas, and she is the only female Founding member of the ABC.

## 1986

Rosalyn P. Sterling Scott, MD became the first African American woman to be certified by the American Board of Thoracic Surgery (ABTS). Prior to 1986, only 28 women in history had been certified by the ABTS. The first woman heart surgeon and one of the first three to be certified by the ABTS (1961) was Nina Star Braunwald. Dr. Scott specializes in adult cardiac surgery and general thoracic surgery. She is currently Associate Professor in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery,

Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science (Los Angeles, California).

## 1992

Edward S. Cooper, MD, became the first Black president and chief medical spokesperson for the American Heart Association (AHA). In 1997, he received the AHA's highest award, the Gold Heart Award. Dr.

Cooper, also an ABC Pioneer, is a nationally recognized specialist in the campaign against strokes and heart disease.

## 1992

ABC Founding member, Charles L. Curry, MD, became the first African American to serve on the Board of Trustees for the American College of Cardiology (1992-97). Dr. Curry was the first African American to complete a residency in Medicine at Duke University Medical Center. He is also credited with training more African American cardiologists during his 30 years as Chief of Cardiology at Howard University School of Medicine than anyone else.

## 1992

Phyllis Edwards, MD was named the first African American female to serve as president (1992-1995) of the Women in Thoracic Surgery. Dr. Edwards served two terms and was

followed subsequently by Rosalyn P. Sterling Scott, MD, MSHA, who served as president from 1998-2001.

## 2000

Elizabeth Ofili, MD, MPH, Chief of Cardiology at Morehouse School of Medicine, became the first female elected president of the Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc.

## 2003

Augustus O. Grant, MD, PhD became the first past ABC president to also be elected President of the American Heart Association (AHA). Dr. Grant was the second African American President of the AHA. Prior to becoming president, Dr. Grant was the first African American to serve as Chairman of the Scientific Sessions Program Committee of the AHA.

## 2004

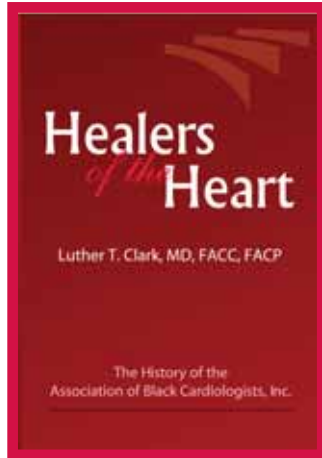
Charles K. Francis, MD, former ABC Board Chairman was elected to serve as President of the American College of Physicians (ACP). Dr. Francis is the second African American to serve in this position. Dr. Gerald E. Thomson was the first (1995).



*"Healers of the Heart  
The History of the Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc."*

*Healers of the Heart* is a comprehensive account of the raison d'être, founding, growth, and rise to prominence of the Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc. Luther T. Clark, MD tells the story of how a small group of African American physicians and scientists met fortuitously for dinner 30 years ago and created what has become one of the most prominent and influential professional medical organizations in America. Established to address the disproportionate burden of cardiovascular disease and inequities in cardiovascular care for African Americans, the history of the ABC is a story of principles, vision, passion, bold determination, and unwavering effort. And yet, in the end, it is the story of a journey that was "... as easy as ABC."

**...coming soon  
February, 2005**



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*"Healers of the Heart  
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# About the Author

Luther T. Clark, MD, FACC, FACP



Dr. Clark is Professor of Clinical Medicine and Chief of the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine at the State University of New York Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn, NY. He is also Chief of Cardiology Services at the Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn, NY. Dr. Clark earned his A.B. degree with honors from Harvard College (Cambridge, MA) and his M.D. from Harvard Medical School (Boston, MA).

Dr. Clark has been a member of the Association of Black Cardiologists for more than 20 years, serving in the capacities of Vice President, Member of the Board of Directors, Chairman of the CME committee, and currently as Consulting Medical Director for the Center for Continuing Education and Professional Development. Dr. Clark spearheaded the ABC effort to obtain CME granting status from the Accreditation Council on Continuing Medical Education (1995) and re-certifications in 1997 and 2001. He has always had a special interest in the historical contributions of African Americans to cardiovascular medicine. He wrote a column on "historical notes" for the *ABC Newsletter* for several years and was the founding editor (1995-2001) of the highly regarded ABC calendar, "Pioneering African Americans in Conquest of Heart Disease." Dr. Clark has received several awards from the ABC in recognition of his contributions, including the Dr. Walter M. Booker, Sr. Innovation Award (1991), the Dr. Daniel D. Savage Science Award (1996), and Member of the Year (1998, 2001). He is also recipient of the ABC Award for Outstanding Achievement in Cardiovascular Medicine and will be featured in the 2005 ABC Calendar.



