



**Uniformed Services University**  
*of the Health Sciences*  
4301 Jones Bridge Road  
Bethesda, MD 20814-4799

Release No. 16-12-12

Dec. 12, 2016

**Contact:** Sarah Marshall, Office of  
External Affairs

**Email:** sarah.marshall@usuhs.edu

---

### **Dr. Richard W. Thomas Installed as Uniformed Services University's Sixth President**

**Bethesda, Md.** – During a ceremony steeped in tradition and academic pageantry, Dr. Richard W. Thomas was inaugurated as the sixth president of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) on Dec. 9.

Thomas was officially sworn in as the university's newest president in July, succeeding Dr. Charles Rice, who served as president from 2005-2016. Thomas is responsible for advising the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs and the four Surgeons General on a wide array of issues related to graduate health professions education and health care research.

Thomas said, first and foremost, he is committed to life-long service, having served as a physician, dentist, surgeon, commander, Soldier, Army general, and now a university president.

“As such, I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of so many through the leadership of a premier federal university,” he said. “A love of learning, a longing for discovery, a commitment to pursue the truth – these are the underpinnings of a great university. I find each of these here in abundance.”

Thomas also emphasized his commitment to enhancing the university's already eminent standing as a place where gifted scholars focus on research, on teaching, and mentoring the rising generation to become tomorrow's leaders in military medicine.

“This is our mission, and our mission is like no other university,” he said.

Supporting and working with the armed forces and their respective medical departments, he added, USU will lead the way to a new era in education, research, and health care.



The Honorable Peter Levine, performing the duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, presents the ceremonial mace to Dr. Richard W. Thomas, president of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, officially installing Thomas as the university's sixth leader. (Photo by Air Force SSgt. Stephanie Morris, Uniformed Services University)

“We are members of the finest medical team the world has ever seen. We represent the investment in trust our nation has made in health readiness. That’s exactly as it should be,” he said.

Thomas graduated from West Virginia University (WVU) in 1981. He is a graduate of the WVU School of Dentistry and received his Doctor of Medicine degree from the WVU School of Medicine in 1994. He earned a master’s degree in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College in 2006. He completed his internship at Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and residency in Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery at Madigan Army Medical Center, Fort Lewis, Washington.

Previously, Thomas held a faculty appointment as clinical associate professor at the University of Washington in Seattle, and served as adjunct faculty and staff surgeon at the Swedish Medical Center in Seattle and American Lake Veteran’s Administration Hospital in Tacoma. He currently serves as an American Academy of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery diplomate, and is an American College of Surgeons fellow. He is also a member of several professional associations, including the American Association for Physician Leadership, the American Dental Association, the American Medical Association, and the American Academy of Pain Medicine.

Prior to retiring from the Army in May 2016, as a Major General, his last assignment was Chief Medical Officer and Director of the Defense Health Agency Healthcare Operations Directorate. Prior to becoming USU president, he also served as the Commanding General of Western Regional Medical Command; Chief, U.S. Army Medical Corps and Senior Market Executive for TRICARE Puget Sound Multi-Service Market.

###

### **About the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences**

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, founded by an act of Congress in 1972, is the nation’s federal health sciences university and the academic heart of the Military Health System. USU students are primarily active duty uniformed officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Public Health Service who receive specialized education in tropical and infectious diseases, TBI and PTSD, disaster response and humanitarian assistance, global health, and acute trauma care. A large percentage of the university’s more than 5,500 physician and 1,000 advanced practice nursing alumni are supporting operations around the world, offering their leadership and expertise. USU also has graduate programs in biomedical sciences and public health committed to excellence in research, and in oral biology. The University’s research program covers a wide range of clinical and other topics important to both the military and public health. For more information about USU and its programs, visit [www.usuhs.edu](http://www.usuhs.edu).