



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

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Contact: Sarah Marshall, Office of
External Affairs

Email: sarah.marshall@usuhs.edu

Uniformed Services University Surgery Chair Dr. Kyle Potter Named 'Military Medicine Hero'

Bethesda, Md. – Army Col. (Dr). Benjamin “Kyle” Potter, Norman M. Rich Chair of the Uniformed Services University’s (USU) Department of Surgery and internationally recognized leader in combat casualty care, has been awarded the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine’s (HJF) Army Hero of Military Medicine Award. The annual award is bestowed upon medical professionals for their remarkable contributions to military medicine and for enhancing the lives of service members, veterans, their families, and civilians.

Potter, who has dedicated more than 20 years as an Army surgeon, will accept the award May 11 during a ceremony at the Washington National Cathedral in Washington, DC. The HJF awards ceremony will recognize the top researchers, practitioners, ambassadors, and champions of military medicine who demonstrate excellence in medical research and clinical care.

“It is a tremendous honor to be recognized by HJF with this award for what has truly been, throughout my entire career, a team effort across the clinical, educational and research fronts, including countless other surgeons and nurses, research collaborators and mentors such as Dean Elster and President Woodson - not to mention the love and support of my wife and family,” Potter said.

An orthopaedic surgeon, Potter has single-handedly operated on more U.S. war casualties with limb loss than any other military surgeon on active duty, having deployed three times in support of combat operations. Throughout his career, he has developed and advanced many cutting- edge techniques and programs to improve wounded warrior care, to include the advancement of targeted muscle reinnervation (TMR) surgery, where severed nerves are reattached to existing muscles to reduce post amputation pain and improve prosthetic control. Thanks to his efforts, TMR has become standard clinical practice for combat casualties with amputation and has become more accessible for individuals across the globe. His work has been revolutionary in improving the quality of life of countless current and future military beneficiaries with limb loss.

Potter also served as the Director for Surgery at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, where he led the expert surgical care of countless military beneficiaries, including more than 70 percent of war casualties returning from overseas. As a prominent leader within the Orthopaedic Residency program there, he has mentored and taught countless medical students, interns, residents and junior faculty. From 2019-2022, he served as the Consultant to the U.S. Army Surgeon General for Orthopaedics, ensuring the operational readiness of military orthopaedics, including the career development of more than 140 uniformed attendings and 100 residents. Currently, as Chair of Surgery at USU, Potter oversees a vast education, training, and research portfolio, including the university’s Surgical Critical Care

Initiative (SC2i), the Murtha Cancer Center Research Program, and the Center for Prostate Disease Research.

Potter has also published his research extensively, authoring or co-authoring more than 200 peer-reviewed publications, focusing much of his interest on trauma-related amputation techniques and outcomes, including osseointegration and targeted muscle reinnervation. He has also co-edited the 4th edition of the Atlas of Amputations and Limb Deficiencies for the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, and is at work on the 5th edition. His efforts have earned him numerous accolades, to include the Order of Military Medical Merit, a Master Clinician Award, and the U.S. Army Medical Command "A" Proficiency Designator.

"Dr. Potter epitomizes selfless service and dedication to our military, veterans and their families, and has made significant contributions to the Department of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and the nation as a whole," said USU President Dr. Jonathan Woodson. "Despite earning numerous awards or honors over the course of his career, he remains an incredibly humble man whose greatest reward is restoring the health and functionality of our wounded warriors through the application of his vast surgical skills and total commitment to each and every patient. He is singularly driven by his quest to deliver the best medical care possible to the most deserving patient populations – our military members, veterans, and their families."

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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. USU also has graduate programs in oral biology, biomedical sciences and public health committed to excellence in research. The University's research program covers a wide range of areas important to both the military and public health. For more information about USU and its programs, visit www.usuhs.edu.