

Dr. Norman Ellsworth McSwain Jr.

Dr. Norman Ellsworth McSwain, Jr., M.D., FACS, was a pioneer in the field of trauma medicine who helped establish emergency medical service (EMS) systems on a national level as well as an international level. His training emphasized rapid, immediate medical services to treat victims of traffic crashes, gunfire, stabbings and other life-threatening injuries before they arrived at a hospital. His work has saved countless lives. He was a highly regarded Professor of Surgery at Tulane University School of Medicine and Clinical Professor of Surgery at [Louisiana State University](#) and Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences. He was the Trauma Director of the Spirit of Charity (Level I) Trauma Center; Medical Director and Founder of PreHospital Trauma Life Support, Chairman of Tulane Medical Center Emergency Medicine Section and Section chief of Trauma/Critical Care at Tulane; Police Surgeon for the New Orleans Police Department and Medical Director for the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival for the past 30 years. Previous positions include Vice Chairman of the Department of Surgery at Tulane University School of Medicine and Residency Program Director for 15 years. He finished high school at Albertville High (1955) in Albertville, Alabama, earned a Bachelor of Science degree from The University of the South (1959) in Sewanee, Tennessee. He then returned to Alabama attending the University of Alabama School of Medicine (1963) to study medicine under Dr. Tinsley Harrison (Harrison's Textbook of Medicine) and Dr. Champ Lyons in surgery. Following graduation, he completed his internship in surgery at Bowman-Gray (currently Wake Forest University) School of Medicine (1965) in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, then joined the Air Force (Berry Plan) and under the tutelage of Dr. Kermit Vandenbos performing more than a thousand surgical procedures before he completed his residency in surgery at Emory University School of Medicine (1970) through Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia. He continued his experience in patient care as a partner in private practice with Dr. Harrison Rogers (who later became President of the American Medical Association) for three years in Atlanta. During his time in Atlanta he developed an interest in emergency medicine and trauma care while he was Medical Director of the Road Atlanta Race Track. He joined University of Kansas School of Medicine (1973) in Kansas City, as an Academic Associate Professor of Surgery. While at KUMC, he was Medical Director of the Kansas City Fire Department Paramedic Program (KARE), the Johnson County Kansas Paramedic Program (MED ACT), served as state-wide EMS Medical Director and developed a state-wide EMS system. He established a standardized curriculum and training for emergency medical technicians (EMTs) that was utilized throughout the state. An area of major importance he accomplished while at KUMC was securing a contract with the Department of Transportation to develop and implement a national curriculum for EMTs and EMT-Paramedics and the development of a national certification examination. When he left KUMC, one out of every five hundred Kansans (including the entire Kansas Highway Patrol) was trained as an EMT- Basic, 90% of the population was covered by paramedic quality care with response times within ten minutes. Dr. McSwain was recruited by Tulane University School of Medicine and Charity Hospital, considered to be one of the three most important trauma centers in the United States, in 1977. The city called on McSwain to continue his work developed in Kansas, including a similar protocol in New Orleans which helped boost Interim LSU Hospital to become a Level I trauma center. McSwain also began training city police in basic emergency medical and paramedic techniques. For the past 35 years, he made a point to care for severely injured [police officers](#) as the Police Surgeon for the New Orleans Police Department. McSwain's crowning achievement could be his worldwide impact on emergency trauma care. An American College of Surgeon (ACS) Fellow since 1973, Dr. McSwain began his involvement with the Committee on Trauma (COT) in 1975 through his work with the Kansas Committee on Trauma. Four years later, he was appointed to the national COT where he led both the Pre-Hospital Care Committee and the Advanced Trauma Life Support® Committee. He played a leading role on the team that revised the initial Hospital Resources Document, which evolved into the current COT Verification, Review, and Consultation Program for Hospitals. Over the next three decades, Dr. McSwain led the Louisiana Committee on Trauma, served on the task force for Operative Skills, was a liaison to the Board of Regents, and most recently, served as the liaison for the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT). In collaboration with NAEMT and COT, he founded PreHospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS). The methods developed are widely regarded as the world standard for trauma care outside hospitals. PHTLS has trained more than one million providers in 64 countries since the first course in New Orleans in 1983. As the champion of PHTLS and the NAEMT, his work set the stage for the modern version of Tactical Combat Casualty Care. Immediately following the active shooter disaster at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT, Dr. McSwain agreed to be a founding member of the Committee to Develop a National Policy to Increase Survival from Active Shooter and Intentional Mass Casualty Events. He brought the dedication, passion, and intellect for which he was famous to the Hartford Consensus deliberations. He fiercely advocated for an organized coordinated prehospital response which incorporated hemorrhage control by immediate bystander responders, a change in focus of the mission of law enforcement to include immediate stopping of life-threatening hemorrhage of victims, and an urgent response by emergency medical personnel to treat and transport trauma patients to the appropriate trauma hospitals. He recognized that time was a critical factor in patients who had massive bleeding. Dr. McSwain served the [US Air Force](#) where he earned the Air Force Commendation Medal. He was also a retired [US Navy](#) Captain, including serving in the Persian

Gulf on the USNS Comfort where he earned a Citation for Outstanding Performance as a General Surgeon during Operation Desert Storm from the US Naval Forces Central Command (1991). He was board certified in general surgery; certified by the National Registry of EMT's as an EMT-Paramedic; certified as a hyperbaric physician by the International Society of Aquatic medicine; a member of the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma; the American College of Emergency Physicians; the American Surgical Association; and the Association for Academic Surgery; a member of the Committee on Tactical Combat Medical Care and the Trauma and Injury Committee of the Defense Health Board. He was one of the founders of the Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma (EAST), the first (and only) ad hoc chairman of Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS). He sat on the Editorial Board for Journal of Trauma, Comprehensive Therapy, Emergency Medicine, Emergency Care Quarterly, Prehospital and Disaster Medicine, and Trauma Chronicle; and served as an Editor or Editorial Consultant for six separate publications. His Tulane Trauma Educational Institute trains EMT's at Tulane University, runs the Rural Trauma Development Course throughout Louisiana, currently trains Navy Special Warfare Medics and SEALs. He developed the McSwain Trauma Education Project, an endowed education for EMS providers who cannot afford to travel to the large EMS educational programs for continuing education. An inspiration to several generations of trauma and emergency care professionals, Dr. McSwain is the only physician in the history of ACS to receive all five major trauma awards: in 1989, he won the Meritorious Service Award from the Advanced Trauma Life Support's Committee on Trauma, in 1998, he won the National Safety Council's Surgeon's Award for Service to Safety, in 2000, he won the Committee on Trauma's Millennium Commitment Award, in 2001, McSwain was named both a Scudder Orator and won the Committee on Trauma's Meritorious Achievement Award for state or provincial chairs. He has earned every honor the ACS COT and NAEMT bestows and received the NAEMT award that now bears his name-the Dr. Norman E. McSwain, Jr., PHTLS Leadership Award. In addition, his awards include the Award of Excellence from the Kansas Emergency Medical Training Association (1977); the President's Leadership Award from the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (1980); the NAEMT "Deke" Farrington Award of Excellence (1983); President's Award from the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (1984 & 2000); the Distinguished Achievement Award from the American Trauma Society (1993); the Virginia S. Furrow Award from Tulane University School of Medicine (1998); the Rocco Morando Award for Lifetime Achievement in EMS from the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (2002); AARP the Magazine Award (2005); the National Public Health Hero Award from the University of California-Berkeley's School of Public Health (2006); the Spirit of Charity Award (2008); Distinguished Lectureship Award from the Society of Trauma Nurses (2008); the CAPT Frank K. Butler, Jr. Award for Outstanding Contributions to Tactical Combat Casualty Care (2008); and the Order of Military Medical Merit (2012) among numerous other awards and achievements. Dr. McSwain has co-authored 37 books, and 420 journal articles; authored 116 book chapters, delivered 900 professional presentations and earned more than 50 professional awards. As a certified scuba diver since the early '70s, he was one of the original founders of the International Society of Aquatic Medicine (ISAM), and logged more than 1800 dives. He was an avid Alabama football fan. He is survived by his daughter, Merry Johnston McSwain, his sister, Ann McSwain Kightlinger and her husband Neal, his niece and nephew, Janelle K. Eason, David Kightlinger (Shannan). Services for Dr. McSwain will be held at Lake Lawn Metairie Funeral Home, 5100 Pontchartrain Blvd. in New Orleans. Visitations will be on Saturday, August 15th from 3:00PM to 7:00PM and again on Sunday, August 16th from 10:00AM to 2:00PM. A memorial service will be held in the chapel at 2:00PM. Interment will follow in Metairie Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Norman E. McSwain, Jr., MD, FACS, Endowed Trauma Fund, c/o Tulane University School of Medicine, Department of Surgery, 1430 Tulane Avenue SL-22, New Orleans, LA, 70122 and/or to CaringBridge.com. To view and sign the guest book, visit www.lakelawnmetairie.com.

Funeral Home**Lake Lawn Met Funeral Home**

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