

Orlando C. Kirton, MD, FACS, FCCM, FCCP

Ludwig J. Pyrtek, MD, Chair in Surgery
Hartford Hospital, University of Connecticut School of Medicine

JNMA is featuring a series on African Americans holding endowed chairs in American medical schools in recognition of the outstanding accomplishments of these very special people. These chairs are usually funded from generous benefactors and may include grateful patients or parents of patients (children), executives from the business world and industry, foundations, anonymous donors and even faculty members. The common denominator amongst these philanthropists is to recognize the institution for the opportunities afforded them in some way as a way of "giving back" to insure that the school can continue to recruit the most talented individuals to the institution.

The chair is named for Ludwig J. Pyrtek, MD, an esteemed surgeon at Hartford Hospital, who was devoted to the care of his patients and was an outstanding educator within his chosen field. A unique aspect of the chair is that its income is not used to support the salary of the director but is used to enhance the education activities of the department, such as the purchasing of state-of-the-art teaching devices, support of surgical resident research activities, educational travel for residents and honoraria for nationally/internationally known clinicians/scientists to speak at grand rounds.

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Dr. Orlando C. Kirton received his undergraduate degree from Brown University in Providence, RI, and his medical degree—cum laude—from Harvard. He served his internship and residency in surgery at SUNY and then completed fellowships in surgical critical care and surgery of trauma at Jackson Memorial Hospital, Department of Surgery, University of Miami School of Medicine in Florida. At the University of Miami, he held the academic rank of associate professor of surgery, served as the director of the trauma intensive care unit at Jackson Memorial Hospital and served as the interim director of the trauma service.

In addition to being the Ludwig J. Pyrtek, MD, chair in surgery, Kirton holds the titles of director of the department of surgery, chief of the division of general surgery and associate director of the surgical intensive care unit. Since being in this position, Kirton has revitalized the surgery department, creating the divisions of bariatric surgery, thoracic surgery and surgical oncology. He was a principal architect in the introduction of robotic surgery at Hartford Hospital and was instrumental in the growth and development of endovascular surgery within the division of vascular surgery. He has shepherded the



inclusion of highly skilled mid-level practitioners into the practice schema who work in tandem with the residents and attending surgeons on the surgical floors and intensive care units.

Kirton's current academic rank in the University of Connecticut School of Medicine is that of professor of surgery. He is the vice chairman of the department of surgery and associate program director of the integrated general surgery residency program at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine.

Kirton is a diplomat of the American Board of Surgery with additional qualification in surgical critical care. He is a fellow of the American College of Surgeons, the American College of Critical Care Medicine and the American College of Chest Physicians. Kirton has served as president of the surgical section of the National Medical Association and on the boards of directors for the Society of Critical Care Medicine, the Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma and the National Medical Association. He has written extensively and has published articles and monologues in peer-reviewed, refereed journals as well as numerous chapters for surgical texts. He is a nationally known speaker and has lectured on a variety of critical care, education and trauma topics.