

Dr. Keith C. Ferdinand appointed to the Gerald S. Berenson Endowed Chair in Preventive Cardiology

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Dr. Keith C. Ferdinand, a distinguished cardiologist at Tulane University School of Medicine, has been appointed to the Gerald S. Berenson Endowed Chair in Preventive Cardiology.

The Chair is named for Dr. Gerald S. Berenson, who is internationally recognized for his clinical research on the early natural history of arteriosclerosis. Berenson was the principal investigator of the Bogalusa Heart Study, a long-term community study of heart disease risk factors that begin in childhood. This study, which is based in Bogalusa, Louisiana, is one of the most important biracial studies in the world on the natural history of heart diseases. Berenson passed away November 22 at the age of 96.

Ferdinand has been heavily involved in many national organizations concerned with public health, including the Association of Black Cardiologists, of which he was the former chair and chief science officer, the American Society of Hypertension, of which he was a board member, and the Healthy Heart Community Prevention Program, a cardiovascular risk program targeting African American and other high-risk populations. He is also a past chair of the National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, which provides the leadership and encouragement for collaboration among more than 65 organizations.

Ferdinand focuses largely on cardiac risk factor evaluation and control, including hypertension and hyperlipidemia, especially in communities of racial and ethnic minorities. He has had over 100 manuscripts published and has a strong media presence. His passion for patient-care is highlighted in his commitment to non-profit work and community service. In 2015 he was inducted into the Association of University Cardiologists.

"As a child of the Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans, my professional life's goal has always been to serve this community, and Tulane University is an important component of the city," Ferdinand says of the new chair appointment. He adds, "I deeply appreciate the consideration and honor."