

First responders clinic renamed to honor Dr. Norman McSwain

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City and healthcare officials hold a ceremony to rename the first responders clinic The McSwain First Responders Clinic. McSwain's daughter, Merry McSwain (left of the sign), said her late father would be honored to know that his legacy will live on as students and doctors follow his footsteps in caring for others. Paraphrasing her dad's favorite saying, she hopes clinic staff will continue to do "something for the good of mankind" each day for generations to come. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

For years during Carnival, it was a right of passage for police officers across the city heralding the official beginning of parade season — the annual vitamin B12 shot from Dr. Norman McSwain, surgeon for New Orleans Police Department and Tulane

University professor of surgery.

The vitamin shot was intended to keep officers healthy as they protected revelers, but it was also a sign that the internationally renowned trauma surgeon had their backs during their busiest, most-trying shifts of the year.

As officers headed into their first Mardi Gras in three decades without [McSwain, who died in July](#), the Tulane Health System, the Tulane University School of Medicine and city officials dedicated the police and first responders clinic McSwain founded in his honor.

[The McSwain First Responders Clinic](#), located at 275 LaSalle St. within the Tulane Multispecialty Clinic, offers walk-in appointments for law enforcement, fire and emergency responders three days a week with newly expanded hours. The clinic treats an average of 50 patients per month.

“No matter where in the city he was needed, he was there — always,” said New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, adding that he hopes the new name inspires both doctors and first-responders to emulate McSwain’s legendary dedication to the city and his profession.

Michael Harrison, New Orleans Police Department superintendent, recalled McSwain’s service to first responders as trauma director for Charity Hospital of New Orleans. Whenever an officer was injured on the job, McSwain was one of the first to come to the rescue, he said.

“I can’t begin to tell you how many surgeries Dr. McSwain performed on these officers, how many bones he reattached, how many officers he put back together who came in broken,” he said. “For my 24 years, I can remember that no matter what happened, when we were on the way to the hospital, the only thing that brought us comfort was someone saying, ‘Dr. McSwain has been notified — he will meet you there.’”

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Mitch Landrieu, New Orleans mayor