



Darrell G. Kirch, MD

Darrell G. Kirch, MD, is president and CEO of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). Founded in 1876 and based in Washington, D.C., the AAMC is a not-for-profit association representing all 151 accredited U.S. and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools; nearly 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems, including 51 Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers; and more than 80 academic societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC represents more than 173,000 full-time faculty members, 89,000 medical students, 129,000 resident physicians, and 60,000 graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in the biomedical sciences.

A distinguished physician, educator, and medical scientist, Dr. Kirch's career spans all aspects of academic medicine and includes leadership positions at two medical schools and academic health systems, as well as at the National Institutes of Health. He speaks and publishes widely on the need for transformation in the nation's health care system and how academic medicine can lead change across medical education, biomedical research, and patient care. He has been a champion for interprofessional education and practice, helping establish the Interprofessional Education Collaborative and serving as co-chair of the Campaign for Action's Strategic Advisory Committee for the Future of Nursing. Dr. Kirch also advocates on the importance of restoring and preserving the well-being of the nation's health professions workforce and is currently co-chair of the National Academy of Medicine Action Collaborative on Clinician Well-Being and Resilience.

Dr. Kirch assumed the position of AAMC president in July 2006 following six years as senior vice president for health affairs, dean of the college of medicine, and CEO of the Milton S. Hershey Medical Center at The Pennsylvania State University, where he and his leadership team are credited with revitalizing the institution and guiding it through a period of educational innovation and major growth in clinical activity and research funding. Before joining Penn State, Dr. Kirch held several leadership positions at the Medical College of Georgia from 1994 to 2000, including serving as dean of the medical school, senior vice president for clinical activities, and dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

Before becoming AAMC president, Dr. Kirch was selected as chair-elect of the association and co-chaired the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the accreditation body for medical schools. He also served as chair of the AAMC Council of Deans Administrative Board and chair of the American Medical Association Section on Medical Schools.

As a psychiatrist and clinical neuroscientist, Dr. Kirch conducted research on the biological basis of and clinical treatments for severe neuropsychiatric disorders. Following the completion of his residency training at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, he joined the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in Bethesda, Maryland, where he was named acting scientific director in 1993. His NIMH contributions were recognized when he received the Outstanding Service Medal of the United States Public Health Service.

Dr. Kirch is a member of several professional societies, including the American Psychiatric Association, American College of Psychiatrists — where he is currently a member of its Board of Regents — and American Medical Association. He has chaired the Washington Higher Education Secretariat and served on the American Council on Education Board of Directors. Dr. Kirch is also a member of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Special Medical Advisory Group. He was elected to the National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine) in 2007. In 2014, the American Psychiatric Association named Dr. Kirch a Distinguished Life Fellow and in 2018, the Arnold P. Gold Foundation honored him with the Gold Humanism in Medicine Medal.

A native of Denver, Dr. Kirch received both his BA and MD degrees from the University of Colorado, which in 2002 presented him with its Silver and Gold Alumni Award. In addition to his many leadership roles and active career as a clinician and researcher, he has held medical faculty positions at Penn State, the Medical College of Georgia, and George Washington University. And as a prolific writer and public speaker, Dr. Kirch has published more than 150 articles and book chapters and made numerous presentations to medical, educational, scientific, and advocacy organizations.