

James Edward Eckenhoff



James Edward Eckenhoff was born on April 2, 1915 in Easton, Maryland. He attended Transylvania College and the University of Kentucky before going on to attend the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in 1941. There, he decided on specializing in anesthesiology. Throughout his long career, Dr. Eckenhoff made considerable contributions to the field of anesthesia in particular and to medicine in general.

After twenty-one years at the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Eckenhoff came to Northwestern in 1966. In addition to joining the Medical School faculty as professor, Dr. Eckenhoff also organized an autonomous Department of Anesthesia, and soon thereafter, became Director of the second Anesthesia Research Center. During his tenure as director, many reforms and innovations were implemented, primarily through the establishment of the new Research Center. Here, residents were trained in anesthesiology and conducted research. These changes helped the department raise its standards, making it one of the better departments in the United States.

After Medical School Dean Richard H. Young resigned from his position in 1970, the Medical School looked for a successor from within, appointing Dr. Eckenhoff. He instantly instigated a series of institutional advances, based on the recommendations of a Reorganization Committee that he

had headed prior to his role as Dean.

During Dr. Eckenhoff's thirteen year tenure as Dean (1970-1983), the Medical School experienced a massive facelift, including the construction and/or acquisition of eight different buildings and the establishment of affiliations with other hospitals. Administrative advances were also quite noticeable, particularly in the creation of Faculty and Student Senates, the installation of an Office of Development, and the appointment of a Director of Medical Education. Among the academic advances were the creation of the following programs: a M.D.-Ph.D. program in conjunction with the Graduate School, a Master of Public Health program, a Baccalaureate program in Nursing Education, a section on general medicine in the Department of Medicine, a wholly elective curriculum for the fourth year students, and annual visiting professorships to honor distinguished alumni. Additionally, funding more than doubled from 1971 to 1979.

Dr. Eckenhoff retired from his position as Dean in 1983. He served as president of the McGaw Medical Center from 1980 to 1985, and was named a distinguished Veterans Affairs physician in 1984. He passed away on November 25, 1996 at the age of 81. The medical school named an endowed professorship the James E. Eckenhoff Professorship in Anesthesiology.

NOTABLE FACTS: Dr. Eckenhoff served as Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Anesthesiology* from 1958-1962. His book [Introduction to Anesthesiology](#) continues to be the standard text for beginning students in the field.

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