We make a living by what we get,
we make a life by what we give.

— Winston Churchill
William E. Davis, MD

William E. Davis, MD, is a life-long Missourian, whose medical training and career in otolaryngology is firmly rooted at the University of Missouri. After completion of his medical school and residency training at MU, Dr. Davis joined the Division of Otolaryngology as a faculty member. He assumed the position of Division Chief in 1980. During his tenure, he developed the division from a fledgling group of general otolaryngologists to a group of subspecialty-trained surgeons and research specialists. His warm leadership style fostered a memorable educational environment for over three decades of graduates. Dr. Davis has been a leader in the field not only locally, but nationally as well. He has been an active member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology, having served on its Board of Directors. He received the Distinguished Service Award from the AAO-HNS.

From the foundations established by Dr. Davis, otolaryngology at MU has grown from a division of general surgery to an autonomous department. In 2004, the William E. Davis, MD, Distinguished Professorship in Otolaryngology and Head and Neck Surgery was created to honor his contributions and to support faculty who uphold his legacy by fostering the department’s mission through excellent patient care, education, and research.
University of Missouri
Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery
Proudly training physicians since 1970
"My entire training and early Otolaryngology experience included Bill as a positive influence. He was a resident when I was a student at Mizzou and helped stimulate my interest in ENT. He was my senior resident and then young attending when I was a resident and my close friend and colleague in my early years of practice. Thanks Bill for the friendship and all the great memories!"

— Regan Thomas, MD

"Dr. Bill Davis has been the heart and soul of the residency program. His legacy is one of integrity, gentlemanliness, compassion for the patient, concern for the residents and faculty, and building a nationally recognized program. What a role model is he!"

— G. Richard Holt, MD, MSE, MPH, MABE
Residents and attending physicians teaching and learning at weekly Grand Rounds.

Dr. Teresa Lever instructs a student in her research lab.

A Day in the Life of Otolaryngology

Professor Christine Seitz and voice students demonstrating how to mark the voice at the MU Voice Symposium and Vocal Arts Festival.

A resident learns to manage epistaxis during a simulation session.

Dr. Robert Zitsch instructs a resident during a neck dissection.

Residents and attending physicians teaching and learning at weekly Grand Rounds.

Young cochlear implant patient awaits to hear for the first time.

Either at pitch or octave down (men can employ falsetto)
Jane Cooper, APRN, evaluates the ear of a young patient.

Residents and attending physicians teaching and learning at weekly Grand Rounds.

One of Dr. Lever’s students working in the research lab.

Dr. Jeff Jorgensen screens the mouth for oropharyngeal cancer.

Dr. Matthew Page counsels a patient regarding sinus inflammation.

Young cochlear implant patient awaits to hear for the first time.
The University of Missouri Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery continues to be strong with regard to our missions of service, research, and education. We continue this tradition established several decades ago when we were a division of the Department of Surgery. We have progressively embraced a clinical service model that is sub-specialty focused, as most of our faculty have either fellowship training or a focused area of clinical expertise. We offer the entire otolaryngologic spectrum of services, including allergy, rhinology, pediatric otolaryngology, otology and neurotology, facial plastic and reconstructive surgery, laryngology, and head and neck/microvascular reconstruction. Our hospital was named as one of the top 50 otolaryngology centers in the nation by US News & World Report for 2012-13.

Our residency education program is among the strongest at the University of Missouri. We are approved to match two — alternating three — residency positions each year. Our residents perform exceptionally well each year on the otolaryngology training examination and board certification exam. Alumni have established practices throughout the United States.
The department is committed to research as we attempt to more thoroughly understand and manage the diseases and disorders we see in our specialty. However, research funding has been increasingly difficult to secure. Nevertheless, we have maintained steady research and scholarly activity, with a strategic plan to further grow. Over the last five years, our faculty have received a total of 17 grants, 15 of which were from extramural sources. In addition, we have produced over 30 peer-reviewed publications, four book chapters, and multiple poster/oral presentations at national meetings. We have a dedicated research coordinator, who facilitates administrative and logistic aspects of research projects. We are also proud to have recently recruited Teresa Lever, PhD, who conducts NIH funded basic and translational research involving swallowing disorders. She will no doubt strengthen our research program in all regards.

As you know, funding for higher education has become a major concern. In Missouri, state appropriations for higher education account for less than 5% of our department budget. We are therefore required to be continually innovative and resourceful to support our missions, which are largely funded through clinical revenues and philanthropic donations. Our two departmental endowments, the Jerry W. Templer, MD, Faculty Scholar in Otolaryngology and the William E. Davis, MD, Distinguished Professor in Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery are becoming increasingly important to drive excellent resident education and research programs. We are grateful for all of the financial support we have received for our endowments in the past as well as your continued support in the future.

Robert P. Zitsch III, MD
William E. Davis Professor and Chair
We would like to recognize the generosity of donors during this capital campaign.

Friends: $1 - $4999
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Presidential Circle: $30,000+

Lifetime Giving to the Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery
$10,000  Department Benefactor
$20,000  Legacy Assistant Professor
$50,000  Legacy Associate Professor
$100,000  Legacy Professor

William E. Davis, MD
An old man, going a lone highway,
Came, at the evening, cold and gray,
To a chasm, vast, and deep, and wide,
Through which was flowing a sullen tide.
The old man crossed in the twilight dim;
The sullen stream had no fear for him;
But he turned, when safe on the other side,
And built a bridge to span the tide.

“Old man,” said a fellow pilgrim, near,
“You are wasting strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the ending day;
You never again will pass this way;
You’ve crossed the chasm, deep and wide –
Why build you this bridge at the evening tide?”

The builder lifted his old gray head:
“Good friend, in the path I have come,” he said,
“There followeth after me today,
A youth, whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm, that has been naught to me,
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be.
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him.”

Will Allen Dromgoole