



# LOUISIANA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

9521 BROOKLINE AVENUE • BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70809-1431  
(225) 928-0026 • FAX (225) 923-1004 • WWW.LHAONLINE.ORG

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**CONTACT:** LHA Communication Department

[pr@lhaonline.org](mailto:pr@lhaonline.org); 225-928-0026

### Louisiana Hospital Association Honors Elrod as Lifetime Member

Baton Rouge — The Louisiana Hospital Association (LHA) recently honored **James K. “Jim” Elrod, FACHE**, as a Lifetime Honorary Member of the Association in recognition of his substantial contributions to the hospital industry and his community. He was the longest tenured hospital administrator in the nation, having served as president and CEO of Willis-Knighton Health System in Shreveport for more than 56 years.

“It has been a privilege and an honor of a lifetime to both lead and serve as president and CEO of Willis-Knighton Health System for more than five decades,” said Elrod. “Never as a boy from Texas did I dream I would find my promised land in the piney woods of Northwest Louisiana and together with legions of excellent doctors, nurses and support staff grow Willis-Knighton to the level of prominence in healthcare it enjoys in the region and beyond.”

Elrod began serving on the Association’s Board of Trustees in 1975, served as chair of the board from 1976 to 1977, and served as an ex-officio board member until last year. In addition, he served as board chair of the LHA Trust Funds from 1979 to 1995.

“Serving the hospital industry for more than half a century, Jim Elrod’s dedication to healthcare is unmatched,” said LHA President and CEO Paul A. Salles. “His leadership has been instrumental to the Association, and we are grateful for his commitment to improving healthcare in Louisiana.”

“James K. Elrod is a visionary and an exceptional leader. For more than five decades, he has made unparalleled contributions to healthcare in Northwest Louisiana and beyond,” said Jaf Fielder, president and CEO of Willis-Knighton Health System. “He leaves a lasting legacy at the local, state and national levels through his commitment to advancing the health and well-being of all patients and growing Willis-Knighton from a small community hospital to one of the largest healthcare systems in Louisiana.”

In addition to making a difference in Louisiana, Elrod has been active in the healthcare field nationally. He served on the American Hospital Association (AHA) Board of Trustees from 1985 to 1988 and on the AHA Regional Policy Board for Region 7, which includes Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas and Louisiana, from 1980 to 1992, serving as chair from 1985 to 1988.

“Jim is a legend in Louisiana, and I extend my congratulations to him for being honored as a Lifetime Member of the Louisiana Hospital Association,” said Rick Pollack, AHA president and CEO. “Jim led Willis-Knighton for a record 56 years, taking it from a small community hospital to one of the largest health systems in Louisiana that provides essential services to patients. Jim’s service to his patients and communities is immeasurable and his influence will be felt in our field for years to come.”

### About the Louisiana Hospital Association

Established in 1926, the Louisiana Hospital Association is a non-profit organization representing hospitals and healthcare provider groups across the state. The mission of the LHA is to support its members through advocacy, education and services. For more information, visit the LHA website at [www.lhaonline.org](http://www.lhaonline.org).

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### Download Photos:

- [Elrod Receiving Award from Salles \(pictured left\) and Fielder \(pictured right\)](#)
- [Elrod’s Headshot](#)