

Walter J. Pories, MD, FACS

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Professor Pories is Professor of Surgery, Biochemistry and Kinesiology at East Carolina University (ECU). He received his MD with Honor at the University of Rochester where he also completed his surgical training in general and cardio-thoracic surgery. Following his appointments at the University of Rochester and Case Western Reserve, he became the founding Chairman of Surgery at ECU (1977 – 1990). He is currently the Director of the Metabolic Surgery Research Group at ECU.

Dr. Pories' research interests have been in nutrition, pediatric and bariatric surgery. His research interests included the first report that zinc is not only an essential element for plants but also animals. He described the role of the element in wound healing, development and the growth of cancers. During these studies he participated in the fortification of animal feeds as well as the addition of trace elements to parenteral and alimentary formulations. He was also the first to delineate the full and durable remission of type 2 diabetes following the gastric bypass operation. To improve the outcomes from bariatric surgery, he founded the Surgical Review Corporation that developed the international Bariatric Surgery Centers of Excellence Program as well as developing the BOLD database that led to a reduction of the 90 day mortality in the US from about 10% to 0.3%. He was also the first to develop a postgraduate curriculum for graduate surgical education, published through four editions.

Dr. Pories' current research interest is the molecular explanation why type 2 diabetes clears within a matter of days following bariatric surgery. His group has had uninterrupted funding from the NIH for over three decades. He served as President of the Society for Environmental Health and Geochemistry, the Association of Program Directors in Surgery, the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery, as the 2nd Vice President of the American College of Surgeons and Vice President of the Southern Surgical Association as well as editor-in-chief and associate editor of several journals.

He retired from the US Army with the rank of Colonel after 24 years of service with the Legion of Merit. He also received a Presidential Citation for the performance of the regiment under his command in the first Gulf War.