

**George Nicholas Verne, Interim Dean, College of Medicine,  
University of Tennessee**



Dr. George Nicholas Verne, a native of upstate New York, earned his Bachelor of Science in Biology summa cum laude from Le Moyne College in Syracuse and his medical degree from SUNY Upstate Medical University. He completed his internal medicine residency at Albany Medical Center and his Gastroenterology Fellowship at the University of Florida in Gainesville, where he was an NIH T32 basic research fellow.

Dr. Verne is an internationally recognized physician-scientist whose research focuses on gastrointestinal molecular physiology, epigenetic regulation, neuroplasticity, and mechanisms underlying intestinal permeability. For more than 25 years, he has

served as principal investigator on NIH R01 and VA Merit Review awards and is a standing member of an NIH and Veterans Administration study sections. His scholarship includes more than 100 peer-reviewed publications in journals such as Gastroenterology, Gut, and the Journal of Clinical Investigation.

Across more than three decades in academic medicine, Dr. Verne has served as a division chief, GI fellowship program director, department chair, health-system chief medical officer, and senior associate dean. He chaired the Department of Medicine at Tulane University and served as chief medical officer for HCA at Tulane University Health System in New Orleans. Since 2019, he has held the Lemuel W. Diggs Chair and has served as Chair of Medicine at the University of Tennessee College of Medicine, where he also serves as senior associate dean for statewide operations and strategy and executive director of the Digestive Disease Center.

During his tenure at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Dr. Verne led a statewide academic enterprise encompassing 23 departments, approximately 1,100 faculty members, and partnerships with seven health systems. Under his leadership, the

college achieved full eight-year LCME reaccreditation, strengthened student outcomes with 100% Step 1 and Step 2 pass rates, expanded statewide clinical education for medical and PA students, advanced research growth that contributed to UTHSC's Carnegie R1 designation in 2025, developed new community and philanthropic initiatives, and secured a \$25 million state appropriation for a new gross anatomy laboratory.

Dr. Verne's servant-leadership approach is grounded in listening, transparency, and accountability. He considers how decisions will affect faculty, staff, students, trainees, patients, and partners; builds consensus around shared priorities; and creates the conditions in which people and programs can thrive. His honors include election as a Master of the American College of Physicians, Fellowship in the American Gastroenterological Association, and the AGA Masters Award for outstanding achievement in digestive sciences. He recently completed a two-year term as president of the American Neurogastroenterology and Motility Society and currently serves as director of the ANMS Institute.