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August 2021

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Welcome, Class of 2025!



2021 WHITE COAT CEREMONY | The freshman class donned the symbol of the medical profession and recited the medical student oath in a virtual ceremony on August 6. They were welcomed by college leaders and faculty advisors from the seven academic houses (pictured below; click on the group photo for details). Read more about the ceremony and some of the amazing members of the Class of 2025 in the [UAMS Newsroom](#).



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Leadership Appointments

DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS



William J. Steinbach, M.D., has been appointed Chair of the Department of **Pediatrics** and Associate Dean for Child Health in our college and Pediatrician-in-Chief for **Arkansas Children's**, effective January 15. Dr. Steinbach currently serves as the Samuel L. Katz Distinguished Professor of Pediatrics, Chief of the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases, and Vice Chair for Research in the Department of Pediatrics at Duke University.

He is also Co-Director of Basic Research for the Duke Transplant Center and Medical Director of the Children's Clinical Research Unit. He is a Professor of Molecular Genetics and Microbiology and has also served since last October as Interim Chief of Pediatric Transplant and Cellular Therapy.

"We are thrilled to have Dr. Steinbach join UAMS as we work with Arkansas Children's to provide world-class pediatric care and improve the health of children across Arkansas," said Executive Vice Chancellor and Dean **Susan Smyth, M.D., Ph.D.** "Bill brings exceptional leadership experience in pediatric clinical care, education and research – the key areas that together help us ensure a brighter future for Arkansas' children."

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Elena Ambrogini, M.D., Ph.D., has been appointed Director of the Division of **Endocrinology and Metabolism** in the Department of **Internal Medicine**. A faculty member since 2015, Dr. Ambrogini is an Associate Professor in the division, a staff endocrinologist and researcher for the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System (CAVHS), and a researcher with the UAMS Center for Osteoporosis and Metabolic Bone Diseases and the Center for Musculoskeletal Disease Research.

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New Faculty

Editor's note: These are some of the many faculty members joining the College of Medicine this summer and fall. We will continue to introduce new faculty colleagues in the months ahead.



Kevan Beth Meadors, M.D., has joined the Department of **Emergency Medicine** as an Assistant Professor.

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Meredith Von Dohlen, M.D., has joined the Department of **Emergency Medicine** as an Assistant Professor.

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Elizabeth Eoff, M.D., has joined the Department of **Geriatrics** as an Assistant Professor.

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Rajshekhar Kore, Ph.D., a researcher in the Department of Internal Medicine, Division of **Cardiovascular Medicine**, has joined the faculty as an Instructor.
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Jinendra Satiya, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Assistant Professor and transplant hepatologist in the Division of **Gastroenterology**.
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Jason Petitjean, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **General Internal Medicine**.
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Charles Lavender, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Instructor and Chief Resident in the Division of **General Internal Medicine**.
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Lauren Taylor, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Instructor and Chief Resident in the Division of **General Internal Medicine**.
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Zachary Tilley, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Instructor and Chief Resident in the Division of **General Internal Medicine**.
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Samer Ahmad Al Hadidi, M.D., M.S., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Assistant Professor and myeloma specialist in the **Hematology/Oncology** Division.

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Jacob Leffert, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Assistant Professor and hospitalist in the **Hematology/Oncology** Division.

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Nishanth Thalambedu, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Assistant Professor and hospitalist in the **Hematology/Oncology** Division.

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Kelsey Besett, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Hospital Medicine**.

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Marina Joseph, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Hospital Medicine**.

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John "Charlie" Kincaid, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Palliative Medicine**.

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Skye Miner, Ph.D., will join the Department of **Medical Humanities and Bioethics** as an Assistant Professor on September 1.
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Harshad Ladha, M.D., M.P.H., has joined the Department of **Neurology** as an Assistant Professor.
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Hillary Williams, M.D., has joined the Department of **Neurology** as an Assistant Professor.
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Alireza Ghaffarieh, M.D., has joined the Department of **Ophthalmology** as an Assistant Professor and Director of **Ophthalmic Pathology Services**.
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Patrick Fraley, M.D., has joined the Department of **Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery** as an Associate Professor.
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Jeffrey Kirsch, M.D., has joined the Department of **Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery** as an Associate Professor.
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Jon Bos, Psy.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Associate Professor in the Section of **Pediatric Psychology**.

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Abdelrahman Fouda, Pharm.D., Ph.D., has joined the Department of **Pharmacology and Toxicology** as an Assistant Professor.

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Huiliang Zhang, Ph.D., has joined the Department of **Pharmacology and Toxicology** as an Assistant Professor.

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Chrystal Fullen, Psy.D., has joined the Department of **Psychiatry** as an Assistant Professor.

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Lindsey Roberts, Ph.D., has joined the Department of **Psychiatry** as an Assistant Professor.

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Prashanth Reddy, M.D., has joined the Department of **Radiology** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Neuroradiology**.

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Recent Grants



HPV CANCER VACCINE | A \$3.6 million grant renewal from the National Cancer Institute will fund phase 2 clinical trials of the breakthrough vaccine for HPV-caused cancers developed at UAMS by **Mayumi Nakagawa, M.D., Ph.D.**, bringing total funding for the pioneering work to just over \$10 million.

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HEALTHY EATING TO PREVENT OBESITY, CANCER | **Taren Swindle, Ph.D.**, received a \$3.1 million R37 MERIT Award from the National Cancer Institute to lead a new effort to reduce cancer by addressing eating habits in early childcare and education settings in Arkansas and Louisiana.

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[PHONE APP TO PREVENT RELAPSE](#) | **Andrew James, Ph.D.**, is the Principal Investigator on a \$2.5 million grant from the National Institute on Drug Use to develop and test the effectiveness of a cell phone app to prevent relapse in people receiving medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorder.

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[Behavioral Health & Trauma Resources](#) | The Blue & You Foundation awarded \$1.2 million to UAMS to develop and sustain the Arkansas Trauma Resource Initiative for Schools, led by **Nikki Edge, Ph.D.**; and \$750,000 to support AR-Connect, the free, round-the-clock service for Arkansans in urgent need of behavioral health care overseen by the **Psychiatric Research Institute**.

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Extramural Awards

Congratulations to College of Medicine faculty members who received new extramural grants in July. This list, courtesy of the Office of the Executive Associate Dean for Research, excludes clinical trials and awards under \$10,000, as well as grants we have previously reported and those highlighted above.

Jill Fussell, M.D., Department of **Pediatrics**, LEND Award, (7/1/2021-6/30/2026), \$713,466.

Erika Santos Horta, M.D., Department of **Neurology**, NRG Oncology Foundation, NRG-BN007, (8/6/2021-8/5/2022), \$55,286.

Lu Huang, Ph.D., Department of Microbiology and Immunology, American Lung Association, Deciphering trained immunity in lung resident macro, (7/1/2021-6/30/2022), \$50,000.

Hakan Paydak, M.D., Department of Internal Medicine, Medtronic Foundation Award, (7/1/2021-7/1/2022), \$10,000.

Edward Yeh, M.D., Department of Internal Medicine, Arkansas Research Alliance, ARA Scholar, (7/1/2021 – 6/30/2024), \$500,000.

Intramural Grants



Congratulations to the 2021 recipients of Arkansas Children's Research Institute/Arkansas Biosciences Institute Postgraduate Research Awards: **Adam Corken, Ph.D.**; **Tiffany Miles, Ph.D.**; and **Rajikha Raja, Ph.D.** The awards include funding of up to \$30,000 over a two-year period.

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Accolades



Have you read the latest *Accolades* from Dean Smyth? The weekly email highlights recent honors and accomplishments of COM faculty, staff, residents and students. You can also [read Accolades here](#). If you know someone who deserves a shout-out, send your ideas to [COM Internal Communications](#).

UAMS team members and students named in Accolades this month:

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Manish Adhikari | J. Reed Gardner | Amanda Pangle |
| Monroe Albertson | Molly Gathright | Cam Patterson |
| Iad Alhallak | James Graham | Eric Porter |
| Lee Archer | Lawrence Greiten | Arpan Prabhu |
| Tim Atkinson | Laura Guidry-Grimes | Brian Reemtsen |
| Bardia Azar | Jennifer Hankins | Gloria Richard-Davis |
| Gohar Azhar | Hailey Hardgrave | Ron Robertson |
| Julius Balogh | Larry Hartzell | Nancy Rusch |
| Teresita Bellido | Hanna Jensen | Abby Russ |
| Lyle Burdine | Alissa Kanaan | Hayley Sabol |
| Marie Burdine | Sharmin Khan | Angela Scott |
| Ana Castro Munoz | Jarrett Lea | Paul Seib |
| Destiny Chau | Gary Lewis | Kevin Sexton |
| Ethan Clement | Lin-Xi Li | Kristen Shealy |
| Sarah Cobb | Riley Lide | Mohammad Zia Siddiqui |
| Meloney Cregor | Diorella Lopez-Gonzalez | Frank Simmen |
| Shannon Dare | Anusha Majagi | Rosalia C.M. Simmen |
| Kyle Davis | Issam Makhoul | Sara Tariq |
| Romona Davis | Alexa Martin | Carol Thrush |
| Stephanie Dayer | Caroline Martinello | Dylan Trujillo |
| Jesus Delgado-Calle | Simon Mears | John Ukadike |
| Rohit Dhall | Priya Mendiratta | Jamie Watson |
| Karen Dickinson | Tyler Merrill | Jeanne Wei |
| John Dornhoffer | Steppe Mette | Christopher Westfall |
| Helena Drolshagen | Jill Mhyre | Danny Wilkerson |
| Alysia Dubriske | Charles Napolitano | Keith Wolter |
| Leesa Freasier | Meryll Pampolina | |

COM departments represented in Accolades this month:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Anesthesiology | Obstetrics/Gynecology |
| Biochemistry/Molecular Biology | Ophthalmology |
| Biomedical Informatics | Otolaryngology-Head/Neck Surgery |
| Biostatistics | Pathology |
| Family/Preventive Medicine | Pediatrics |
| Internal Medicine | Pharmacology/Toxicology |
| Medical Humanities/Bioethics | Physiology/Cell Biology |
| Microbiology/Immunology | Radiation Oncology |
| Neurobiology/Developmental Sciences | Surgery |
| Neurology | |

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The *COMmunication* is published monthly to highlight key events, initiatives and developments in the COM, introduce new faculty members and leaders, and shine a spotlight on our work in education, research, clinical care and service to Arkansas. To view past issues, visit the [COMmunication webpage](#). Comments, questions and suggestions for improvements are always welcome. Call Tamara Robinson, Senior Communications Writer, at 526-5163, or click the red button below to email the *COMmunication*.

[Comments? Ideas? Email Us!](#)



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