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The Monthly Newsletter for
Faculty, Staff and Friends of the
UAMS College of Medicine

UAMS
College of Medicine

COMmunication

May 2022

GO TO: Convocation & Commencement | New Endowed Chairs | Recent Grants & Research | Accolades

Celebrating Excellence



DEAN'S HONOR DAY | The College of Medicine celebrated exemplary educators, clinicians, scientists and service-minded team members at the annual Dean's Honor Day ceremony on May 3. The Distinguished Faculty Service Award was presented to **Billy Thomas, M.D., MPH**, a professor of **Pediatrics** who has made his mark as an outstanding neonatologist and as a key leader in initiatives to ensure a diverse health care workforce for Arkansas.

"He is someone who sees a bigger picture. He seeks understanding and unity. He is resolute and solution-focused, and is a true inspiration and role model for us all."

Read more about **Dr. Thomas** and the ceremony overall in this [web story](#).

Read tributes to the **17 additional faculty members who received awards** [here](#), or click on the read-more links for each award below to go directly to the honoree's profile.



[Video of the ceremony](#)

[Video tribute to faculty being promoted to Associate Professor](#)

[Video tribute to faculty being promoted to Professor](#)

[Read about faculty who were promoted to Distinguished Professor](#)

STAFF EXCELLENCE: EDUCATION

Baylee Field, AA, quickly established strong relationships with rural hospitals after joining the UAMS Institute for Digital Health and Innovation (IDHI) as program coordinator for the Stroke Program in February 2020 – just before COVID-19 arrived in Arkansas.

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STAFF EXCELLENCE: RESEARCH

Pamela Kahler, BA, brings 28 years of experience in research and educational program administration at UAMS – and a ton of dedication – to multiple roles supporting researchers and research training programs at UAMS and beyond.

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STAFF EXCELLENCE: CLINICAL

Jan Wall, MS, RD, has been integral to the health and wellbeing of UAMS patients with diabetes for 28 years. While faculty and trainees have come and gone during that time, the diabetes clinic continues to thrive thanks in large part to her dedication and “pastoral heart.”

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STAFF EXCELLENCE:

ADMINISTRATION

Chad Sievers, MSSW, helped to build the Arkansas Building Effective Services for Trauma (ARBEST) program in the UAMS Psychiatric Research Institute from the ground up while serving as research program manager for the past nine years.

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RESIDENCY EDUCATOR: PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Mary Katherine Kimbrough, M.D., is a critical and highly respected leader in resident education in the Department of Surgery, where she has served as program director for the General Surgery Residency since 2018, after four years as associate director, and as the founding director of the Surgical Critical Care Fellowship.

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RESIDENCY EDUCATOR: PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Darlene Clinton is known as a “pillar of strength” in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, where she has served as program coordinator for the residency program since 2008. Residents fondly call her “Mama Darlene.”

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MASTER TEACHER

R. Dale Blasier, M.D., MBA, is so synonymous with orthopaedic surgery training in Arkansas that appreciative former residents espouse sayings – “Blasier-isms” – that they learned from him. Blasier has served on the faculty since 1989 and directed the residency program from 2003 to 2021.

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EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION

Emily Kocurek, M.D., and **Deepa Raghavan, M.D.**, developed an innovative critical care medicine elective for fourth-year medical students to better prepare them for residency training and foster interest in the increasingly important specialty.

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EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Sung Rhee, Ph.D., began using social media, audience-response systems and other innovative teaching methods to better engage sophomore medical students in the cardiovascular module. He later took on additional teaching duties in the renal module to systemically apply the new learning modalities and evaluate their effectiveness.

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LEONARD TOW HUMANISM IN MEDICINE

Presented by the Arnold P. Gold Foundation

Nicholas Long, Ph.D., began offering free parenting classes on his own time shortly after joining the Department of Pediatrics faculty in 1987. By the early 1990s, his efforts had grown into the Center for Effective Parenting, which continues to help families across Arkansas.

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EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Hari Eswaran, Ph.D., has made significant advancements in obstetrics and gynecology and the field of digital health, with an emphasis on innovative technological approaches. One of UAMS' top-funded researchers, he is passionate about research and mentoring.

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CLINICAL EXCELLENCE: QUALITY & SAFETY

Simon Mears, M.D., Ph.D., has driven numerous positive and sustainable changes to improve quality, safety and the value of patient care in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery.

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CLINICAL EXCELLENCE: BEST CONSULTING PHYSICIAN

Raghu Ramakrishnaiah, MBBS, is a highly respected neuro-radiologist who is appreciated by faculty in the Department of Pediatrics for going above and beyond in the consults he provides.

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CLINICAL EXCELLENCE: COLLABORATIONS & TEAMWORK

Zachary Lewis, M.D., is passionate about using emergency ultrasound to improve care for Arkansans – and deeply committed to teaching others how to make full use of the technology's potential.

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CLINICAL EXCELLENCE: RISING STAR CLINICAL FACULTY

Emily Kocurek, M.D., has stood out for her clinical excellence, teaching and service to UAMS since joining the faculty in 2017, including her work as a pulmonologist in the throes of the pandemic.

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CLINICAL EXCELLENCE: PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR

Randy Maddox, M.D., is widely respected in the Emergency Department and beyond for his expertise, hard work and professionalism. Service to the College of Medicine and UAMS has been the backbone of his career.

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[Back to the Top](#)

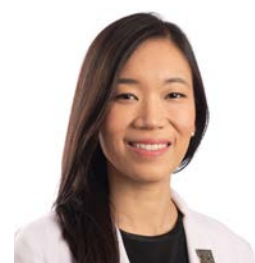
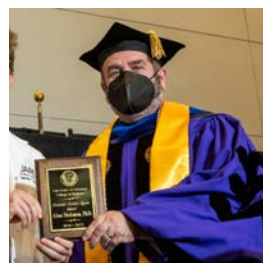
Convocation & Commencement



Congratulations to the Class of 2022!



**GOLDEN
APPLE
AWARDS**



GOLDEN APPLE HONOREES | Sung Rhee, Ph.D., Professor of **Pharmacology and Toxicology**, (top right) delivered the Faculty Charge and also was selected by students as this year's Senior Golden Apple Award recipient. Bottom row, from left: The Junior Golden Apple went to **Lindsey Sward, M.D.**, Associate Professor of **Obstetrics and Gynecology**. Sophomores awarded their Golden Apple to **Manisha Singh, M.D.**, Associate Professor of **Internal Medicine/Nephrology**. **Alan Diekman, Ph.D.**, Professor of **Biochemistry and Molecular Biology**, was the Freshman Golden Apple recipient - his tenth Golden Apple! Earlier, COM students at the UAMS Northwest Regional Campus honored **Sharon Reece, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of **Family and Preventive Medicine**, as their inaugural Golden Apple honoree.

RESIDENTS OF THE YEAR | Also at Honors Convocation, fourth-year **General Surgery** resident **Dr. Tamara Osborn** was recognized as Resident of the Year. For the Northwest Campus, third-year **Internal Medicine** residents **Dr. Tony Hoyt** and **Dr. James Tullis** recently received awards for Resident Physician Teaching Excellence.



CHANCELLOR'S TEACHING AWARD

Gregory Snead, M.D., Professor and Vice Chair of **Emergency Medicine**, received the Chancellor's Teaching Award for Teaching Excellence at the UAMS Commencement ceremony.

Editor's note: Gold Sash and Red Sash recipients will be honored in Accolades soon!

[Back to the Top](#)

New Endowed Chairs



OPHTHALMOLOGY INVESTITURES | Congratulations to three exemplary faculty members in the Department of **Ophthalmology** and **Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute** on their investitures, which were celebrated in a joint ceremony on May 17. Pictured above, left to right: UAMS formally recognized the investiture of [Ahmed Sallam, M.D., Ph.D.](#), in the John W. Nutt Chair in Ophthalmology. [John Pemberton, D.O., MBA](#), was invested in the Stella Boyle Smith/Gissur J. Petursson, M.D. Chair in Ophthalmology. [Paul Phillips, M.D.](#), assumed the Pat Walker Chair in Ophthalmology.

Recent Grants & Research



RAPID TEST FOR ACETAMINOPHEN TOXICITY | The first rapid diagnostic test for acetaminophen toxicity has cleared a major hurdle on its long road to the marketplace from UAMS. The test's inventors, **Laura James, M.D.**, **Jack Hinson, Ph.D.**, and **Dean Roberts, Ph.D.**, received a three-year, \$3.2 million National Institutes of Health (NIH) Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grant to conduct the final phase of study before seeking Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of the blood test. [READ MORE](#)



COBRE GRANT EXTENSION | The NIH National Institute of General Medical Sciences has awarded an additional \$5.7 million, five-year grant to fund the third and final phase of the Centers for Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) program led by Mark Smeltzer, Ph.D. The extension brings total federal funding for the UAMS program that supports infectious disease research to more than \$26 million. [READ MORE](#)

Intramural Grants

Congratulations to the College of Medicine faculty members who received Barton pilot study grants and Sturgis grants from the College of Medicine Office of Research this spring. All awards are \$25,000.

Barton Pilot Awards

Guilia Baldini, Ph.D., (Biochemistry/Molecular Biology), Saturated Fat and Hypothalamic Neurodegeneration

Xuming Zhang, Ph.D., (Microbiology/Immunology), Long-Haul COVID: Does SARS-CoV-2 Establish Persistent Infection in the Central Nervous System

Jeffrey Stambough, M.D., (Orthopaedic Surgery) Addressing Obesity Health Disparities in Rural Joint Replacement Patients with a Telehealth Pre-Operative Program

Katie Ryan, Ph.D., (Biochemistry/Molecular Biology), Determining How Driver Mutations Affect the Metastatic Potential of Lung Cancer Using Cell-based Assays and a Proteomic Approach

Roy Morello, Ph.D., (Physiology/Cell Biology), A New Mouse Model to Study Cell-Autonomous Effects of Type 1 Collagen Mutations Causing Osteogenesis Imperfecta

Ha-Neui Kim, Ph.D., (Internal Medicine), Targeting Mitochondrial Quality Control in Osteoclasts to Prevent Bone Loss Induced by Ionizing Radiation

Lisa Brents, Ph.D., (Pharmacology/Toxicology), The Contribution of the Active Metabolite Norbuprenorphine to Buprenorphine-Associated Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome

Sturgis Grants

Elena Ambrogini, M.D., Ph.D., (Internal Medicine), Role of Natural Antibodies Against Oxidized Phospholipids in Age-related Glucose Intolerance

Rushita Bagchi, Ph.D., (Internal Medicine), A Multi-omics Approach to Identify Mechanisms of HDAC II-mediated Lipid Regulation in the Diabetic Heart

Teresita Bellido, Ph.D., (Physiology/Cell Biology), Bone Disease Induced by Diabetes: Mechanism and Treatment



Translational
Research Institute

KL2 SCHOLARS | The Translational Research Institute's KL2 Mentored Research Career Development Scholars Program announced nine new scholars for 2022-2023, its largest-ever class. [READ MORE](#)



Winthrop P. Rockefeller
Cancer Institute

SEEDS OF SCIENCE | The Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute had a record number of applicants and supported a record number of investigators through the Seeds of Science Awards program. [READ MORE](#)

PROVOST'S INNOVATOR AWARDS | UAMS has announced four College of Medicine faculty members as recipients of the Provost's Innovator Awards. The awards support groundbreaking, innovative, high-impact projects that are likely to establish new clinical approaches or achieve rapid commercialization.

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[Back to the Top](#)

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:

Stenia Accilien	Murat Gokden	Nayana Prabhu
Murad Almasri	Rachel Graham	Rebecca Pratt
Anil Anandam	Jason Guell	C. Preston Pugh
Aline Andres	Mavina Guram	Praveen Ramani
Teresita Angtuaco	Hailey Hardgrave	Sharon Reece
Naomi Armstrong	Matthew Helton	Sung Rhee
Jason Arthur	Shuk-Mei Ho	Jon Rick
Zainab Atiq	John House	Paula Roberson
Gohar Azhar	Tony Hoyt	Ron Robertson
Jay Bhama	Sayena Jabbehdari	Ahmed Sallam
Shubham Biyani	Supriya Jambhekar	Patricia Savary
Patrick Bonasso	Hanna Jensen	Kevin Sexton
Elisabet Borsheim	Nick Kaukis	Obeid Shafi
Meryll Bouldin	Delice Kayishunge	Hemendra Shah
Heather Broyles	Noojan Kazemi	Ahmed Shakarchi
Marie Burdine	Jay Kincannon	Muhammad Shamim
Samuel Byrd	Scott King	Tanya Sharma
John Carroll	Linda Larson-Prior	Jessica Shenoi
Emily Casson	Onna Lau	Vivian Shi
Josh Chang	Mary Littrell	Zia Siddiqui
Zain Chauhan	Daniel Lu	Manisha Singh
Vignesh Chidambaram	Sophia Ly	Kalai Sivakumar
Aric Clegg	Joana Mack	Gregory Snead
Denise Compton	Gregory Martin	Blake St. Clair
Howard Corwin	Alyson McKinnon	Lindsey Sward
Shelley Crary	J.L. Mehta	Taren Swindle
Paige Dailey	Priya Mendiratta	Jordan Takasugi
Devea De	Sandy Moore	Tarendeep Thind
Alan Diekman	Roy Morello	Khiem Train
Milena Dimori	Paul Mounsey	James Tullis
Philip Dockery	Marwan Moussa	Aravindhan
Carly Eastin	Nikhil Nair	Veerapandiyan
Abdelrahman Elhousseiny	Tamara Osborn	Manasa Veluvolu
Reem ElSheikh	Xiawei Ou	Meredith Von Dohlen
Lauren Evans	T. Glenn Pait	Dinesh Voruganti
Megan Evans	Viktoras Palys	Katherine Wang
Haley Feezell	Amanda Pangle	Ryan Waters
Mario Ferruzzi	Anjali Patel	Jeanne Wei
Jordan Fett	Cam Patterson	Taylor Winn
Elizabeth Gath	John David Pemberton	Lori Wong
Michalis Georgiou	Patrick Phelan	Jacob Wooldridge
Regina Gibson	Paul Phillips	Laxmi Yeruva
Emmanouil Giorgakis	Craig Porter	Pele Yu

COM departments represented in Accolades this month:

Biochemistry/Molecular Biology	Obstetrics/Gynecology
Biomedical Informatics	Ophthalmology
Biostatistics	Orthopaedic Surgery
Dermatology	Otolaryngology-Head/Neck Surgery
Emergency Medicine	Pathology
Family/Preventive Medicine	Pediatrics
Geriatrics	Pharmacology/Toxicology
Internal Medicine	Physiology/Cell Biology
Microbiology/Immunology	Psychiatry
Neurobiology/Developmental Sciences	Radiology
Neurology	Surgery
Neurosurgery	

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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