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

UAMS
College of Medicine

COMmunication

September 2022

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2022 UAMS
DR. EDITH IRBY
JONES
**EXCELLENCE IN
DIVERSITY &
INCLUSION**
AWARDS



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT | **Ronda Henry-Tillman, M.D.**, Professor of **Surgery** and Chief of **Breast Surgical Oncology**, is the 2022 UAMS Dr. Edith Irby Jones Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Lifetime Achievement honoree. Dr. Henry-Tillman (*above*) was recognized, along with honorees in other categories, at a Sept. 12 ceremony following the annual [State of Diversity Address](#).

"Dr. Henry-Tillman has served Arkansans for over 24 years dedicated to eliminating health disparities, especially addressing cancer disparities, social justice, and striving to achieve health equity. She is a leader and tireless servant to UAMS and our most vulnerable communities, to include global efforts. Recognizing the importance of breast cancer screenings and the barriers that may prevent people in rural areas from accessing proper screenings, she established the UAMS mobile mammography program. To date, over 18,000 women have been screened. She advocates for women suffering from breast cancer to receive access, quality and compassionate care."

- from the nomination of Dr. Henry-Tillman

STAFF HONOREE | **Kimberlyn Blann, M.A.**, Associate Director of Admissions and Outreach Programs in the College of Medicine, received the Dr. Edith Irby Jones Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Staff Award for her work to advance diversity through multiple roles at UAMS.

“Kim is truly an inspirational advisor and mentor, and advocates for all students. She puts her heart and soul into her job. Kim is devoted to inspiring students at all levels to raise people up when they interact with her, whether it is a chance meeting or a relationship over the years. She makes every effort to see students succeed, particularly underrepresented students. She is passionate about providing leadership in the areas of mentoring, team building, diversity and inclusion. She has a long track record of devotion to diversity, equity and inclusion. Her dedication, passion and hard work stretch way beyond the responsibilities of her position.”

- from the nomination of Ms. Blann



Kimberlyn Blann, M.A.

The awards pay homage to Dr. Edith Irby Jones, who in 1948 became the first African American to enroll in a previously all-white medical school in the South. The 1952 UAMS graduate went on to become the first woman president of the National Medical Association and much more. Dr. Irby Jones dedicated her career to improving the health and wellbeing of those in underrepresented communities.

In addition to Dr. Henry-Tillman and Ms. Blann, COM students and faculty were nominated for awards in several other categories this year. They include medical students **Carlton "Quincy" Gragg** and **Kayla Jimmerson** and graduate student **Luke Childress**; **Aravindhan Veerapandiyan, M.D.**, Assistant Professor in **Pediatric Neurology** (Early Career Faculty); and **Thomas Kelly, Ph.D.**, Professor of **Pathology** (Leadership). Congratulations to these team members and nominees and recipients from across UAMS!

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In the Spotlight

Surgery Colleagues Invested in Endowed Chairs



Jonathan Laryea, M.D., Professor and Chief of the Division of **Colorectal Surgery**, was invested in the Nolie and Norma Mumey Endowed Chair in Surgery.

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Matthew Steliga, M.D., Professor and Chief of the Division of **Thoracic Surgery**, was invested in the Kent. C. Westbrook, M.D., Distinguished Chair in Surgical Oncology.

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New Faculty

Please join us in welcoming these recent additions to the College of Medicine faculty – and watch for introductions of more faculty members who have joined us this summer and fall in upcoming issues of the COMmunication!



Shashidhar Manchegowda, M.D., has joined the Department of **Anesthesiology** as an Assistant Professor.

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Rachael Goodwin, M.D., has joined the Department of **Family and Preventive Medicine** and **UAMS North Central Regional Campus** in Batesville as an Assistant Professor.

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Brittany Carmack, M.D., has joined the Department of **Family and Preventive Medicine** and **UAMS Northeast Regional Campus** in Jonesboro as an Assistant Professor.

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Alan Padilla Ramos, M.D., has joined the Department of **Family and Preventive Medicine** and **UAMS Northwest Regional Campus** in Fayetteville as an Assistant Professor.

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Natalie Rodriguez, M.D., has joined the Department of **Family and Preventive Medicine** and **UAMS Northwest Regional Campus** in Fayetteville as an Assistant Professor.

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Kaethe Goodwin-Chigumira, M.D., has joined the Department of **Family and Preventive Medicine** and **UAMS West Regional Campus** in Fort Smith as an Assistant Professor.

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Arwa Albashaireh, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Endocrinology**.

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Heba Mousa, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **General Internal Medicine**.

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

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Lauren Bunch, Ph.D., has joined the Department of **Medical Humanities and Bioethics** as an Assistant Professor.
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Eleanor Gilmore-Szott, Ph.D., has joined the Department of **Medical Humanities and Bioethics** as an Assistant Professor.
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Aditya Vikram Boddu, M.D., has joined the Department of **Neurology** as an Assistant Professor.
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Jordan Walters, M.D., has joined the Department of **Orthopaedic Surgery** as an Assistant Professor.
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Elizabeth Grasmuck, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pathology** as an Associate Professor, Laboratory and Pathology Service Line Medical Director, and CLIA Director.
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Mugahed A. Hamza, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pathology** as an Assistant Professor in the **Dermatopathology** Division.
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Hany Meawad, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pathology** as an Assistant Professor in the **Hematopathology** Division.

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Jacob Wooldridge, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pathology** as an Assistant Professor in the **Pathology Informatics** and **Hematopathology** divisions.

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Brannon Broadfoot, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pathology** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Molecular Pathology**.

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Peter Jang, D.D.S., has joined the Department of **Pediatric and Special Needs Dentistry** as an Assistant Professor.

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Hugh Bigg, D.O., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Instructor in the **Cardiology** Division.

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Jeffrey Orcutt, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Associate Professor in the **Cardiology** Division.

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Amna Qasim, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Cardiology** Division.

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Praveen Juvvadi, Ph.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Associate Professor in the **Infectious Diseases** Division.

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Vonita Chawla, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Neonatology** Division.

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Caroline Crocker, D.O., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Neonatology** Division.

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Sarah Perez, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Neonatology** Division.

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John Stack, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Neonatology** Division.

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Amanda Brown, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Associate Professor in the **Rheumatology** Division.
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Hieu Mitchell Pham, M.D., has joined the Department of **Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation** as an Assistant Professor.
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Kumar Shashi, M.D., has joined the Department of **Radiology** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of Pediatric Radiology.
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Martha Estrada, M.D., has joined the Department of **Surgery** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Transplant Surgery**.
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Recent Grants



INNOVATIVE TESTS FOR TOXINS | UAMS is co-leading a National Science Foundation-funded effort to develop advanced, inexpensive devices to detect toxins in water and people. UAMS' role in the project is led by Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation **Shuk-Mei Ho, Ph.D.** UAMS Co-investigators are **Linda Larson-Prior, Ph.D.**, and **Yuet-Kim "Ricky" Leung, Ph.D.**

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TRACKING COVID-19 VARIANTS | Additional funding from the NIH will continue the work of the Arkansas Sequencing Consortium, a collaboration between Arkansas Children's Research Institute and UAMS to help federal and state agencies understand more about the variants of COVID-19 circulating in the state. The award to **Josh Kennedy, M.D.**, is the second administrative supplement for the consortium. **Stephanie Byrum, Ph.D.**, and **David Ussery, Ph.D.**, are providing crucial biomedical informatics support.

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Extramural Awards

Congratulations to College of Medicine colleagues who received new extramural grants in August. This list, courtesy of the Office of the Executive Associate Dean for Research, excludes clinical trials and awards under \$10,000.

Jon Blevins, Ph.D., Department of **Microbiology and Immunology**, Cyclic di-AMP-dependent Signaling in Tickborne Relapsing Fever *Borrelia*, NIH/NIAID, (8/8/2022-7/31/2026), \$2,380,916.

Ha-Neui Kim, Ph.D., Department of **Internal Medicine**, Role of Mitochondrial Quality Control in Bone Homeostasis and Disease, NIH/NIAMSD, (8/1/2022-7/31/2027), \$1,683,000. (*Re-listed from last month to update total*)

Bolni Nagalo, Ph.D., Department of **Pathology**, Development of a New Virotherapy Platform to Treat Pancreatic Cancer, American Association for Cancer Research, (8/23/2022-6/30/2025), \$300,000.

Nicole Schartz, Ph.D., Department of **Geriatrics**, Mechanistic Link Between C5aR1 and Cognitive Loss in Alzheimer's Disease, Alzheimer's Association, (8/4/2022-4/30/2023), \$10,648.

LaTunja Sockwell, M.A., Department of Family and Preventive Medicine, iHELP, CDC, (8/3/2022-6/30/2023), \$92,980. Pass through from National Foundation for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Inc.

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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](#).

Team members and students named in Accolades this month:

Muhammad Abu-Rmaileh
Naomi Armstrong
Lee Archer
Gohar Azhar
Emily Barnes
Tara Bates
Elijah Bolin
Ted Brown
Gwendolyn Bryant-Smith
Lyle Burdine
Andrew Campbell
Stephen Canon
Rebecca Cantu
Mary Caroline Carnes
Destiny Chau
Shelley Crary
Kyle Davis
Brandi Dawson
Peter DelNero
John Dornhoffer
Paul Drake
Breyanna Dulaney
Courtney Edgar-Zarate
Mohamed Elasm
Kathy Emans
Susan Emmett
Lisa Evans
Claire Foster
Stephen Foster
Patricia Franklin
J. Reed Gardner
Regina Gibson

Emmanouil Giorgakis
Matthew Green
Lawrence Greiten
Hayden Hairston
Hailey Hardgrave
Ronda Henry-Tillman
Laura Hollenbach
Stacie Jones
Katie Kimbrough
Brian Kirkpatrick
Tim Langford
Jonathan Laryea
Jennifer Laudadio
Chris Long
Samantha K. Robler
Anvesh Kompelli
Bruno Machado
Joana Mack
Sindhu Malapati
Nirvana Manning
Chelsea Mathews
Pearl McElfish
Michelle McFail
Trevor Meece
Jawahar "Jay" Mehta
Jill Mhyre
Mohammed Moursi
Alberto Ocampo
Amanda Pangle
Raj Patel
Sara Peebles
Paul Phillips

Parthak Prodhon
Roopa Ram
Veronica Raney
Gresham Richter
Julie Riley
Chris Rule
Debasmita Saha
Geeta Sakariya
Ahmed Sallam
Sara Sanders
Patricia Savary
Steve Schexnayder
Beth Schmit
Steven Schulze
Brigitte Serfaty
Jarna Shah
Kyla Shelton
Brittany Slagle
Dora Smith
Michael Smith
Kathryn Stambough
Matthew Steliga
Leslie Stone
Beth Taggard
Shruti Tewar
Marty Trieschmann
Richard Turnage
Srikanth Vallurupalli
Amy Wenger
Kent Westbrook

COM departments represented in Accolades this month:

Anesthesiology
Family/Preventive Medicine
Geriatrics
Internal Medicine
Neurology
Obstetrics/Gynecology
Ophthalmology
Orthopaedic Surgery
Otolaryngology-Head/Neck Surgery

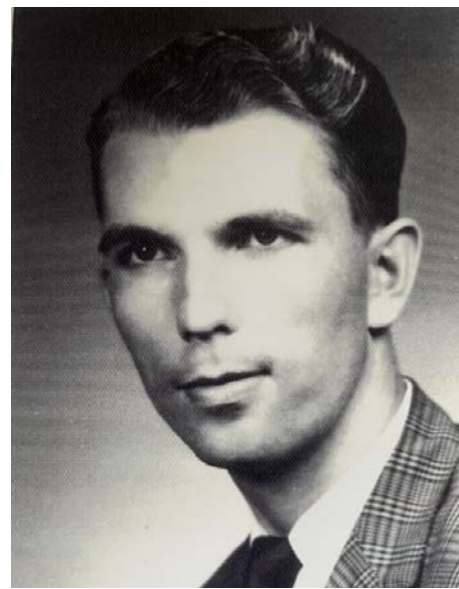
Pathology
Pediatrics
Pharmacology/Toxicology
Physiology/Cell Biology
Psychiatry
Radiology
Surgery
Urology

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In Memoriam

Edgar A. Lucas, Ph.D

Edgar A. Lucas, Ph.D., a pioneering sleep researcher and faculty member in Anatomy (now **Neurobiology and Developmental Sciences**) from 1971-1984, died Aug. 31. Dr. Lucas established one of the first sleep disorders clinics and one of the first sleep medicine fellowship training programs in the United States at UAMS. Along with the late **Lawrence Scheving, Ph.D.**, Dr. Lucas also developed one of the first time-isolation study units for the research of sleep, at the North Little Rock VA Medical Center. He continued to collaborate with Dr. Scheving and UAMS on research into chronobiology into the 1990s. [READ MORE](#)



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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*.

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