

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

UAMS
College of Medicine

COMmunication

January 2023

GO TO: Message from the Dean | New Faculty & Leadership Appointments | Recent Grants | Accolades

In Memoriam



Susan S. Smyth, M.D., Ph.D.

1965-2022

Executive Vice Chancellor and Dean
June 2021-December 2022

Susan S. Smyth, M.D., Ph.D., was a nationally respected cardiologist, researcher and leader in academic medicine. As Executive Vice Chancellor of UAMS and Dean of the UAMS College of Medicine from June 2021 until her death on Dec. 31, 2022, Dr. Smyth created and expanded initiatives to improve health care and health equity in Arkansas. She also worked to increase the college's national standings in medical education, research and clinical care.

[READ MORE](#)

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A CELEBRATION OF DR. SMYTH | UAMS will honor the inspiring life of Dr. Smyth on Thursday, Feb. 9, at 4:00 p.m., in Fred Smith Auditorium, 12th floor of the Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute. If you plan to attend in person, please [RSVP here](#). The event also will be livestreamed at go.uams.edu/live. A recording will be available on that site following the event and via our upcoming publications.



Leanne Whiteside-Mansell, Ed.D., died Dec. 18, 2022. A Professor in the Department of **Family and Preventive Medicine**, Dr. Whiteside-Mansell joined the faculty in 1999 and oversaw significant growth of the Research and Evaluation Division (RED) as its Director for 12 years. Her own research drove significant advances in the understanding of children living in poverty and how to help them.

[UAMS In Memoriam](#) (*Inside UAMS*)



Stacy Ann Robinson Pitsch Petty, APRN, died Jan. 16, 2023. A UAMS team member for more than 17 years, she served as Director of **UAMS HealthNow**. From the start of her career as a NICU nurse through her leadership role in UAMS Health's virtual health care program, Stacy was known as a dedicated and compassionate professional.

[UAMS In Memoriam](#) (*Inside UAMS*)

[Back to the Top](#)

Message from the Dean

Dear College of Medicine Community,

The last several months have been difficult for our shared lives together. While the deaths of our colleagues are very public losses that we grieve together, there are private individual losses that have occurred almost daily in the families of members of our community. We share grief for all of these tragic losses.

Grief is difficult for everyone. Grief affects us all differently. Some of us are relatively public about our experience of grief and others are very private. However one experiences grief, please keep a few things in mind.

"Grief affects us all differently."

Grief is a normal biological process that is as old as humankind. Grief also occurs in other mammalian species. Thus, it unlikely that any of us can avoid grief, nor is avoiding grief desirable – no matter how hard it may feel at the moment.

Community, when it is available, helps us through grief. The shared experience of grief normalizes the process and helps us to not feel so alone. Public rituals such as funerals or memorial services are for a reason: to help those left behind with their grief.

Grief occurs in waves. The intense feelings of loss, despair, anger and sadness come and go, usually for at least a year – and often longer – for a significant loss such as a parent, spouse, child, etc.

Finally, being gentle with oneself and others by allowing grief to happen on its own time schedule is a good and helpful approach. Just like most human processes, grief happens when and how it can. Please support each other through these difficult times.

Sincerely,



G. Richard Smith, M.D.

Interim Dean and Executive Vice Chancellor
Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry

[Back to the Top](#)

New Faculty & Leadership Appointments



Joel McMasters, M.D., has joined the Department of **Anesthesiology** as an Associate Professor and Director of the Anesthesiology Perioperative Evaluation Center (APEC). [READ MORE](#)



Beth Anne Reed, M.D., has joined the Department of **Anesthesiology** as an Associate Professor and Director of Anesthesia Services at The Orthopaedic & Spine Hospital (TOSH), which will open this spring. [READ MORE](#)



Rangaswamy Govindarajan, M.D., Professor of **Internal Medicine**, has been appointed Director of the Division of **Hematology/Oncology**. [READ MORE](#)



Sri Obulareddy, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Associate Professor and breast oncologist in the Division of **Hematology/Oncology**.
[READ MORE](#)



Erin Willis, M.D., Associate Professor of **Pediatrics**, has been appointed Section Chief for **Pediatric Neurology** in the Department of **Pediatrics** and Arkansas Children's.
[READ MORE](#)



Laura Hobart-Porter, D.O., Associate Professor of **Pediatrics** and **Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation**, has been named the inaugural Section Chief of **Pediatric Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation** in the Department of Pediatrics and Arkansas Children's.
[READ MORE](#)



Vikramaditya Dumpa, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Associate Professor in the **Neonatology** Section.
[READ MORE](#)



Nathan Epps, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Critical Care Section**.
[READ MORE](#)

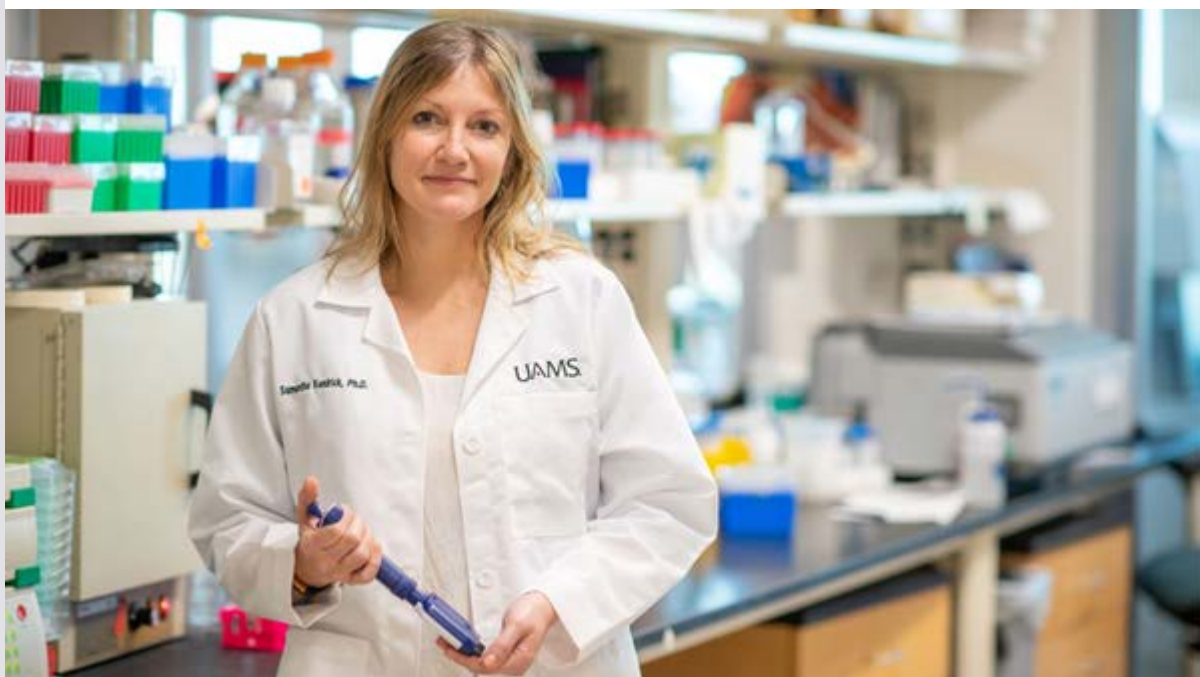


Jason Williams, Psy.D., M.S.Ed., has joined the faculty as Professor and Chief of the Division of **Child and Adolescent Psychiatry** in the Department of **Psychiatry** and Senior Vice President and Chief Mental and Behavioral Health Officer for Arkansas Children's.
[READ MORE](#)

Recent Grants



IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT | UAMS recently received three grants from Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield's Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas aimed at strengthening programs treating Arkansans with mental illness. The projects are being spearheaded by **Jessica Coker, M.D.**, Associate Professor of **Psychiatry** and **Obstetrics and Gynecology**, with **Abigail Richison, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of **Psychiatry**; **Nikki Edge, Ph.D.**, Professor of **Family and Preventive Medicine**; and **Tisha Deen, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of **Psychiatry**. [READ MORE](#)



FIGHTING AGGRESSIVE LYMPHOMA | **Samantha Kendrick, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor in the Department of **Biochemistry and Molecular Biology**, has received a \$760,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Defense to study a fast-growing type of non-Hodgkin lymphoma common among veterans and military personnel. [READ MORE](#)

Extramural Awards

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

Jeanette Lee, Ph.D., Department of **Biostatistics**, AMC Statistical Center – Year 2022-2023, NIH/National Cancer Institute, (12/13/2022-8/31/2023), \$20,103. Pass through from Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

Maya Lopez, M.D., Department of **Pediatrics**, Arkansas Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (AR ADDM) 2022, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, (1/1/2023-12/31/2026), \$2,400,000.

Michael Mancino, M.D., Department of **Psychiatry**, MAT Training, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, (2/1/2023-9/29/2023), \$2,639,951. Pass through from Arkansas Department of Health.

Lorraine McKelvey, Ph.D., Department of **Family and Preventive Medicine**, HRS/ACVN-Maternal and Child Health/Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, Arkansas Department of Health, (11/28/2022-6/30/2023), \$417,914. Pass through from Arkansas Children's Hospital.

Irion Pursell, MPH, Department of **Internal Medicine**, Coverdell Stroke Prevention, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, (12/1/2022-2/28/2023), \$120,000. Pass through from Arkansas Department of Health.

[Back to the Top](#)

Accolades



Have you read the latest *Accolades* from Interim Dean Dr. G. Richard Smith? 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:

Aline Andres	Brittney Harris	M.J. Orellano
Gohar Azhar	Brendon Hogge	Prasad Padala
Marzella Backus	Rajani Jagana	Amanda Pangle
Emily Barnes	Supriya Jambhekar	Sean Parham
Erin Bennett	Brett James	Steven Post
Ariel Berlinski	Kristyn Jeffries	Zhiqiang Qin
Stephanie Byrum	Samantha Kendrick	Kevin Raney
Rebecca Cantu	Humaira Khan	Gloria Richard-Davis
Jungang Chen	Sujit Kumar Kotapati	Ron Robertson
Mary Kate Clarkson	Shashank Kraleti	Laura Sanders
Chloe Cline	Nihit Kumar	Manisha Singh
Terry Collins	Becky Latch	Brittany Slagle
Lu Dai	Hong-Yu Li	Natasha Sra
Nafisa Dajani	Suzette Lopez	Alan Tackett
J.D. Day	Sam Mackintosh	Andrea Tappe
Stephanie Dayer	Nirvana Manning	Ramakrishna Thotakura
Joe DeLoach	Rob Martin	Ruth Thomas
Ken Dick	Chelsea Mathews	Pavana Tirumaniseti
Rhonda Dick	Sacha McBain	Aravindhan Veerapandiyan
Ricky Edmondson	Simon Mears	Muthu Veeraputhiran
Jacob Filipek	Priya Mendiratta	Zhengyu Wang
Chara Fisher	Jill Mhyre	Scott Warmack
Srinivasa Gokarakonda	Brittany Montgomery	Jeanne Wei
Hannah Hale	Sanjeeva Reddy Onteddu	Dustin Williford

COM departments represented in Accolades this month:

Anesthesiology	Neurosurgery
Biochemistry/Molecular Biology	Obstetrics/Gynecology
Emergency Medicine	Orthopaedic Surgery
Geriatrics	Pathology
Family/Preventive Medicine	Pediatrics
Internal Medicine	Psychiatry
Neurology	Surgery

[Back to the Top](#)

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!](#)



[Back to the Top](#)

