

Editor's Note: This archived PDF version of the e-newsletter does not precisely match the layout of the original. However, most links to external articles and other content remain active.



June 2023

GO TO: [Leadership Appointments](#) | [New Faculty](#) | [Recent Grants](#) | [Accolades](#)



COM Climbs in National Rankings for Primary Care

The College of Medicine has again been recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of the nation's best medical schools for generating primary care physicians and ensuring outstanding doctors for rural and underserved areas. UAMS tied for 17th place overall among 123 medical schools that were evaluated specifically for primary care for the 2023-2024 rankings — up from 36th last year.

UAMS also placed 18th in serving rural areas, fourth in serving medically needy areas, and 24th in producing the most primary care graduates. Last year, UAMS ranked 20th nationally in serving rural areas, wasn't ranked in the category of serving medically needy areas, and ranked 36th in producing primary care graduates.

"These rankings show that UAMS' dedication to improving the lives of Arkansans, in line with our motto of creating 'A Better State of Health,' is being noticed on a national scale," said **G. Richard Smith, M.D.**, Interim Dean of the College of Medicine and Executive Vice Chancellor of UAMS. "That is good news for patients and traditionally underserved communities across the state."

[READ MORE](#)

Aspiring to Serve Arkansans



“When you practice medicine in a small town, you become a part of the community. The biggest draw for us, however, is our desire to go where we are most needed. Primary care is where we can have the biggest impact on our state’s health. Every physician in these small towns makes a tremendous difference and helps to make Arkansas healthier overall.”

- Anna Mears, M.D.

2023 graduates **Anna Mears, M.D.**, and her husband, **Cameron Duke, M.D.**, are starting their family medicine residency training at Conway Regional this summer and plan to eventually practice in a small community in Arkansas.

SHARE THE GOOD NEWS! | You can help raise awareness about our latest rankings and the important work being done to produce more primary care doctors for Arkansas by adding our *U.S. News* "badges" to your email signature block. [Click here to view and download](#) two graphics options, or email to [COM Internal Communications](#) for assistance.



Grant Renewal for Regional Campuses Supports Efforts to Build Statewide Health Care Workforce



UAMS has received a five-year renewal of funding under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ AHEC Point of Service Maintenance and Enhancement (POSME) grant, which will benefit programs administered by UAMS Regional Campuses.

“This grant is crucial in supporting UAMS’ efforts to develop the health care workforce throughout our state, especially in rural and underserved communities,” said **Richard Turnage, M.D.**, Vice Chancellor for Regional Campuses.

[READ MORE](#)

[Back to the Top](#)

Leadership Appointments

Dr. Shashank Kraleti to Chair Family & Preventive Medicine

Shashank Kraleti, M.D., FAAFP, has been appointed Chair of the Department of **Family and Preventive Medicine**, effective July 1. Dr. Kraleti will also hold the Dr. Algernon Sidney Garnett Chair in Family Medicine.

"Dr. Kraleti has served in numerous leadership positions since completing his residency training at UAMS and joining the faculty in 2012," said **G.**

Richard Smith, M.D., Interim Dean and Executive Vice Chancellor. "He has gained national recognition in particular for his outstanding work to enhance the Little Rock Family Medicine Residency Program. He is

highly respected by residents and faculty colleagues for his clinical skills and for the passion he brings to training outstanding family physicians."

[READ MORE](#)



Pediatric Emergency Medicine Section Chief

David Spiro, M.D., MPH, has been appointed Section Chief for **Pediatric Emergency Medicine, Pharmacology and Toxicology** in the Department of **Pediatrics**. Dr. Spiro joined the faculty as a Professor in December 2019 and has led numerous initiatives as Interim Section Chief since early 2022.

[READ MORE](#)

[Back to the Top](#)

New Faculty



Matthew Landrum, M.D., has joined the Department of **Orthopaedic Surgery** as an Assistant Professor and pediatric orthopaedic surgeon.

[READ MORE](#)



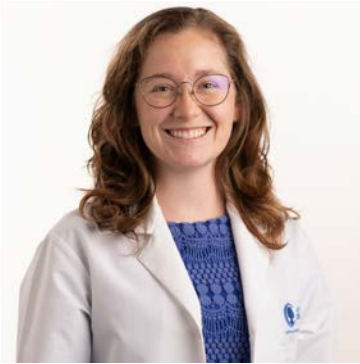
Sarah "Sally" Barnes, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Hospital Medicine** Section.

[READ MORE](#)



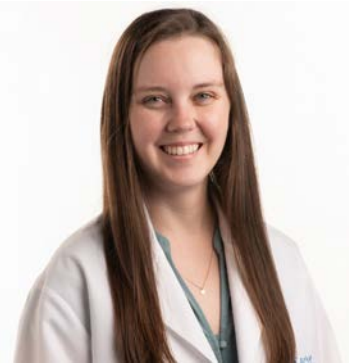
R. Lane Dailey, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Hospital Medicine** Section.

[READ MORE](#)



Emily Wilson, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Neonatology** Section.

[READ MORE](#)



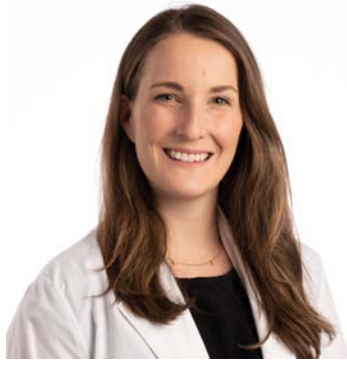
Kelsey Floyd, D.O., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Instructor and Chief Resident for the 2023-2024 academic year.

[READ MORE](#)



Ryan Steele, M.D., MPH has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Instructor and Chief Resident for the 2023-2024 academic year.

[READ MORE](#)



Haley Taylor, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Instructor and Chief Resident for the 2023-2024 academic year. [READ MORE](#)



Matt Kern, M.D., has joined the Department of **Psychiatry** as an Assistant Professor in Northwest Arkansas. [READ MORE](#)

[Back to the Top](#)

Recent Grants



KL2 SCHOLAR AWARDS | Six early-career researchers have been selected to receive two years of funded translational research training and support in the **UAMS Translational Research Institute (TRI) KL2 Mentored Research Career Development Scholar Awards Program**. [READ MORE](#)



Translational
Research Institute

[TRI Names Three Pilot Awardees](#)

[TRI/CTSA Multi-Institutional Pilot Award to Address Patient Prejudice toward Physicians](#)



Rushita Bagchi, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the Department of **Internal Medicine**, Division of **Cardiovascular Medicine**, has received an American Heart Association Career Development Award. Dr. Bagchi worked alongside the late **Susan Smyth, M.D., Ph.D.**, who served as Dean prior to her death in December. The three year, \$231,000 grant, "HDAC11 in Diabetic Cardiomyopathy," was one of their last projects together. Dr. Bagchi continues to be mentored by **Andrew Morris, Ph.D.**, Professor of **Pharmacology and Toxicology** and Dr. Smyth's husband.



A research team led by the Department of **Psychiatry's Melissa Zielinski, Ph.D.**, recently received a two-year, \$250,000 award from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) to help launch an alliance of Arkansas organizations that provide services to women who have been incarcerated.

[READ MORE](#)



The **UAMS Organ Transplant** team, led by **Lyle Burdine, M.D., Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of **Surgery**, received two grants totaling \$50,000 from the Arvest Foundation to benefit the Organ Engineering and Gene Therapy Fund for Excellence. The fund will support the UAMS Research Center for Organ Engineering and Gene Therapy.

[READ MORE](#)

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

Joseph Thompson, M.D., Department of **Pediatrics**, NSF Engines: Type 1: Equitable Access to Food and Health in the Delta-Heartland Region, National Science Foundation, (5/9/2023-4/30/2025), \$1,000,000.

Pearl McElfish, Ph.D., Department of **Internal Medicine**, **Northwest Arkansas Campus**, Home Food Delivery for Diabetes Management in Patients of Rural Clinics – Continuation, NIH/National Institute of Nursing Research, (7/1/2023-6/30/2025), \$1,027,477.

Craig Porter, Ph.D., Department of **Pediatrics**, The Role of the Mitochondrion in the Metabolic Stress Response to Burn Trauma (R35 Supplement), NIH, (6/1/2023-5/31/2024), \$10,010.

Aravindhan Veerapandiyan, M.D., Department of **Pediatrics**, Pediatric Natural History Study for Charcot-Marie-Tooth (CMT) Disease, Hereditary Neuropathy Foundation, (4/17/2023-4/17/2024), \$20,000.

[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:

Mahip Acharya
Murad Almasri
Jennifer Andersen
Tucker Blackledge
Alison Caballero
Sheena CarlLee
Sarah Diamond
Karen Dickinson
John Dornhoffer
Jeffrey Dorrity
Hari Eswaran

Eudice Fontenot
Amisha Gupta
Mallory Heft
Evan Hicks
Charles James
Diane Jarrett
Humaira Khan
Kathleen Kinder
Payton Lea
Farah Mazahreh

Pearl McElfish
Sri Obulareddy
Husam Salah
Paul Seib
Shobhit Sharma
Jeffrey Stambough
James Suen
Samidha Tripathi
Vidhu Vadini
Ashton Walters

COM departments represented in Accolades this month:

Family/Preventive Medicine
Internal Medicine
Neurology
Pediatrics
Obstetrics/Gynecology

Orthopaedic Surgery
Otolaryngology-Head/Neck Surgery
Psychiatry
Radiology
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!



UAMS College of Medicine | 4301 W. Markham, #550 | Little Rock, Arkansas 72205

[Back to the Top](#)