



"Sweethearts" Learn about Heart Health, Cardiovascular Research at UAMS

Faculty and lab teams from the departments of **Pharmacology and Toxicology** and **Neurobiology and Developmental Sciences** in the College of Medicine and **Pharmaceutical Sciences** in the College of Pharmacy hosted 30 “sweethearts” — high school sophomore and junior girls participating in the American Heart Association and AHA Arkansas Chapter “Sweethearts” program — on two evenings in January. [READ MORE](#)

Wear Red on Friday, Feb. 2!

February is American Heart Month, and on **Friday, Feb. 2**, team members across UAMS will wear red to raise awareness of heart disease in women. Cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 killer of women, causing 1 in 3 deaths each year. To learn more, visit the AHA [Go Red for Women](#) website.

American Heart Association.



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LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS



Associate Dean for Student Affairs

Rebecca Latch, M.D., Associate Professor and Vice Chair of Education in the Department of **Pediatrics**, has been named Associate Dean for Student Affairs for the College of Medicine, effective Feb. 1.

“Dr. Latch brings a long track record of outstanding work and leadership in medical education to her new role,” **G. Richard Smith, M.D.**, Interim Dean and Executive Vice Chancellor, said in an announcement to the college. “She has served as a trusted and highly respected advisor to medical students and residents and has earned many honors for her teaching.” [READ MORE](#)

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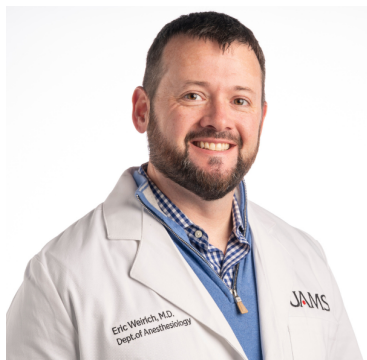
NEW FACULTY

Please join us in welcoming these recent additions to the COM faculty.



Annsley Garner, M.D., has joined the Department of **Anesthesiology** as an Assistant Professor.

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Eric Weirich, M.D., has joined the Department of **Anesthesiology** as an Associate Professor.

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Michael Luna, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as a Professor in the Division of **Cardiology**.

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Kapil Yadav, MBBS, has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Associate Professor in the Division of **Cardiology**.

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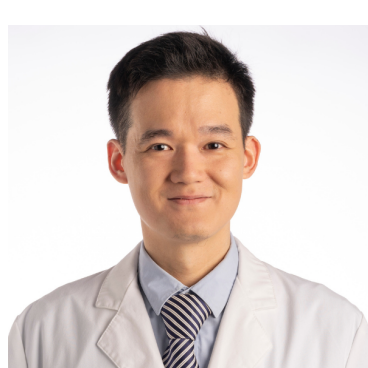
Meer Akbar Ali, MBBS, has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Associate Professor in the Division of **Gastroenterology**.

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Sam Dalvi, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as a Professor and Division Director for the Division of **Rheumatology**.

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Chaow Charoenkijakajorn, M.D., has joined the Department of **Ophthalmology** as an Assistant Professor.

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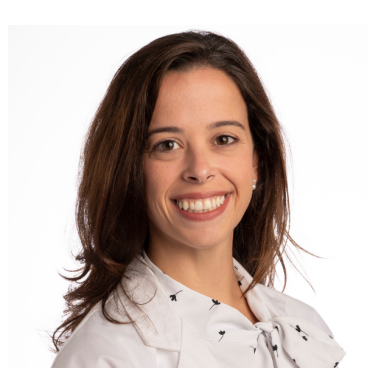
Rakesh Sethapati, MBBS, has joined the Department of Pathology as an Assistant Professor in the Transfusion Medicine Division.

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Ana Del Valle Penella, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Infectious Diseases** Section.

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Adriana Sarmiento Clemente, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Infectious Diseases** Section.

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RECENT GRANTS

Congratulations to College of Medicine team members who recently received new extramural grants. 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.

Laura James, M.D., Department of **Pediatrics/Translational Research Institute**, Engaging Cooperative Sites for Trial Acceleration, NIH | National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, (10/31/2023 – 4/30/2024), \$77,986.

Brian Kirkpatrick, M.D., Department of **Psychiatry**, First Episode Psychosis (FEP) Specialty Treatment Services for Arkansas, National Institute of Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration | Arkansas Department of Human Services, (8/31/2023 – 8/30/2024), \$703,695.

Billy Thomas, M.D., MPH, Department of **Pediatrics**, Initiative for Maximizing Student Development – IMSD, National Institute of General Medical Sciences, (2/1/2024 – 1/31/2029), \$1,832,300.

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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 and questions are always welcome. Call Tamara Robinson, Senior Communications Writer, at 526-5163, or send an email to COMInternalCommunications@uams.edu.