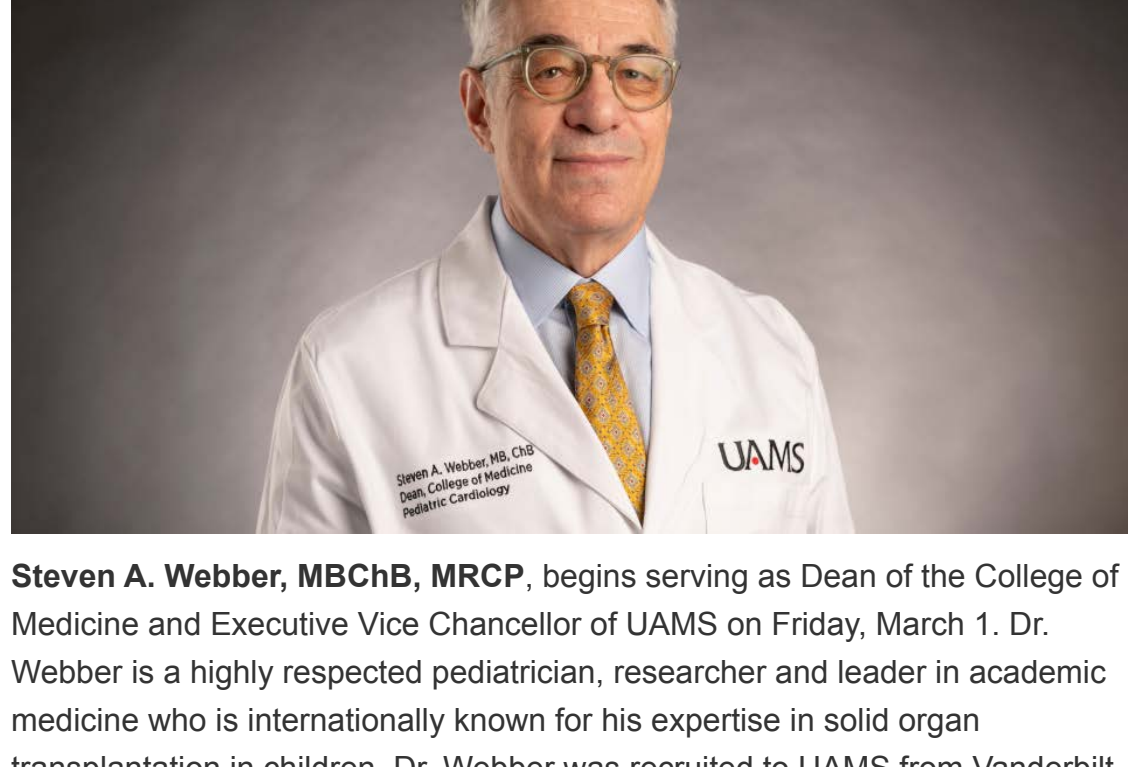


Welcome, Dr. Webber!

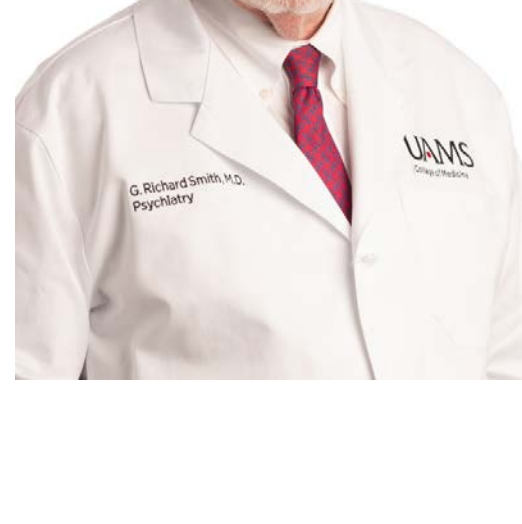


Steven A. Webber, MBChB, MRCP, begins serving as Dean of the College of Medicine and Executive Vice Chancellor of UAMS on Friday, March 1. Dr. Webber is a highly respected pediatrician, researcher and leader in academic medicine who is internationally known for his expertise in solid organ transplantation in children. Dr. Webber was recruited to UAMS from Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, where he had served since 2012 as the James C. Overall Professor and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics and Pediatrician-in-Chief of Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital.

[READ DR. WEBBER'S BIO](#)

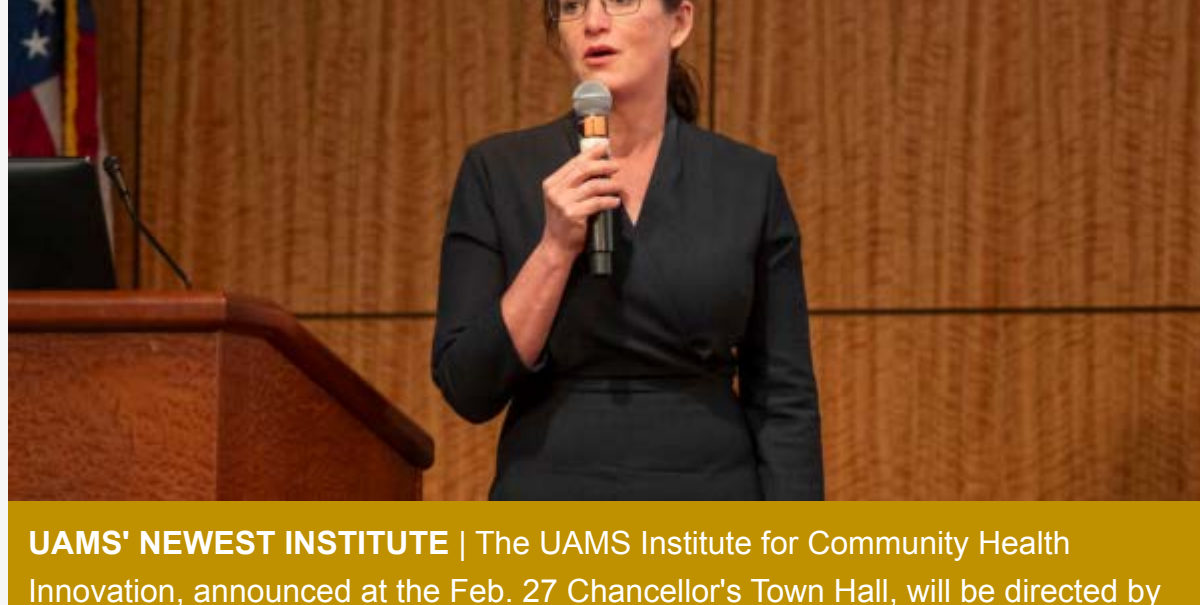
Thank you, Dr. Smith!

The College of Medicine is grateful to **G. Richard Smith, M.D.**, Distinguished Professor of **Psychiatry**, for his service as Interim Dean and Executive Vice Chancellor since January 2023. The role was the latest of many leadership positions Dr. Smith has held during four decades on the faculty. He also served as Dean and Executive Vice Chancellor in 2013-2015. He was the Marie Wilson Howells Chair of the Department of Psychiatry in 2001-2013 and again in 2018-2021. He was the founding Director of the UAMS Psychiatric Research Institute.



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IN THE SPOTLIGHT



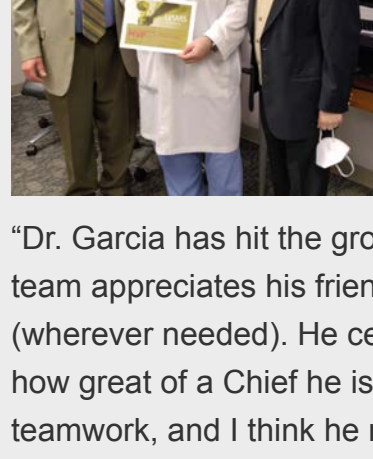
UAMS' NEWEST INSTITUTE | The UAMS Institute for Community Health Innovation, announced at the Feb. 27 Chancellor's Town Hall, will be directed by **Pearl McElfish, Ph.D., MBA**. Based in Northwest Arkansas and with staff and offices across the state, the institute will work with communities to conduct community-based research and deploy community-driven programs to improve health outcomes in rural and medically underserved areas of Arkansas.

[READ MORE](#)

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Meet the MVPs!

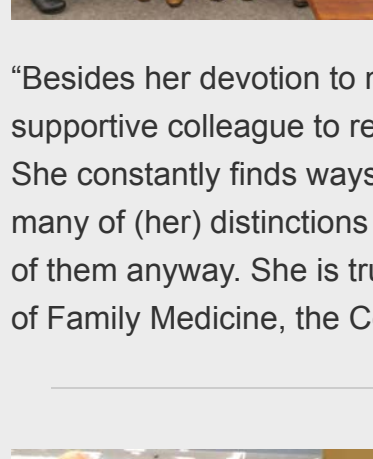
Colleagues across the College of Medicine nominated exceptional team members for the 2023 COM Most Valuable Player (MVP) Awards. Five individuals were selected for their contributions to their programs, fellow team members and our college's mission. They were also honored for exemplifying UAMS' core values and making our college a better place to work. Nominators and leaders including Interim Dean **G. Richard Smith, M.D.**, celebrated the MVPs in individual ceremonies in November and December. Here are some of the things MVP nominators had to say about these exemplary team members.



MAURICIO GARCIA, M.D.

Associate Professor and Chief
Department of **Internal Medicine**, Division of
Gastroenterology and Hepatology
Nominated by Hailey Rogers, GME Program Manager

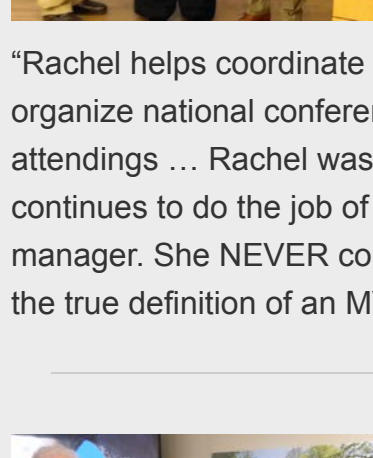
"Dr. Garcia has hit the ground running ... Not only is he a great leader, but his team appreciates his friendship. He has worked tirelessly and steps in (wherever needed). He celebrates our clinic staff ... I can't express enough how great of a Chief he is. He embodies the UAMS core values of respect and teamwork, and I think he really tries to go out of his way to make sure all of us feel valued and important."



DIANE JARRETT, Ed.D., M.A.

Assistant Professor and Director
Department of **Family and Preventive Medicine**,
Office of Communication and Departmental
Relations
Nominated by Wayne Bryant, M.D., Assistant Professor

"Besides her devotion to mentorship, Dr. Jarrett is an excellent teacher and a supportive colleague to residents and faculty who need scholarly assistance ... She constantly finds ways to celebrate the accomplishments of others ... So many of (her) distinctions are not part of her job description, but she takes care of them anyway. She is truly a Most Valuable Player in supporting the mission of Family Medicine, the College of Medicine and UAMS."



RACHEL KELLEY

Office Manager
Department of **Pediatrics**, Division of Hematology
and Oncology, CORE Outpatient and Inpatient
Nominated by Joana Mack, M.D., Associate Professor

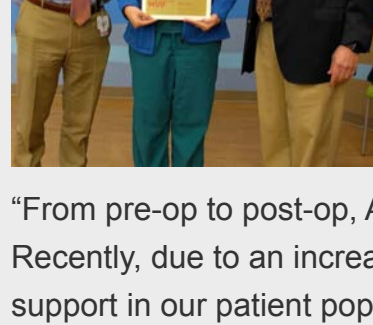
"Rachel helps coordinate our resident education lecture series ... She helps organize national conferences and conferences for residents, fellows and attendings ... Rachel was recently promoted to Office Manager, but she continues to do the job of two admin assistants as well as the job of an office manager. She NEVER complains! She just does so much for our group. She is the true definition of an MVP: she makes everyone around her better."



ANGELA KYZER

Program Manager
Department of **Family and Preventive Medicine**,
Research and Evaluation Division
Nominated by Nikki Edge, Ph.D., Professor

"Angie brings an incredibly positive attitude to those she supervises and works with. One of her supervisees summarized it well, saying, 'Angie is the type of supervisor everyone wishes they had. She is patient, compassionate, and positive and supportive. Her standards of excellence inspire me to perform better and learn more. She is always willing to offer guidance and encouragement, and she genuinely cares for those she supervises.'"



ASHLEY WILSON

Physician Assistant
Department of **Surgery**, Division of Pediatric
Heart Surgery (ACH)
Nominated by Lawrence Greiten, M.D., Associate Professor

"From pre-op to post-op, Ashley is involved in every aspect of patient care. Recently, due to an increased need for post-operative mechanical circulatory support in our patient population, she stepped up to address the need for a ventricular assist device (VAD) coordinator. She successfully organized a team of providers and staff who were able to discharge a teenaged patient home with a VAD, the first accomplishment within Arkansas as well as a first for ACH/UAMS."



WHO WILL BE OUR NEXT MVPs?

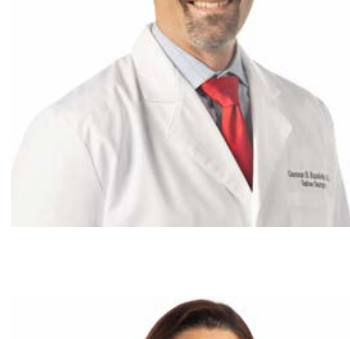
The COM is looking for our next Most Valuable Players.

[Click here to nominate a team member in 2024!](#)

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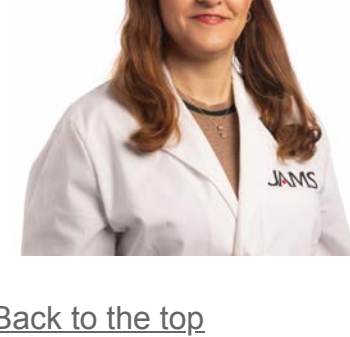
NEW FACULTY

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



Gannon Randolph, M.D., has joined the Department of **Orthopaedic Surgery** as an Assistant Professor and spine surgeon at UAMS Health Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine in Northwest Arkansas.

[READ MORE](#)

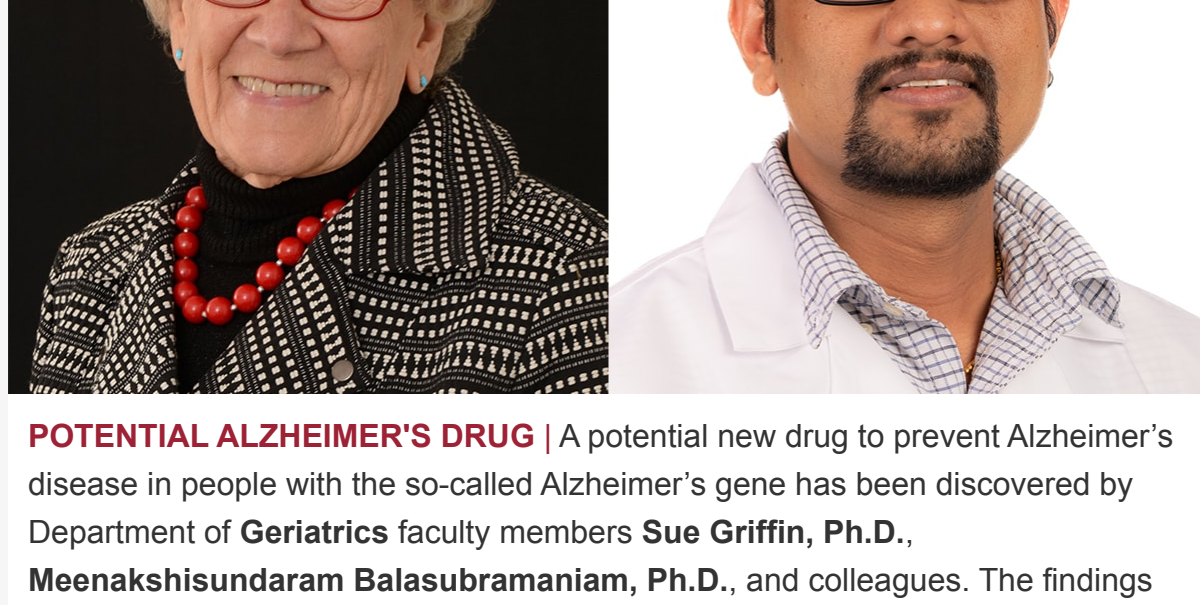


Naghmehossadat Eshghi, M.D., Ph.D., has joined the Department of **Radiology** as an Assistant Professor in the Division **Emergency Radiology** providing overnight coverage.

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GRANTS & RESEARCH



POTENTIAL ALZHEIMER'S DRUG | A potential new drug to prevent Alzheimer's disease in people with the so-called Alzheimer's gene has been discovered by Department of **Geriatrics** faculty members **Sue Griffin, Ph.D.**, **Meenakshisundaram Balasubramaniam, Ph.D.**, and colleagues. The findings were published recently in *Communications Biology*. [READ MORE](#)

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

Shannon Rose, Ph.D., Department of **Pediatrics**, Autoantibody and Cytokine Biomarker Discovery in Patients with Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders, The BRAIN Foundation, (1/31/2024 – 1/30/2026), \$100,000.



INTRAMURAL GRANTS

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The College of Medicine Office of Research is accepting proposals for four **intramural grant programs** through **Monday, March 18**. Funding will begin on July 1. Information and application forms are available in this recent [announcement](#), on the [COMRO website](#) and in these grant-specific links: [Pilot Study Grants](#); [Hornick Endowment Grants](#); [Sturgis Foundation Grants](#); [Brunson Endowment Grants](#).

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