

Congratulations, Class of 2024!

For graduating seniors – including Class President **Tamanna Basri** (pictured above) – donning the doctoral hood at Honors Convocation symbolizes the culmination of four years of hard work in medical school and signals the imminent, formal conferral of the M.D. degree at Commencement the next day. Many awards were presented to students during the May 17 ceremony in recognition of academic achievement, humanism and more.

Selected by seniors to deliver the faculty address, **Alan Diekman, Ph.D.**, injected humor into the ceremony with recollections of teaching and learning virtually early in the pandemic – experiences that also demonstrated the resilience and adaptability of the class. Read more in the [UAMS Newsroom](#).



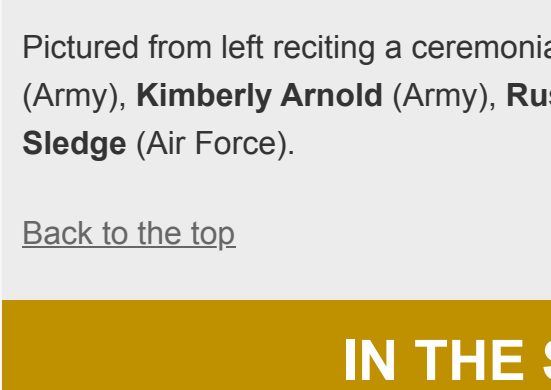
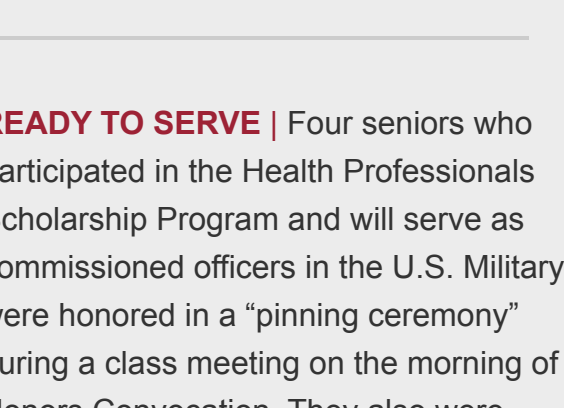
TOP TEACHERS | Exemplary educators also were recognized at Honors Convocation. This year's **Golden Apple** honorees - voted by members of each of the four medical school classes as the best teacher of the year - are pictured above. They are (from left): **Ples Spradley, M.D.**(M3); **Hanna Jensen, M.D., Ph.D.** (M2); **Lindsey Sward, M.D.**, (M4); and **Alan Diekman, Ph.D.** (M1).

Members of the senior class also selected outstanding teachers as this year's **Red Sash** winners. Among the honorees, the faculty who received the highest numbers of votes earned the prestigious **Gold Sash**. In addition to the four Golden Apple winners above, this year's Gold Sash recipients are **Drs. Sheena CarlLee, Nicholas Gowen, Lewis Krain, Steven McKee** and **Hakan Paydak**.

Click here for the full list of [2024 Red Sash and Gold Sash honorees](#).

Read about all student, resident and faculty awards in the [Honors Convocation program](#).

Watch a [video of the ceremony](#).

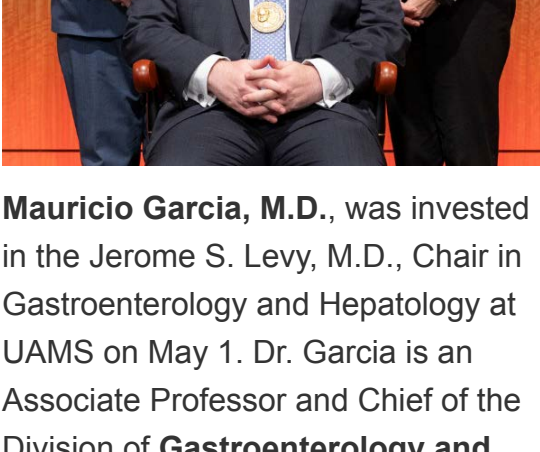


READY TO SERVE | Four seniors who participated in the Health Professionals Scholarship Program and will serve as commissioned officers in the U.S. Military were honored in a "pinning ceremony" during a class meeting on the morning of Honors Convocation. They also were recognized at the ceremony that evening.

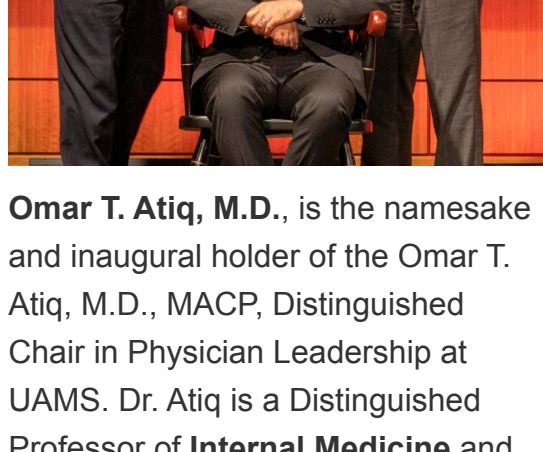
Pictured from left reciting a ceremonial oath of service are: **Kristen Beasley** (Army), **Kimberly Arnold** (Army), **Russell Garner** (Navy), and **Jonathan Sledge** (Air Force).

[Back to the top](#)

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Mauricio Garcia, M.D., was invested in the Jerome S. Levy, M.D., Chair in Gastroenterology and Hepatology at UAMS on May 1. Dr. Garcia is an Associate Professor and Chief of the Division of **Gastroenterology and Hepatology** in the Department of **Internal Medicine**. [READ MORE](#)

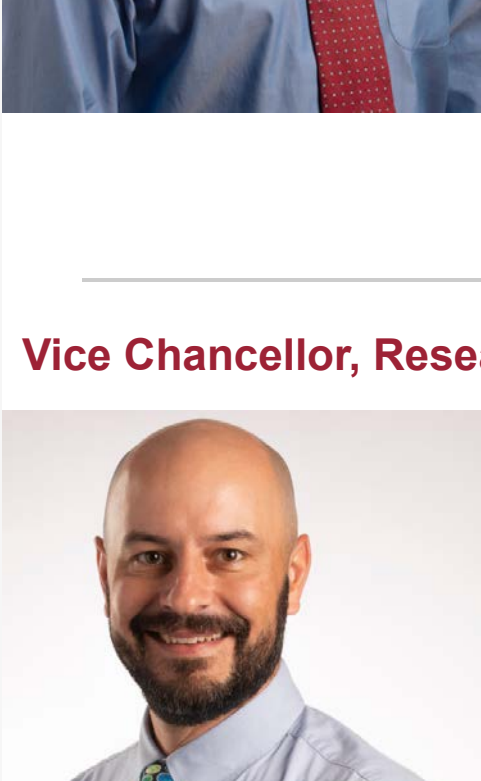


Omar T. Atiq, M.D., is the namesake and inaugural holder of the Omar T. Atiq, M.D., MACP, Distinguished Chair in Physician Leadership at UAMS. Dr. Atiq is a Distinguished Professor of **Internal Medicine** and **Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery**. [READ MORE](#)

[Back to the top](#)

LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS

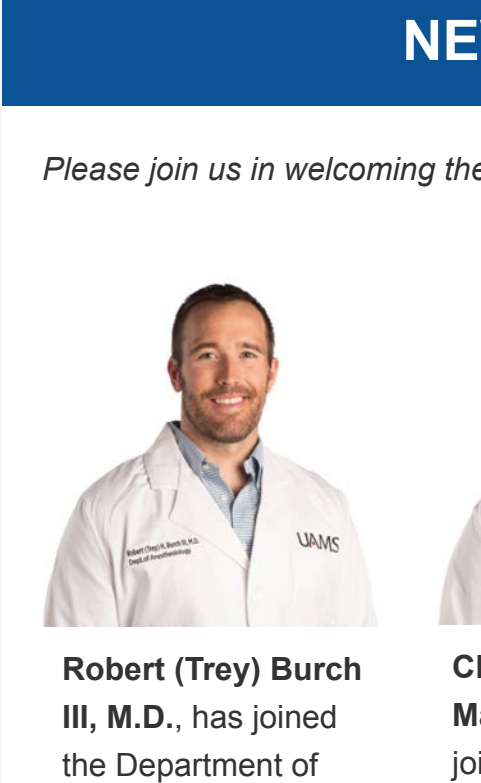
Chair, Neurobiology and Developmental Sciences



Paul Drew, Ph.D., Professor and Vice Chair of the Department of **Neurobiology and Developmental Sciences**, has been named the department's next chair, effective July 1. Dr. Drew will succeed Distinguished Professor and longtime Chair **Gwen Childs, Ph.D.**, who previously announced her decision to step down from the post once the next Chair had been appointed.

"Dr. Drew brings a wealth of leadership experience to his new role, with 27 years of service on our faculty and several key leadership positions behind him," said Dean and Executive Vice Chancellor **Steven Webber, MBChB**. [READ MORE](#)

Vice Chancellor, Research and Innovation



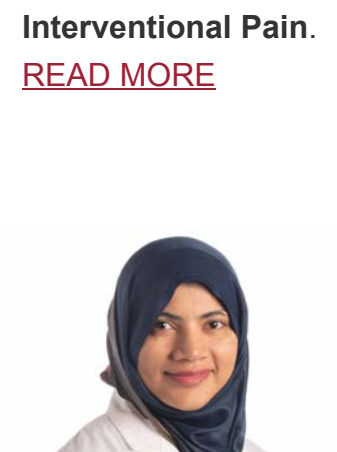
Dan Voth, Ph.D., Professor and Chair of the Department of **Microbiology and Immunology**, has been named UAMS Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation.

"We are delighted that Dr. Voth has agreed to take on this role," said UAMS Chancellor **Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA**. "He has held numerous leadership roles at UAMS, and I know he will do great things at the helm of our research efforts." [READ MORE](#)

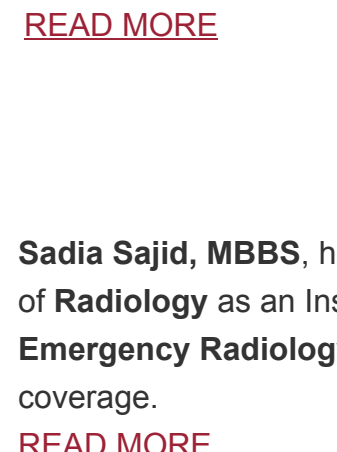
[Back to the top](#)

NEW FACULTY

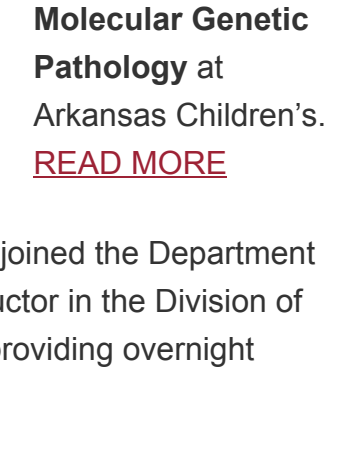
Please join us in welcoming these recent additions to the COM faculty.



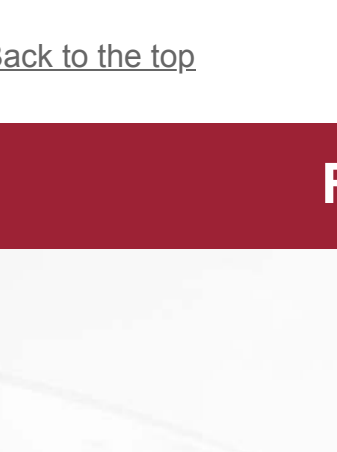
Robert (Trey) Burch III, M.D., has joined the Department of **Anesthesiology** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Interventional Pain**. [READ MORE](#)



Christopher Maranto, M.D., has joined the Department of **Anesthesiology** as an Assistant Professor. [READ MORE](#)



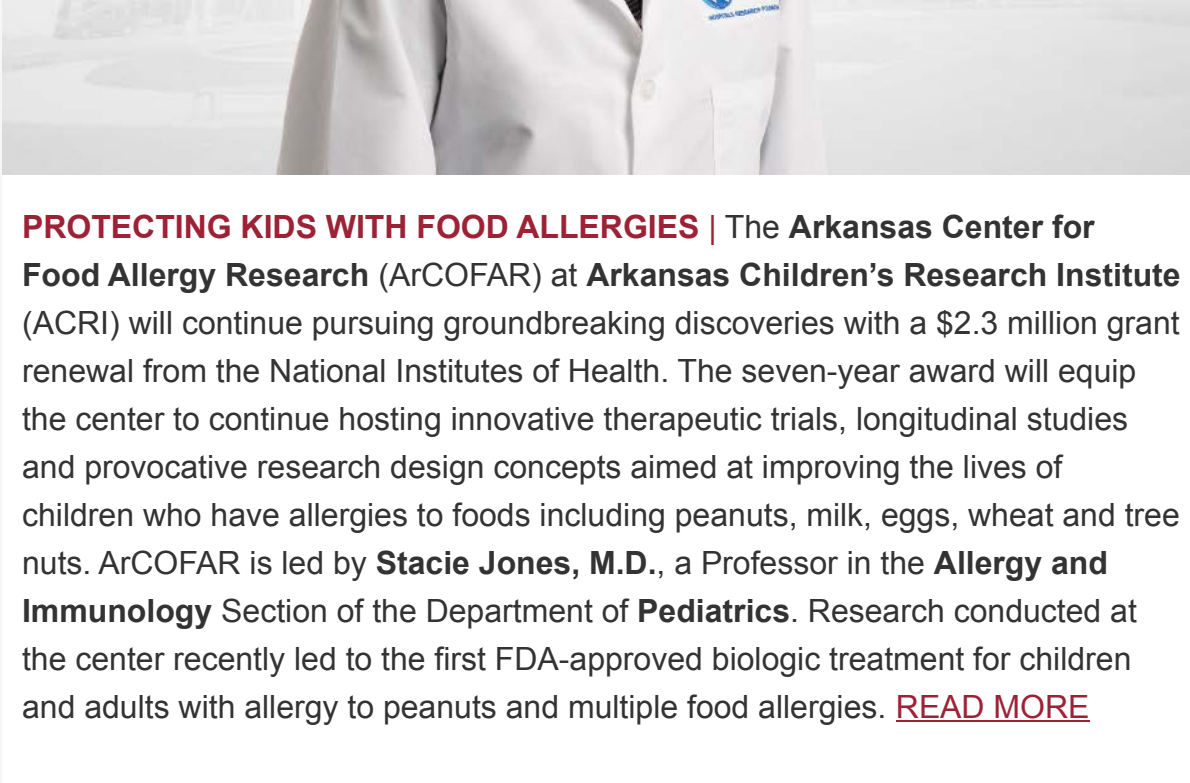
Saradhi Mallampati, Ph.D., has joined the Department of **Pathology** as an Assistant Professor and Section Medical Director for **Molecular Genetic Pathology** at Arkansas Children's. [READ MORE](#)



Sadia Sajid, MBBS, has joined the Department of **Radiology** as an Instructor in the Division of **Emergency Radiology** providing overnight coverage. [READ MORE](#)

[Back to the top](#)

RECENT GRANTS



PROTECTING KIDS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES | The **Arkansas Center for Food Allergy Research (ArCOFAR)** at **Arkansas Children's Research Institute** (ACRI) will continue pursuing groundbreaking discoveries with a \$2.3 million grant renewal from the National Institutes of Health. The seven-year award will equip the center to continue hosting innovative therapeutic trials, longitudinal studies and provocative research design concepts aimed at improving the lives of children who have allergies to foods including peanuts, milk, eggs, wheat and tree nuts. ArCOFAR is led by **Stacie Jones, M.D.**, a Professor in the **Allergy and Immunology** Section of the Department of **Pediatrics**. Research conducted at the center recently led to the first FDA-approved biologic treatment for children and adults with allergy to peanuts and multiple food allergies. [READ MORE](#)

EXTRAMURAL GRANTS

Congratulations to College of Medicine team members who received new extramural grants in March and April. 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 or which are highlighted above.

Martin Cannon, Ph.D., Department of **Microbiology and Immunology**, Mechanisms of Th17-DC immunotherapy for ovarian cancer, NIH/Nat. Cancer Institute, (03/07/2024 – 02/28/2026), \$393,402.

Shengyu Mu, Ph.D., Department of **Pharmacology and Toxicology**, T cell homing to the kidney contributes to salt retention and blood pressure regulation - Continuation, NIH/Nat. Heart, Lung & Blood Institute, (04/10/2019 – 03/31/2029), \$3,428,745.

Analiz Rodriguez, M.D., Department of **Neurosurgery**, Evaluation of the Innate Microenvironment in Melanoma Brain Metastases, NICO Corporation, (01/12/2024 – 03/31/2025), \$30,000.

Analiz Rodriguez, M.D., Department of **Neurosurgery**, Development of immunocompetent melanoma brain metastases organoids, NIH/Nat. Cancer Institute, (03/06/2024 – 02/28/2026), \$153,000.

Esraa Shosha, Ph.D., Department of **Pharmacology and Toxicology**, KTEF pediatric ophthalmology career-starter research grants, Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., (07/01/2024 - 06/30/2025), \$90,000.

INTAMURAL GRANTS

Congratulations to the faculty members who recently received intramural grants from the College of Medicine. The funding period for all grants is 6/01/2024-5/31/2025.

Barton Pilot Grants:

Lin-Xi Li, Ph.D., Department of **Microbiology and Immunology**, Interactions between the vaginal microbiota and adaptive immunity as a novel mechanism for protection against intravaginal Chlamydia, \$25,000.

Katie Ryan, Ph.D., Department of **Biochemistry and Molecular Biology**, Defining how Rnd3 signaling effects the metastatic potential of lung to brain metastasis, \$25,000.

Jason Stumhofer, Ph.D., Department of **Microbiology and Immunology**, Defining the synergistic activity of IFN-gamma and IL-10 on the regulation of the immune response to Plasmodium, \$25,000.

Zhiqiang Qin, M.D., Ph.D., Department of **Pathology**, Targeting an oncogenic viral protein using O^{PROTAC} technology, \$25,000.

Patricia Wight, Ph.D., Department of **Physiology and Cell Biology**, From Phenotype to Genotype: Investigation of a Novel Mouse Mutant, \$25,000.

Brian Kirkpatrick, M.D., Department of **Psychiatry**, Mortality in Nonaffective Psychosis, \$25,000.

Sturgis Grants:

Teresita Bellido, Ph.D., Department of **Physiology and Cell Biology**, Single-cell transcriptomic landscape of diabetic bone, \$31,146.

Shashank Kraleti, M.D., Department of **Family and Preventive Medicine**, Increased Prescription and Utilization of Continuous Glucose Monitoring ..., \$31,146.

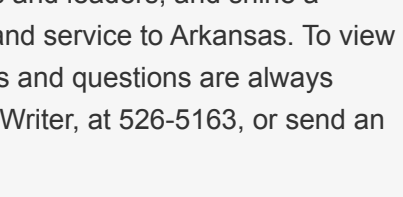
Hornick Grants:

Abdelrahman Fouda, Ph.D., Department of **Pharmacology and Toxicology**, The Role of Clustering in Ischemic Stroke, \$50,000.

[Back to the top](#)

IN MEMORIAM

Adam Kendall, an Education Coordinator at the UAMS Northwest Regional Campus, died Saturday, May 25. Mr. Kendall was a valued team member in Northwest Arkansas for the past 4 ½ years. Prior to his current role, he served as the Residency Program Coordinator for the Northwest Arkansas Family Medicine Residency Program. Mr. Kendall is remembered as a dedicated employee who contributed significantly to the organization and encouraged faculty, staff and students with his positive attitude and commitment to teamwork. More information will be available soon on the [UAMS In Memoriam](#) intranet page.



[Back to the top](#)