

MESSAGE FROM THE Dean



Dear Colleagues,

This month marked my seventh month at UAMS, and as the saying goes, the time has truly flown by. I had the honor of delivering my first State of the College Address on Sept. 24. It was a pleasure to celebrate the people who make our college great, review some of the major accomplishments of the past year and discuss our priorities and other issues for the year ahead.

Since my arrival, I have heard countless examples of your service at the local, state and national level, major honors, and impactful work in education, research, clinical care and service to the community. While preparing for my talk, I quickly discovered I could only scratch the surface of these wonderful achievements in an hour-long presentation.

So, let me reiterate how much I appreciate what you have already accomplished, and what we will do together over the next year and beyond.

Thanks to all of you who joined us in person or virtually. If you weren't able to attend, you can [watch a video recording of the State of the COM Address here](#).

Steve

Steven A. Webber, MBChB, MRCP
Dean, College of Medicine
Executive Vice Chancellor, UAMS

[Back to the top](#)

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



NEWLY INVESTED | Congratulations to **Sam Dalvi, M.D.**, Professor of **Internal Medicine** and Director of the Division of **Rheumatology and Immunology**, on his investiture in the Eleanor A. Lipsmeyer, M.D., Endowed Professorship in Rheumatology. Dr. Dalvi was recruited from the University of Alabama at Birmingham earlier this year. Dr. Lipsmeyer, the professorship's namesake, served on the faculty from 1969 until her retirement in 2015. [READ MORE](#)

Distinguished Faculty Scholar Lecture | October 9

UAMS Emeritus Society "Last Lecture" | October 10



Shuk-Mei Ho, Ph.D., Professor of **Pharmacology and Toxicology**, will deliver the 2024 College of Medicine Dean's Distinguished Faculty Scholar Lecture on Wednesday, Oct. 9. The lecture starts at 4 p.m. in Walton Auditorium on the 10th floor of the Cancer Institute. More information and Dr. Ho's bio are in the [lecture flyer](#).



Michael Jennings, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of **Physiology and Cell Biology**, will deliver the second annual UAMS Emeritus Society "Last Lecture: Lessons from a Lifetime of Learning" at 4 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 10. The lecture will be in Walton Auditorium on the 10th floor of the Cancer Institute and livestreamed at this [Zoom link](#). ([More info here](#))

[Back to the top](#)

NEW FACULTY

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



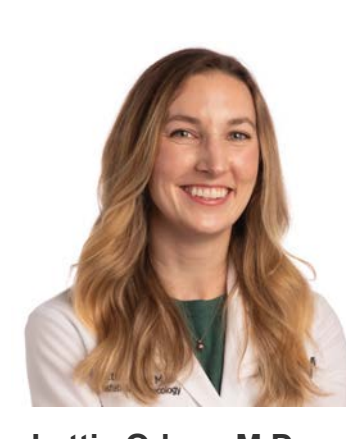
Emily Williamson, M.D., has joined the Department of **Anesthesiology** as an Assistant Professor. [READ MORE](#)



Sherry Abader, MBBCh, has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Hospital Medicine**. [READ MORE](#)



Sinthia Alam, M.D., has joined the Department of **Internal Medicine** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Hospital Medicine**. [READ MORE](#)



Lettie Odom, M.D., has joined the Department of **Obstetrics and Gynecology** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **General Obstetrics and Gynecology**. [READ MORE](#)



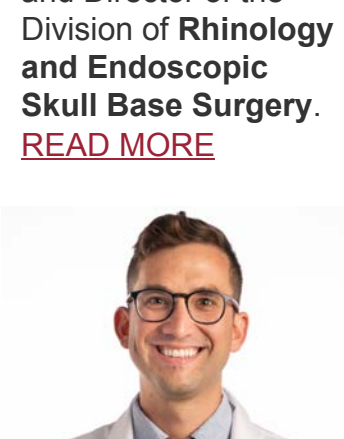
Tyler Merrill, M.D., has joined the Department of **Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery** as an Assistant Professor and Director of the Division of **Rhinology and Endoscopic Skull Base Surgery**. [READ MORE](#)



Anvesh Kempelli, M.D., has joined the Department of **Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery** as an Assistant Professor. [READ MORE](#)



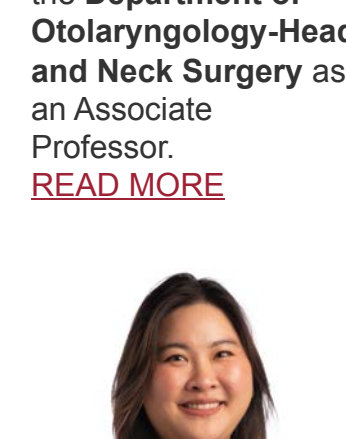
Adrian Williamson, III, M.D., has joined the Department of **Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery** as an Associate Professor. [READ MORE](#)



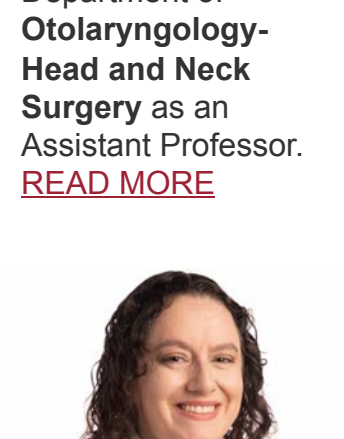
Adrian Williamson IV, M.D., has joined the Department of **Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery** as an Assistant Professor. [READ MORE](#)



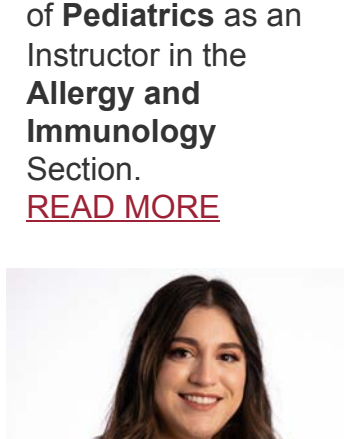
Dieu Doan, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Instructor in the **Allergy and Immunology** Section. [READ MORE](#)



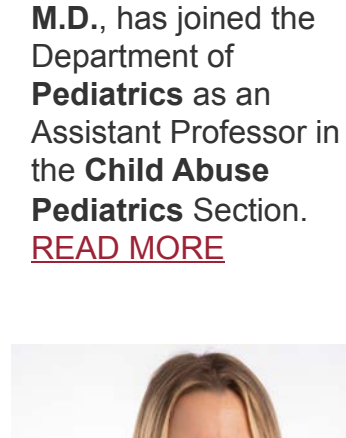
Thanh Thanh Dai, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Child Abuse Pediatrics** Section. [READ MORE](#)



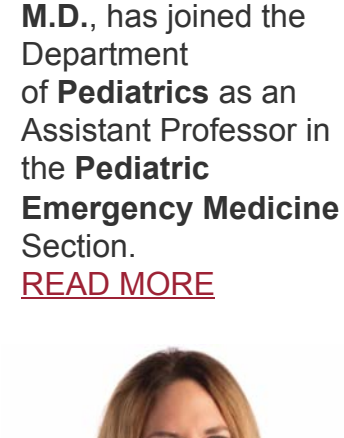
Krystle McCarson, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Pediatric Emergency Medicine** Section. [READ MORE](#)



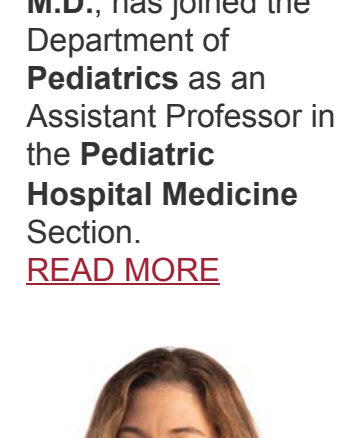
Carissa Rodriguez, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Pediatric Hospital Medicine** Section. [READ MORE](#)



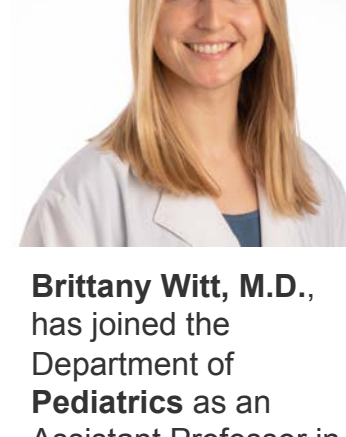
Brittany Witt, M.D., has joined the Department of **Pediatrics** as an Assistant Professor in the **Neonatology** Section. [READ MORE](#)



Jamie Cannon, M.D., has joined the Department of **Surgery** as a Professor in the Division of **Colorectal Surgery**. [READ MORE](#)



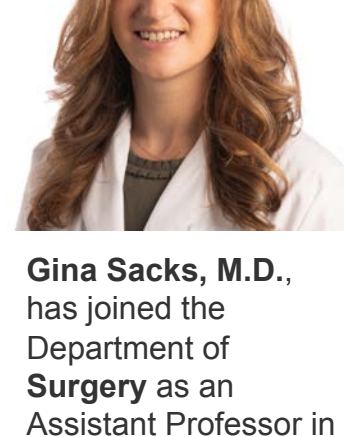
Gina Sacks, M.D., has joined the Department of **Surgery** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Pediatric Plastic Surgery**. [READ MORE](#)



John Montgomery, M.D., has joined the Department of **Surgery** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Transplant Surgery**. [READ MORE](#)



Tsukasa Nakamura, M.D., Ph.D., has joined the Department of **Surgery** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Transplant Surgery**. [READ MORE](#)



Ulugbek Negmadjanov, M.D., has joined the Department of **Surgery** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of **Vascular Surgery**. [READ MORE](#)

[Back to the top](#)

RECENT GRANTS

Recent Grants, Federal Funding Awarded to UAMS to Reduce Maternal and Infant Mortality in Arkansas



POSTPARTUM SUPPORT FOR MOMS AND BABIES | Congress has appropriated \$5 million in Health Resources and Services Administration funding to UAMS to coordinate efforts across the state to reduce infant mortality. The project is directed by **Nirvana Manning, M.D.**, Professor and Chair of the Department of **Obstetrics and Gynecology**. UAMS will work with birthing hospitals statewide to provide crucial resources. [READ MORE](#)



PREVENTION-FOCUSED OUTREACH IN DELTA | UAMS will receive up to \$2.4 million from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services over the next four years to test prevention strategies for reducing high rates of maternal and infant deaths in the Arkansas Delta. BioVentures LLC is leading the effort with multiple partners across UAMS. **Stefanie Kennon-McGill, Ph.D.**, is Principal Investigator. [READ MORE](#)



ENSURING HEALTHIER EATING IN EARLY CHILDCARE | UAMS researcher **Taren Massey-Swindle, Ph.D.**, and a Louisiana Tech University collaborator has secured a \$3 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to address feeding practices at 80 early childhood care and education sites in Arkansas and Louisiana. [READ MORE](#)



IMMUNE RESPONSE TO EYE DISEASE | The laboratory of **Abdel Fouda, Ph.D.**, in the Department of **Pharmacology and Toxicology** has received nearly \$2.2 million from the National Eye Institute to study how modulating the body's immune response may potentially benefit patients with retinopathy. [READ MORE](#)

Congratulations also to the following College of Medicine team members who were awarded new extramural grants in August. This monthly list, courtesy of the College of Medicine Office of Research, excludes clinical trials and awards under \$10,000, as well as grants highlighted above or previously reported in the COMmunication.

Martin Cannon, Ph.D., Department of **Microbiology and Immunology**, Mechanisms of Combinatorial Therapy to Enhance Anti-PD-1 Immune Checkpoint Inhibition for Ovarian Cancer, U.S. Department of Defense, (11/15/2024 - 11/14/2027), \$688,500.

Robert Griffin, Ph.D., Department of **Radiation Oncology**, Investigating the role of metabolic rewiring in breast tumor innervation, NIH/Nat. Cancer Institute, (05/01/2024 - 04/30/2029), \$42,976.

Lu Huang, Ph.D., Department of **Microbiology and Immunology**, Ontogeny and metabolism of lung alveolar macrophages in tuberculosis, NIH/Nat. Inst. of Allergy & Infectious Diseases, (08/13/2024 - 06/30/2029), \$769,925.

Alan Tackett, Ph.D., Department of **Biochemistry and Molecular Biology**, Leveraging cancer-evolved resistance mechanisms to enhance EZH2 activity in adoptive T cells, NIH/Nat. Cancer Institute, (06/01/2024 - 05/31/2026), \$393,401.

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