

The Monthly Newsletter for
Faculty, Staff and Friends of the
UAMS College of Medicine

UAMS
College of Medicine

COMmunication

September 2018

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UAMS Celebrates Legacy of Dr. Edith Irby Jones



70 years ago this month, Edith Irby entered the College of Medicine - the first African American admitted to a previously all-white medical school in the South. With great courage, she made history.

UAMS celebrated this trailblazer with three special events and scholarships honoring Dr. Edith Irby Jones. The commemorations began on Sept. 5 with "The Quiet Pioneer," a historical presentation by **Erick Messias, M.D., Ph.D., M.P.H.**, a Professor of **Psychiatry** and Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs (*bottom right photo in the montage above*). Dr. Messias also wrote an essay based on his talk, which you can [read here](#).

On Sept. 12, **Ronda Henry-Tillman, M.D.**, a Professor of **Surgery**, and junior medical student **Sasha Ray** (*bottom left*) joined two COM alumnae for "Shattering the Glass Ceiling," a panel discussion of past and current challenges faced by women and particularly women of color.

On Sept. 19, UAMS welcomed Dr. Jones to campus for a luncheon in her honor (*top left*) with a keynote presentation by 1960 alumna and former U.S. Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders, M.D. Two COM students were awarded scholarships established in Dr. Jones' honor, and an endowed scholarship campaign is underway.

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"The story of Edith Irby Jones reminds us where we've been, how much we've overcome, and how long we still have to go to ensure fairness and justice for all of us."

-Dr. Erick Messias

Fun in the Sun





The second annual Academic House Olympics gave students an opportunity to set aside the stress of medical school for a few hours of fun. The Saturday, Sept. 15, festivities at Murray Park included classic contests such as tug-of-war, sack races and volleyball. Teams vied for points toward the coveted House Cup, which will be awarded this spring.

Overall top honors for the day went to Beall House (*top photo in the montage above*), which snagged first place in attendance and three other games. Tank House (*bottom left*) blew away the competition in the House Spirit category with their giant props including - what else - a cardboard "armored tank." The final event of the day was the tug-of-war refereed by Dean **Christopher T. Westfall, M.D.** (*far right in bottom right photo*).

The House Olympics was created to help students and faculty members get to know one another better outside of the classroom and build bonds, to support wellness, academic success and professional growth. About 350 students, faculty and family members participated.

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New Faculty and Leaders

Dr. Christopher Westfall Appointed Permanent Dean of College of Medicine

Christopher T. Westfall, M.D., FACS, was named Dean of the College of Medicine Sept. 3 following six months as Interim Dean and 21 years of service as a clinical and academic leader on the COM faculty.

"Dr. Westfall has served UAMS for more than 20 years as a physician, department leader and head of the Jones Eye Institute," said Chancellor **Cam Patterson, M.D.** "He is the perfect person for the job and we are thankful he has agreed to continue to serve in this important capacity."

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Microbiology and Immunology

Youssef Aachoui, Ph.D., has joined the Department of **Microbiology and Immunology** as an Assistant Professor.

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Psychiatry

Melissa Zielinski, Ph.D., has joined the Department of **Psychiatry** as an Assistant Professor in the Division of Health Services Research.

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In the Spotlight

Dr. Bill Ventres Invested in Saltzman Chair

William “Bill” Ventres, M.D., M.A., an Assistant Professor in the Department of **Family and Preventive Medicine**, was invested Sept. 17 in the Ben Saltzman, M.D., Distinguished Chair in Rural Family Medicine.

Dr. Ventres, who joined UAMS in 2017, is a family physician and medical anthropologist with more than 30 years of clinical experience working with disadvantaged patients. He is known as a leader in developing family medicine internationally, researching doctor-patient communication using qualitative methods, and studying the social history of family medicine in the United States.

He plans to encourage students and residents to practice in rural and underserved areas in Arkansas to improve health outcomes.

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Dr. Seth Berney Invested in Lipsmeyer Professorship in Rheumatology

Seth Berney, M.D., Professor and Director of the Division of Rheumatology and Immunology in the Department of **Internal Medicine**, was invested as the inaugural holder of the Eleanor A. Lipsmeyer Professorship in Rheumatology on Sept. 25.

Dr. Berney, who is also Director of the Rheumatology Fellowship, has more than 20 years of experience as a researcher and teacher, for which he has received numerous awards. Since joining UAMS in 2014, he has made it his goal to develop one of the premier rheumatology training programs in the country.

The professorship honors Dr. Lipsmeyer, a beloved rheumatologist and educator who served on the faculty for 45 years and retired in 2015.

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Emergency Medicine Resident Earns Military Excellence Award

Dan Holleyman, M.D., a third-year resident in the Department of **Emergency Medicine**, has been named the recipient of the Steve Tantama, M.D., Military Excellence Award by the Emergency Medicine Residents Association (EMRA). The award, to be presented at the American College of Emergency Physicians Scientific Assembly in San Diego on Oct. 2, honors residents who embody the ideals of leadership, integrity and bravery in service to the nation and the specialty.

Dr. Holleyman enlisted in the Army in 2003. He earned the Green Beret in 2006 and joined the 20th Special Forces Group as a Special Forces Medical Sergeant, serving in Afghanistan in 2009-10. He was commissioned as a Medical Corps Officer in 2016 and currently serves as the Deputy Battalion Surgeon of the 2nd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group.



Psychiatry Fellows Honored by National Association

Srinivasa Gokarakonda, M.D., and **Holly Hunter, M.D.**, second-year fellows in the Department of **Psychiatry's** Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, recently received honors and travel awards from the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP).

Dr. Gokarakonda (*top photo*) was named a winner of a 2018 Systems of Care Special Program Clinical Poster Projects Award, providing him the opportunity to learn about treating children with mental disorders within community-based systems of care.

Dr. Hunter (*bottom photo*) was selected for the AACAP Educational Outreach Program, which provides a formal overview into the field of child and adolescent psychiatry. Both received travel awards to attend the AACAP annual meeting in Seattle on Oct. 22-27.



Not Your Average Grand Rounds: Diagnosing Mozart's Fatal Anasarca

The Arkansas Symphony's Quapaw String Quartet, a noted physician-author and a captivating hypothesis about the strange and sudden death of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart were all part of this year's George Link Ackerman Visiting Professorship Grand Rounds in **Internal Medicine**.

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Showcase Puts COBRES in Spotlight

Have the COBRE programs at UAMS and ACRI reached critical mass and can now benefit the entire campus and research community? **Mark Smeltzer, Ph.D.**, a Professor of **Microbiology and Immunology** and Director of the longstanding Center for Microbial Pathogenesis and Host Inflammatory Responses, certainly thinks so.

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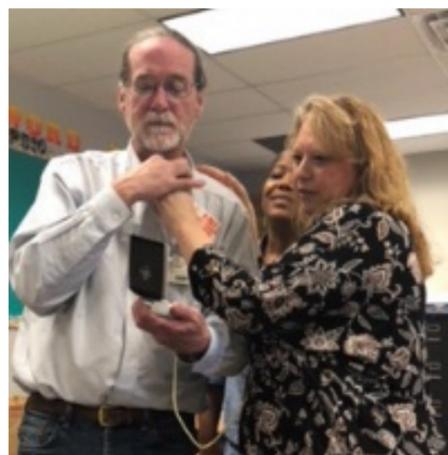
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Recent Grants

Dr. Kevin Phelan Receives \$1.27M for Ultrasound Education in Little Rock Schools

Kevin Phelan, Ph.D., Professor and Co-Director of the Division of Clinical Anatomy in the Department of **Neurobiology and Developmental Sciences**, will bring a bit of "wow" factor to help Little Rock ninth graders learn about STEM careers and cardiovascular health, thanks to a five-year, \$1.27 million grant from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences.

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[Intramural Grants \(August\)](#)

Timothy Chambers, Ph.D., Department of **Biochemistry and Molecular Biology**, Primary Cancer Cells for Understanding Novel and Clinically-relevant Interphase Mechanisms of Microtubule-Targeting Agents, The Development Enhancement Awards for Proposals (08/09/2018 - 07/31/2019), \$25,000.



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The *COMmunication* is published monthly to highlight key initiatives and developments in the COM, to introduce new faculty members and leaders, and to celebrate major professional honors and awards. The Dean's Office works in partnership with designated newsletter liaisons throughout the COM. To find your department's contact, read our submission guidelines or 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*.

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