

UAMS News Bureau

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**UAMS Hires Michelle Gonzalez, Ph.D., to Direct
New Nurse Anesthetist Program**

LITTLE ROCK – The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has hired Michelle Gonzalez, Ph.D., CRNA, to guide the formation and accreditation of a new nurse anesthesia educational program.

Gonzalez comes to UAMS from the University of Maryland School of Nursing, where she served as an assistant professor and simulation coordinator and performed clinical practice as a certified registered nurse anesthetist at the University of Maryland Medical Center.

“Starting a new educational program from scratch can be a formidable task, as there are many processes that must take place before we can actually begin to admit students,” said Gonzalez, pointing to securing accreditation and procuring equipment and facilities.

“It’s very important to earn buy-in from the community and engagement of those early adopters and supporters of this program to which we are all extremely grateful. Their commitment of time will be an enormous help in making this program a success from day one, but with their help I know we can overcome many challenges,” she said.

Before the program can be established, it must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs, a process that involves a rigorous and comprehensive list of requirements to meet nationally established standards of academic quality.

“We are very pleased to have someone as capable as Dr. Gonzalez,” said Patricia Cowan, Ph.D., R.N., dean of the UAMS College of Nursing. “Her leadership will prove instrumental in shepherding our CRNA program from vision to reality as we prepare to seek accreditation, a daunting first step, but one we’re confident she will accomplish with distinction.”

Gonzalez earned her bachelor’s degree in nursing from North Park College in Chicago in 1986. She earned a master’s in nursing from DePaul University, also in Chicago, and

concurrently, a diploma in nurse anesthesia in 1998. Over the following eight years, she earned another bachelor's degree in Chinese nutrition and a master's in oriental medicine. In 2016 she completed her doctoral degree in Educational Leadership at Trident University International in Cyprus, Calif.

Gonzalez has been a practicing nurse anesthetist since 1998, beginning at Cook County Hospital in Chicago. She continued in that role working in hospitals and private practice in Illinois, Texas and Maryland before joining the faculty of the University of Maryland Medical Center in 2010 and the University of Maryland School of Nursing in 2013. During that time, she also served in the U.S. Navy Reserve, Department of Anesthesia, rising to the rank of commander and heading the department.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; hospital; northwest Arkansas regional campus; statewide network of regional centers; and six institutes: the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, Psychiatric Research Institute, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging and Translational Research Institute. It is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. UAMS has 2,727 students, 870 medical residents and five dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 10,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses throughout the state, Arkansas Children's Hospital, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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