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**\$765,789 Grant to Focus on Racial, Ethnic Health Disparities**

LITTLE ROCK — A five-year, \$765,789 grant to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences ((UAMS) will support teaching graduate students advanced analytics to address racial and ethnic health disparities.

The grant, from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), establishes the Arkansas Center for Health Disparities T32 Pre-doctoral Research Training Program.

Mick Tilford, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Health Policy and Management in the UAMS College of Public Health, led the grant application with support from the UAMS Translational Research Institute.

“Minorities are much more likely to experience chronic diseases and have other poor health outcomes,” Tilford said. “Exhibit A is COVID-19. African-Americans make up only 13% of the U.S. population, but 33% of hospitalizations are from this demographic.”

He and Jonathan Bona, Ph.D., will co-direct the T32 program, which will select two graduate students per year. Bona is an assistant professor in the UAMS College of Medicine Department of Biomedical Informatics.

Tilford believes that developing the skills needed to analyze large sets of data by computer will lead to a better understanding of the complex relationships between social determinants of health and population health outcomes.

With multidisciplinary, team-based science as part of the T32 training, Tilford said the program will produce a new generation of researchers to address health disparities and to improve health equity.

“This is the only NIMHD T32 research training program in the state,” he said. “It will serve as a model for improving disparate population health outcomes in the state, region and nation.”

The program builds on the research infrastructure of the NIMHD-funded Arkansas Center for Health Disparities Center of Excellence and five Ph.D. programs across the colleges of Public Health, Pharmacy and Nursing with support from the Department of Biomedical Informatics.

The T32 training will include collaborations with the Translational Research Institute, Regional Campuses and Institute for Digital Health & Innovation at UAMS, and the Institute for Advanced Data Analytics at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

The Translational Research Institute is supported by a Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) from the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences of the National Institutes of Health, grant UL1 TR003107.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; hospital; a main campus in Little Rock; a Northwest Arkansas regional campus in Fayetteville; a statewide network of regional campuses; and seven 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, Translational Research Institute and Institute for Digital Health & Innovation. UAMS includes UAMS Health, a statewide health system that encompasses all of UAMS' clinical enterprise including its hospital, regional clinics and clinics it operates or staffs in cooperation with other providers. UAMS is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. *U.S. News & World Report* named UAMS Medical Center the state's Best Hospital; ranked its ear, nose and throat program among the top 50 nationwide; and named six areas as high performing — cancer, colon cancer surgery, heart failure, hip replacement, knee replacement and lung cancer surgery. 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, Arkansas Children's Hospital, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit [www.uams.edu](http://www.uams.edu) or [www.uamshealth.com](http://www.uamshealth.com). Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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