

UAMS News Bureau

Office of Communications & Marketing
4301 West Markham # 890
Little Rock, AR 72205-7199

uamshealth.com/news



**News Release
May 20, 2020**

Media Contacts:

Leslie W. Taylor, 501-686-8998
Wireless phone: 501-951-7260
leslie@uams.edu

Liz Caldwell, 501-686-8995
Wireless phone: 501-350-4364
liz@uams.edu

**UAMS Medical Student Amy James Receives
Prestigious Award from U.S. Public Health Service**

LITTLE ROCK – Amy James, a senior at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), has been selected to receive a 2020 Excellence in Public Health Award from the U.S. Public Health Service Physician Professional Advisory Committee.

The national award is given to medical students who are public health champions advancing the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) mission to “protect, promote and advance the health and safety of our nation” and who are helping address public health issues in their community.

The award was created by the USPHS to inspire medical students to commit themselves to public health and to become leaders in their field. Each year, every U.S. medical school is able to nominate one student who has worked hard to increase awareness about health care and put that knowledge into action.

James, who is pursuing a dual degree (M.D. and Master of Public Health) in the UAMS College of Medicine and the UAMS Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health, was selected for this prestigious award in recognition of her commitment to finding a solution for controlling tuberculosis (TB) in the Marshallese community in Springdale.

Although Arkansas as a state has a TB case rate of 3/100,000, the rate among the 10,000 or more Marshallese living in Springdale is 200/100,000. The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) has worked for several years trying to control tuberculosis disease in the Marshallese population.

James, working with Leonard Mukasa, M.D., Ph.D., the chief epidemiologist for the tuberculosis control program at ADH, studied the epidemiologic data concerning the Marshallese as part of her capstone research project, which is known as the Integrated Learning Experience (ILE) in the College of Public Health. She began this work in the fall of 2019 and will report her findings in a scientific paper together with a poster presentation in May 2020.

“Amy is a creative and thoughtful researcher who truly embodies our shared mission to improve the public’s health,” said James Graham, M.D., executive associate dean for academic affairs in the UAMS College of Medicine. “Based on her character, achievements, work ethic, and passion for public health, I predict a bright future for her.”

According to David A. Jackson, M.D., with the USPHS, “this award is a testament to the education provided by the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences College of Medicine and to the high caliber of your students. We hope that this will encourage your faculty and students to continue their strong work in public health.”

James expressed her gratitude to Graham; her MD/MPH program advisor Joseph Bates, M.D.; and Mukasa, who serves as her capstone advisor.

“Amy is an excellent example of how involving medical students in public health issues can inform them about how public health is closely intertwined with traditional medical practice,” said Bates, associate dean for public health practice in the College of Public Health.

“I would not have been able to complete this research and ultimately receive this Excellence in Public Health award without the support from the UAMS faculty, specifically Dr. Mukasa, Dr. Bates and Dr. Graham,” James said. “At a time when health care inequities seem to be ever more pronounced, I am grateful for the support I was given and the opportunity to work on a project that very well could have a positive and lasting influence on this community.”

Originally from Monticello, Ark., James earned an undergraduate degree in biochemistry from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville before entering the dual degree program at UAMS. She plans to complete her residency in internal medicine and hopes to continue to work with her interests of pulmonary diseases and public health.

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 or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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