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**UAMS Division for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Receives
\$800,000 Grant to Launch Academy for Arkansas Students**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Division for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion has received an \$800,000 grant from the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services Temporary Assistance for Needed Families program.

Funding will support the creation of a Pathways Academy, a comprehensive learning and community engagement program focusing on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) for students in public middle and high schools across Arkansas. The annual grant is renewable for up to five years, or a potential commitment of \$4 million.

“The Pathways Academy is meant to not only give students the opportunity to explore and pursue careers in science and health care fields, but to build bridges of community engagement and education in communities with underrepresented minority populations, opening doors for clinical and translation research as well,” said Brian Gittens, Ed.D., MPA, UAMS vice chancellor for diversity, equity and inclusion.

The Pathways Academy program will use online tools to engage selected Pathways Scholars from families eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and help prepare those students for careers in STEM and health care fields, with opportunities for mentoring, tutoring, attending conferences and seminars, internships, summer programming and technology-based technical training.

The program will also engage the parents of Pathways Scholars by hosting workshops meant to help them in supporting their child’s academic career and will also provide training for scholars’ teachers.

“The achievement gap for socioeconomically disadvantaged students and students from minority backgrounds is well documented in terms of graduation and matriculation rates,” said Gittens. “Our purpose with this program is equity and providing resources to those who need them to prepare them for further academic and career advancement.”

Immediate program goals include staffing to support curriculum and program development and administration, said Gittens. This staff will then begin the work of recruitment of students, parents and teachers.

“Our long term goal is to grow to include 1,200 students statewide,” said Gittens. “We want to empower them, as well as their parents and teachers, to break the cycle of poverty with opportunities for education and employment and to create partnerships that help us eliminate disparities in health and wellness across the entire state.”

The Pathways Academy program is 100% funded through an Arkansas Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Services, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families subgrant to the UAMS Division for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the amount of \$800,000, with no nongovernmental funds contributing. The entire amount of those funds will be used to support the Pathways Academy, focusing on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) for students in public, middle and high schools across Arkansas.

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 — COPD, colon cancer surgery, heart failure, hip replacement, knee replacement and lung cancer surgery. UAMS has 2,876 students, 898 medical residents and four 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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