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Pioneering Researcher Returns to UAMS Myeloma Center

LITTLE ROCK — John D. Shaughnessy, Jr., Ph.D., has rejoined the Myeloma Center in the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) as a principal staff scientist and professor of medicine.

“It feels great to be back,” said Shaughnessy, whose research is focused on developing new targeted therapies for multiple myeloma, a cancer of the plasma cells, which are a type of white blood cell that is found in the bone marrow. “I am very happy to be working with Dr. Zhan again as we were very productive together.”

“Dr. Shaughnessy’s return to UAMS expands and strengthens our research and subsequent treatment here at the Myeloma Center,” said Fenghuang “Frank” Zhan, director of research at the Myeloma Center. “He came to UAMS in 1996 specifically to create a tissue archive and accompanying genetic profiles on myeloma patients.”

The archive and profiles require long-term follow-up on uniformly treated patients to learn more about the genetics of short and long survival, Zhan added.

“We now have patient cases that have been studied for more than 20 years, which allows me to investigate the genetics of extremely long survivors in the hope of turning those insights into a way to help those who die from their disease much earlier in their treatments,” Shaughnessy said.

During his initial time at the Myeloma Center, he served as director of the Lambert Laboratory of Myeloma Genetics and led the center’s Division of Basic Sciences.

Shaughnessy left UAMS in 2010 to establish Myeloma Health, LLC and Signal Genetics, LLC in 2013, offering improved diagnostic and prognostic testing for myeloma patients using patented technologies developed at UAMS. The technologies were sold to Quest Diagnostics, and the companies are no longer in operation.

The Richmond, Virginia, native received his doctorate degree in molecular biology from the University of Maryland and served his postdoctoral fellowship in the Mammalian

Genetics Laboratory of the National Cancer Institute's Frederick Cancer Research and Development Center.

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* recognized UAMS Medical Center as a Best Hospital for 2021-22; ranked its ear, nose and throat program among the top 50 nationwide for the third year; and named five areas as high performing — colon cancer surgery, diabetes, hip replacement, knee replacement and stroke. *Forbes* magazine ranked UAMS as seventh in the nation on its Best Employers for Diversity list. UAMS also ranked in the top 30% nationwide on *Forbes*' Best Employers for Women list and was the only Arkansas employer included. UAMS has 2,876 students, 898 medical residents and six 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, 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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