

UAMS News Bureau

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**UAMS Names Kirt Simmons, DDS, Ph.D., Chair
of Department of Pediatric and Special Needs Dentistry**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has appointed Kirt Simmons, DDS, Ph.D., as chair of the Department of Pediatric and Special Needs Dentistry. He has served as the department’s interim chair since August 2020.

A professor in the UAMS College of Medicine, Simmons is a nationally recognized leader in orthodontic care for patients with cleft/craniofacial anomalies, growth disorders, and special needs such as Down syndrome, autism and other conditions. He is also a leading expert in facial growth, development and identification, and orthodontic and dental digital standards.

“I am delighted that Dr. Simmons has agreed to take on this role,” said Susan Smyth, M.D., Ph.D., UAMS executive vice chancellor and dean of the College of Medicine. “A longtime leader at UAMS and Arkansas Children’s, he has done a wonderful job as interim chair. I know the department is in good hands.”

He earned his DDS and a Ph.D. in pharmacology at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio. He completed his residency in orthodontics and a National Institutes of Health-fellowship in craniofacial anomalies at the University of North Carolina (UNC). He held faculty posts at Indiana University and UNC before his recruitment to UAMS and Arkansas Children’s in 1997. In 1998, he was named Arkansas Children’s orthodontic director, a position he has held since.

Simmons has served in leadership positions with the Arkansas Association of Orthodontists, the Southwest Society of Orthodontists, the American Association of Orthodontists and the American Dental Association. He is a Fellow of the International College of Dentists. He has served since 2015 on the Facial Identification Subcommittee of the Organization of Scientific Advisory Committees in the U.S. Department of Justice. He also serves as the orthodontic reviewer for program accreditation for the American Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Association. He has published extensively and has lectured internationally on his areas of expertise.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; a 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. 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 3,047 students, 873 medical residents and fellows, 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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