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**Jenkins, Kovak Appointed to New Leadership Positions
at UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute**

LITTLE ROCK — Amy Jo Jenkins, M.S., CCRP, has been named associate director of administration for the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS). Succeeding Jenkins, Matthew Kovak, M.S., CCRP, has been promoted to executive director of the clinical trials office.

After leading a significant expansion of the Cancer Institute’s clinical trials operations, Jenkins assumes leadership of all research administration and operations for the Cancer Institute. She also will oversee its growing staff. As UAMS works toward National Cancer Institute (NCI) Designation, Jenkins will advise senior leaders to ensure infrastructure and operations are aligned with NCI expectations for an NCI-designated cancer center.

“In less than a year, Amy Jo has made a significant impact in our clinical trials area, overseeing unprecedented growth in our staff and trial enrollments. Combined with her vast experience, especially her years of overseeing the daily operations of the Translational Research Institute here at UAMS, she will do a great job in this broader role,” said Michael Birrer, M.D., Ph.D., vice chancellor and director of the Cancer Institute.

Jenkins was previously chief of staff in the office of Chancellor Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA. Prior to that, Jenkins was executive director of the Translational Research Institute from 2016 to 2020, providing oversight and leadership of the institute’s daily operations. She joined the Translational Research Institute in 2014 as a senior project manager. She also has taught courses through the UAMS colleges of Public Health and Pharmacy as part of a program in regulatory sciences since 2012.

She first joined UAMS in 2009 as clinical research monitoring manager. Prior to that, Jenkins worked as a lead clinical research monitor at a large medical device company and served as a vice president of clinical operations for a site management organization. She received a master’s degree in clinical research organization and management from Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Jenkins is immediate past president of the board of directors for the Society of Clinical Research Associates (SOCRA), serving as a board member since 2016. The nonprofit, charitable and educational membership organization provides an internationally recognized certification program for clinical research professionals (CCRP).

In 2011, Jenkins became the founding member and chairperson of the Arkansas SOCRA Chapter. She has also worked as an administrator in the national Clinical and Translational Science Award consortium.

Kovak succeeds Jenkins as executive director of the Cancer Institute's clinical trials office. Previously, he served as assistant director of regulatory and financial affairs for cancer clinical trials at UAMS.

Kovak will direct early phase clinical research, including operations, staffing, trial management and execution, and business development. He will also work to improve the effectiveness of executing cancer-related research contracts and filings in partnership with other institutional offices.

His other duties include creating and managing a quality assurance and control program within the Cancer Institute's research efforts, and developing and maintaining standard operating procedures. He will also oversee the UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute Network, which includes such participants as the UAMS Regional Campuses, the UAMS/Baptist Health joint venture and the Cancer Institute's partner practices throughout Arkansas. Kovak will work to help to identify and use opportunities to develop and expand clinical trial participation throughout the network.

Kovak joined UAMS as a research technician in 2010 and has taken on increasingly larger roles since then, including lab manager and research assistant, regulatory specialist and regulator manager at the Cancer Institute.

He is a graduate of Lyon College in Batesville, Arkansas. He received a master's degree from UAMS in biochemistry and molecular biology and was a 2009 UAMS summer undergraduate research fellow. He is a member of the Society of Clinical Research Associates and the Association of American Cancer Institutes.

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

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