

UAMS News Bureau

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**Arkansas Medical Partnership Launches
Health Careers Workforce Mobile Unit**

LITTLE ROCK — The Health Careers Workforce Mobile Unit, a new traveling medical education facility, is hitting the road to educate students across the state on the various career opportunities in health care.

The launch of the unit was announced at a press conference today at the Burgundy Hotel in Little Rock. The UAMS-led program is managed by the Arkansas Rural Health Partnership (ARHP) with support from the Community Health Centers of Arkansas (CHCA).

The purpose of the mobile training facility is to visit schools in rural communities to increase understanding, awareness, interest and connection to health career opportunities. Students learn about available health care careers through simulation experiences and visits with health care professionals, including UAMS medical students.

“We are proud of this program because we recognize that by introducing health care career opportunities to individuals in rural communities, it may also get them excited about the possibilities that lie ahead,” said Richard Turnage, M.D., vice chancellor for UAMS Regional Campuses. “When programs like this invest in the future of students, everyone benefits.”

The interactive experience provides students with information on the education requirements needed for entry into specific medical fields, how many years of training are required, the average cost of programs and the institutions that offer medical training and then guides them through the admissions processes and scholarship opportunities.

“In addressing the health care gap in Arkansas, we need to pursue innovative approaches like the Health Careers Workforce Mobile Unit,” said Mellie Bridewell, president of ARHP. “Through the variety of resources that this facility offers, we have a proactive strategy in directing students toward careers in health care, helping to alleviate the growing demand for quality treatment.”

“What we are excited about is that this project is the culmination of focused collaboration between several organizations, and we understand that is crucial in providing excellent localized health care,” said Rex Jones, MBA, chief executive officer of ARHP. “Through these partnerships, we believe we have established the groundwork for future programs that will further help underserved communities in Arkansas.”

The unit has an exam room, two blood draw rooms and state-of-the-art equipment such as smartboards. Career counselors are available both on-site and virtually to connect interested students to customized college and career path preparation. Through the partnership, multiple possibilities are being explored to utilize the mobile unit for junior and senior medical students to participate in providing care, or additional training, to rural and underserved communities, or to assist in promoting health professions to junior and high school students. There will also be an option through the AHEC Scholars program at UAMS for a senior elective that will allow students to accompany the unit’s staff at visits.

“What we have learned from the COVID-19 pandemic is that we need creative solutions to accommodate the demand for personalized care throughout the state,” said Lanita White, Pharm.D., chief executive officer of CHCA. “This is especially so for vulnerable, minority and rural populations.”

To schedule a visit, contact Nathan O’Fallon nathan@arruralhealth.org or call (870) 939-8772. For more information ARHP’s health care career programing, visit careers.arruralhealth.org.

The program is grant-funded by the UAMS regional campuses program through Arkansas Medical Education Primary Care Partnerships (AR MEd-PCP). The program is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Value-Based Medical Student Education Training Program of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$12,282,365 with 10% financed with non-governmental sources.

ARHP is a nonprofit horizontal hospital and economic development organization composed of 14 independently owned rural hospitals in south Arkansas. This unique network is the largest health care service provider in the area and serves as a hub for economic growth and development across the region. ARHP efforts aim to support and improve existing health care infrastructure, while strengthening health care delivery across rural south Arkansas.

CHCA is a nonprofit organization established in 1985 to expand access to affordable quality care in Arkansas, and to create a unified voice for Community Health Centers (CHCs) and the patients they serve. For more than 30 years, CHCA has received funding to provide training and technical assistance to CHCs for improving care delivery.

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. 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 11,000 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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