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**UAMS Invests Andrew J. Morris, Ph.D.,
in Mehta/Stebbins Chair in Cardiovascular Research**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) College of Medicine invested Andrew J. Morris, Ph.D., professor in the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, in the Mehta/Stebbins Chair in Cardiovascular Research during a Nov. 9 ceremony.

“I am honored to have this chair, and as I learn more about UAMS, I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of its community and to contribute to its history,” said Morris. “I’ve been an independent researcher for almost 30 years, and I am lucky in that I’ve had a very rewarding career.”

Morris also serves as a research investigator at the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System. His work is related to understanding interactions between genetic, behavioral and environmental risk factors for non-communicable diseases using multidisciplinary approaches that combine biochemical, molecular genetic and cell biological methods with preclinical models and population health studies.

An endowed chair is among the highest academic honors a university can bestow on a faculty member. An endowed chair is established with gifts of at least \$1 million, which are invested, and the interest proceeds used to support the educational, research and clinical activities of the chair holder. Those named to a chair are among the most highly regarded scientists, physicians and professors in their fields.

“The forged medallion that Dr. Morris will receive today represents the work that has been done and the great work that he will conduct,” said Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA, UAMS chancellor and CEO of UAMS Health. “I have known Andrew for a very long time, and I couldn’t be prouder to be on this stage to celebrate this honor with him.”

The chair was established in 2011 by a gift from the estate of the late Howard and Elsie Stebbins to help fund their longtime vision of a cardiovascular research chair at UAMS.

“The Mehta/Stebbins Chair in Cardiovascular Research is the second endowed chair at UAMS made possible thanks to the late Howard and Elsie Stebbins,” said Stephanie Gardner, Pharm. D., Ed.D., UAMS provost and chief strategy officer. “The Stebbins family, whose primary philanthropic interest has been related to cardiology, began their generous relationship in 1993. Dr. Jay Mehta, whose family was close friends of the Stebbins, was the inaugural holder of the chair.”

Morris was born in Hampstead, England. He obtained a First-Class Honors degree in biochemistry from the University of Bristol. He completed post-doctoral training at the University of Birmingham with Sir Peter Downes and Bob Michell. He was a post-doctoral Fellow and research faculty member at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and held tenured faculty positions at Stony Brook University in Stony Brook, New York, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and the University of Kentucky in Lexington, where he worked for 16 years as an endowed professor. He joined UAMS in the fall of 2021.

Morris’s laboratory has made important contributions to the identification of genes involved in intracellular lipid metabolism and signaling. He now directs an analytical laboratory at the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System that provides biomonitoring services to support population health research, including studies of veterans and active-duty military personnel enrolled in the Millennium Cohort in the Million Veteran Program. Morris’s research primarily is supported by grants from the Veterans Health Administration, National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Department of Defense. He has authored almost 300 peer-reviewed research articles, and a recent report placed him in the top 2% of highly cited researchers in the biomedical sciences.

“UAMS is very fortunate to have recruited Dr. Morris from the University of Kentucky — his research accomplishments, interests and activities are well aligned with Arkansas and the university,” said Linda S. Birnbaum, Ph.D., director of the Department of Environment Sciences and Engineering at the University of North Carolina. “He is very deserving of the recognition provided by the Mehta/Stebbins Chair, and I am looking forward to following his research contributions.”

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. UAMS has 3,240 students, 913 medical residents and fellows, and five 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](#).