

News Release
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**UAMS Receives \$50,000 from Arvest Foundation
to Support Organ Engineering and Gene Therapy**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) received two grants totaling \$50,000 from the Arvest Foundation to benefit the Organ Engineering and Gene Therapy Fund for Excellence, which will support the UAMS Research Center for Organ Engineering and Gene Therapy.

The Organ Engineering and Gene Therapy Fund for Excellence will provide crucial funding to support the UAMS Organ Transplant team’s research in cellular engineering, genetic reprogramming, targeted cellular removal and organ revitalization. It will also help acquire technology and equipment needed to carry out essential research activities.

“Engineering and reprogramming organs at a cellular level can potentially ameliorate human aging and disease,” said Lyle Burdine, M.D. Ph.D., associate professor of Transplant Surgery and director of Organ Transplant in the College of Medicine Department of Surgery. “We are very grateful to the Arvest Foundation for contributing to the Organ Engineering and Gene Therapy Fund for Excellence, which will support physicians and scientists at UAMS in the development of novel cellular-based medicines to improve the health and lives of patients.”

UAMS is home to Arkansas’ only adult kidney and liver transplant center. UAMS performed the state’s first kidney transplant in 1964 and the state’s first liver transplant in 2005. The UAMS Organ Transplant team has performed more than 1,800 kidney transplants and more than 400 liver transplants.

“The Organ Engineering and Gene Therapy Fund for Excellence will provide crucial funding for Dr. Burdine and his team, supporting research that will lead to cutting-edge solid organ treatments,” said Michelle W. Krause, M.D., MPH, senior vice chancellor for UAMS Health and CEO of the UAMS Medical Center. “Both the kidney and liver transplant programs here at UAMS Health are in the top 10 in the United States, and this research will ensure that we are able to expand this program to meet the needs of our

aging population. We are grateful for the generosity of Arvest and thank them for championing this cause, which provides hope and healing to many Arkansans.”

The Arvest Foundation supports local nonprofit organizations working to improve the quality of life for communities in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Missouri and Kansas.

Ron Witherspoon, president and CEO of Arvest Bank in Central Arkansas, and Daniel Robinson Sr., vice president of Arvest Wealth Management, hosted a gathering in April where Burdine discussed how engineering, regenerating and repairing human organ systems at the cellular level will be the standard of care, helping to heal diseased solid organs. Don Rhoads, board member of the Arvest Saline County Advisory Board, was also able to share his experience with the life-saving treatment he received from Burdine and the UAMS transplant team.

“Support for the UAMS Research Center for Organ Engineering and Gene Therapy was easy because there was already a lot of momentum created by Don Rhoads and my predecessor Jim Cargill,” said Witherspoon. “I was personally inspired by the treatment Don received from Dr. Burdine and his team. This program has had a great impact on the people of Arkansas, and so supporting this cause is the right thing to do for our community.”

“I am incredibly grateful to work for an institution that is so committed to supporting organizations that improve the overall health and wellness of the people of our great state,” said Phillip Partain, community market president of Arvest Saline County. “The work Dr. Burdine and his team have done in the form of research and awareness for this program since his arrival in 2010 has been truly remarkable.”

About the Arvest Foundation

The Arvest Foundation seeks to provide funding to grantees who are actively working to create positive change for others. Major areas of focus include: K-12 education, economic development, and enhancing the quality of life throughout the Arvest footprint. Learn more at arvest.com/foundation.

About UAMS

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](#).

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