

UAMS News Bureau

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**UAMS' Leonie DeClerk, Ph.D., DNP, APRN, Selected
as Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners**

LITTLE ROCK — Leonie DeClerk, DNP, RN, clinical associate professor in the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) College of Nursing, has been named as a 2024 inductee in the Fellows of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners program.

The prestigious program recognizes nurse practitioners for their outstanding achievements and exemplary service in the areas of education, policy, clinical practice or research. Nominees must display achievements beyond the scope of their typical workplace responsibilities.

DeClerk's nomination highlighted her contributions in health policy and education, including her work to expand Arkansans' access to care through a state law that removed barriers on nurse practitioners. She also collaborates with professional organizations such as the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties and the Arkansas Nurse Practitioner Association.

DeClerk, who serves as chair of the UAMS College of Nursing's Department of Practice, credited the college for giving her the flexibility to pursue projects that benefit the nursing profession.

"I've had a lot of support from the College of Nursing over the 10 years I've been here as a full-time faculty member," she said.

Members of the fellowship program "volunteer their expertise as reviewers, topical experts, committee members, journal contributors, mentors and more," according to the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, the nation's largest professional organization for nurse practitioners. Fellows strive to advance the role of nurse practitioners and to develop the next generation of leaders in the profession.

DeClerk will be inducted into the program at a June 27 ceremony during the organization's national conference in Nashville, Tennessee. She is one of 33 fellows in this year's class and is the only one in Arkansas.

The new members will join 942 colleagues who have been inducted into the program since its inception in 2000.

"I would say it's the highest recognition I can get as a nurse practitioner, to be considered at the same level as some of the fellows in this program," DeClerk said. "It's an honor to know that my peers appreciate the work I've done for the profession."

Each nominee must receive support from at least two of the program's current members. DeClerk's nomination was sponsored by Deborah Hopla, DNP, professor at Francis Marion University in Florence, South Carolina, and Kristine Browning, Ph.D., APRN, clinical professor at the Ohio State University College of Nursing.

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 eight 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, Institute for Digital Health & Innovation and the Institute for Community 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 3,275 students, 890 medical residents and fellows, and five dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 12,000 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](#), [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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