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**UAMS Working with Schools in Carroll, Madison Counties
to Develop Behavioral Health Outreach Programs**

FAYETTEVILLE — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Institute for Community Health Innovation will work with schools in Carroll and Madison counties to establish programs aimed at reducing behavioral risk factors for youth, while preparing students for career opportunities in community health.

Through a \$1.2 million Rural Communities Pathways grant, funded by the Health Resources and Service Administration, the institute will work with schools in Huntsville, Eureka Springs, and Kingston to train teachers to identify and respond to risk behaviors, while engaging young people to develop and implement peer-driven behavioral health opportunities. Topics that teachers and students will explore will include mental health awareness, stress management, substance abuse prevention, and more.

“We are grateful for this collaboration and the opportunity to work together across Madison and Carroll counties to support students beyond the classroom,” said Paula Harris, Huntsville School District assistant superintendent. “The Rural Pathways work allows us to connect education, health, and community resources in ways that will have a lasting impact on students and families.”

Lacie Bohannon, school counselor at Kingston Schools, said she is excited for the training and leadership opportunities that students will receive through the program.

“Having health professionals come to campus to educate our students on important healthy relationships and mental health topics is an amazing resource,” she said. “Students have a support system with our staff and educators, but having outside professionals to learn from will be extremely beneficial and an added support.”

In addition to strengthening knowledge and response to behavioral health issues among youth, the institute will also work with schools to establish pathway programs that introduce students to community health career opportunities, including establishing the first community health worker training for high school students.

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“Today’s youth face significant challenges, which are often compounded by limited access to behavioral health resources,” said Rosalinda Medrano, director of programs at the institute. “This program addresses those gaps by meeting young people where they are, delivering practical, effective solutions that are designed for youth and informed directly by their voices and experiences.”

The collaboration with Carroll and Madison County schools is part of the institute’s mission to transform health in rural communities. To learn more, visit communityhealth.uams.edu.

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 3,553 students and 1,015 medical residents and fellows. It is the state’s largest public employer with about 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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