

**UAMS News Bureau**

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**UAMS, University of Arkansas-Fort Smith Forge  
Agreement to Expand Health Care Education Pathways**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) and the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith (UAFS) have entered into a formal Memorandum of Agreement designed to create clear, accelerated pathways for UAFS graduates pursuing careers in health care.

The agreement covers 14 UAMS programs across four colleges and offers qualifying UAFS students guaranteed interviews, priority application review, or automatic admission.

“We greatly value this partnership and look forward to continued collaborations to create seamless pathways for students to advance their health care careers after completing their degree at UAFS,” said Tina Maddox, Ph.D., RD, associate provost at the UAMS Northwest Regional Campus, who led development of the agreement.

The agreement spans UAMS programs in the College of Health Professions, College of Pharmacy, College of Nursing, and Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health. Participating programs include degrees in cytology, medical laboratory sciences, respiratory care, speech language pathology, audiology, physical therapy, pharmacy, nursing, public health, health administration, health care data analytics, and doctoral research programs.

“UAFS plays an important role in preparing the future health care workforce, both through the programs on our campus that put nurses, surgical technicians, and more into the workforce, and through our partnerships with institutions like UAMS, where our graduates take the next step toward medical degrees,” said UAFS Chancellor Terisa Riley, Ph.D. “Our faculty prepare UAFS graduates by building strong academic foundations early, and this agreement ensures those talented students have a clear path forward toward the next stage in their education.”

Depending on the program, eligible UAFS students who meet specified GPA and prerequisite criteria will receive one of three levels of enhanced admissions consideration: a guaranteed interview, priority application review that bypasses standard prescreening, or automatic admission.

The collaboration was initiated through conversations between UAMS Northwest Regional Campus leadership and UAFS Chancellor Terisa Riley, Ph.D., and UAFS Provost Shadow Robinson, Ph.D. The agreement is supported by 14 programs across UAMS, reflecting broad institutional enthusiasm for the initiative.

“We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity and the partnership,” said Ryan Cork, MSHA, vice chancellor of the UAMS Northwest Region. “This agreement reflects our shared commitment to expanding access to health professions education and strengthening the health care workforce across Arkansas.”

UAFS students wishing to benefit from the agreement must declare their intent to apply to a participating UAMS program by the relevant program’s admissions deadline and obtain certification from a designated UAFS faculty or staff member confirming they meet the eligibility criteria.

“The significance of this agreement extends far beyond admissions,” Riley said. “Many of the students who start at UAFS go on to become the providers, practitioners, and health care leaders who serve this region. Creating stronger pathways for their success is one of the most influential ways we invest in healthier communities and a stronger future for western Arkansas and the state as a whole.”

### **About University of Arkansas-Fort Smith**

Founded in 1928, the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith is a regional public university in the Arkansas River Valley. More than 5,500 students each year choose UAFS for certificate, associate, bachelor’s, and master’s programs across health care, business, education, engineering, the arts, and the sciences. UAFS is known for its commitment to hands-on learning, with internships, externships, undergraduate research, and deep partnerships with regional employers that help students move from classroom to career with confidence.

Part of the University of Arkansas System, UAFS serves a unique need in the state, responding nimbly to regional workforce demands, offering one of the most affordable tuition rates in Arkansas, and providing students a tight-knit campus experience where they truly get to know their faculty and staff.

### **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 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](http://www.uams.edu) or [www.uamshealth.com](http://www.uamshealth.com). Find us on [Facebook](#), [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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