

UAMS News Bureau

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UAMS Chancellor's Circle Awards Grants to 12 Programs

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) awarded 12 grants totaling \$313,500 at the annual Chancellor's Circle Grant Awards ceremony held Aug. 24 at the William J. Clinton Presidential Library & Museum.

The Chancellor's Circle is UAMS's premier annual giving society. Through its unrestricted annual giving, this group of dedicated members donates more than \$250,000 each year that funds grants to address the institution's highest priorities. Currently nearly 200 household and corporate members make up the Chancellor's Circle.

"Your membership supports the Chancellor's Circle endowment, and we are grateful for your generosity as these funds have a tremendous impact on the lives of the people of our state," said Chancellor C. Lowry Barnes, M.D. "More than \$4 million in grants has been awarded since the first grants were given in 2014. The impact these grants have had on UAMS over the years is not just an impressive dollar amount, there have been significant transformations made possible through them."

UAMS uses the grants to purchase state-of-the-art medical equipment, provide seed money for innovative health and wellness programs, and finance research projects of high potential to the state's economic and social development.

Since the inception of the Chancellor's Circle in 1984, donors have given more than \$9 million to support UAMS's mission. The funds awarded in the ceremony will support key mission areas in health care education, research, and patient care.

"Every year we welcome new members to the Chancellor's Circle, and this increase in membership, along with support from other members, has brought in over \$9 million of investment with the proceeds used to support a variety of programs at UAMS," said Larry Alman, chair of the UAMS Board of Advisors and Chancellor's Circle member. "Chancellor's Circle members provide roughly more than a quarter of a million dollars

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annually in discretionary funds that allow UAMS to provide additional support to the key mission areas of health care education, medical research and patient care.”

This year's grants were awarded to the following:

- Academic Foundation for Healthcare Success will develop, implement, and evaluate a scalable Academic Foundations course that equips students at the UAMS Northwest Regional Campus with essential academic, professional, and wellness skills necessary for success in a health professions education. Lyndsay Johnson, M.S., director of Student Services, accepted the \$5,000 grant.
- Artwork for Academic & Research Buildings seeks to purchase and thoughtfully place original artwork within education and research buildings on the UAMS main campus. The program will collaborate with local arts organizations, curators, and galleries to identify works that reflect the cultural, geographic, and community diversity of Arkansas. Kat Neill, Pharm.D., associate provost for academics and Amy Stalls, accepted the \$20,000 grant.
- Clinical Skills in Compassionate Caregiving through Schwartz Rounds and Stress First Aid is a program of open discussion and storytelling designed to support the psychosocial and emotional aspects of working in healthcare. Research conducted by the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare demonstrated a 50% reduction in psychological distress in attendees versus non-attendees and a reduction in moral distress for 35.5% of nurses and 50% of physicians. More than 82% of attendees reported an increase in their ability to provide patients with compassionate care. Monique A. Spillman, M.D., Ph.D., gynecologic oncologist, accepted the \$25,000 grant.
- The Culinary Medicine Program invests directly in the UAMS community by strengthening the institution's workforce, fostering collaboration across disciplines, and enhancing the way UAMS trains future healthcare professionals. Its primary goal is to sustain and expand in-person culinary medicine programming at UAMS to improve nutrition knowledge, culinary skills, and health behaviors among participants. Alyssa Frisby, M.S., registered and licensed dietitian, and Gina A. Drobeni, M.D., associate professor, accepted the \$40,000 grant.
- The Hospitality Table will utilize the concepts from the book “Unreasonable Hospitality” by Will Guidara to bring participants from all the colleges together to interact and learn from each other. Culinary Medicine Program participants will work in interdisciplinary teams to create a sense of belonging and respect through shared culinary experiences where they can feel valued and connected. Rosa Brewer, MBA, project coordinator, accepted the \$10,000 grant.
- The PET CT Patient Waiting Room Renovation will create a more hospitable, modern, clean, and comfortable environment for patients who need a PET CT scan and their family members, who may have to wait over an hour during

appointments. This waiting room, which hosts more than 500 patients per month, hasn't been updated in many years. The grant was awarded in memory of Nancy "Jo" Smith to honor her legacy of excellence in patient care at UAMS and her years of dedication to the patient experience. Claire Denham, project planner, and Dana Trickey, project administrator, accepted the \$8,500 grant.

- The PRIMAL (Performance, Recovery, Integrative Metabolism, & Longevity) Human Performance Clinic seeks to provide a clinical program focused on preventative, proactive health. The clinic will provide a new level of longevity optimization by assessment, addressing deficiencies, imbalances, and risk factors. The PRIMAL Clinic will be the revenue-generating arm to sustain the Center for Orthopaedic & Performance Research (COPR) above its core mission. COPR will validate, study, analyze, publish, and scale what PRIMAL discovers clinically. Chelsea S. Mathews, M.D., orthopaedic foot and ankle surgeon, accepted the \$50,000 grant.
- Rapid Access Clinic for Youth & Families seeks to provide a specialized rapid-access, outpatient service focused on youth suicide risk stabilization, family engagement, and safety-focused care. Services will support youth during the high-risk transition period following acute mental health crises, as well as youth in the community who experience suicidal ideation or related concerns and are referred by pediatric providers, schools, or other community partners. Elissa H. Wilburn, Ph.D., clinical psychologist with the Psychiatric Research Institute, accepted the \$20,000 grant.
- The Student Wellness Oasis will create a dedicated stress-relief space within the UAMS College of Nursing designed to support student well-being during periods of heightened academic pressure. The proposed space will incorporate resources such as massage recliners, sand tables, low lighting, a sound machine, and other tools to facilitate brief, restorative decompression sessions. Teresa Whited, DNP, RN, APRN, associate dean of Academic Programs and Accreditation, and Sarah Rhoads, Ph.D., DNP, FAAN, dean of the College of Nursing, accepted the \$15,000 grant.
- The UAMS 12th Street Health & Wellness Center is committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive, and patient-centered environment. Plans to better serve our community include implementing EPIC Welcome software for streamlined patient sign-in and purchasing iPads to facilitate digital check-in; upgrading the director on duty workspace to support real-time clinic management; modifying the front desk to include a lowered counter area; installing new floor-to-ceiling temporary walls to enhance privacy and organization within patient rooms; and equipping each room with machinery to efficiently obtain vital signs. Taylor Connor, Pharm.D., MPH, director of the 12th Street Center, and Bendi Bowers, MSN, RN, clinical services manager, accepted \$20,000 grant.
- UAMS CARES: Compassion, Attention, Respect, Empathy, and Service is a grassroots movement that was born from a simple but powerful idea: to build the

kind of healthcare experience that UAMS employees would want for themselves and for the people they love. UAMS CARES is about strengthening the institution's culture through "unreasonable hospitality" and "outrageous service." Leslie Oden, special services liaison, and Sara Foster, accepted the \$50,000 grant.

- The UAMS Head Start/Early Head Start Program is a vital investment in the health and future of Arkansas. Funded primarily through a federal Head Start grant, the program provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and family support services that help children enter kindergarten ready to learn while empowering parents to achieve greater family stability and self-sufficiency. Eduardo R. Ochoa Jr., M.D., vice chair of partnerships and child health advancement and professor of Pediatrics, accepted the 50,000 grant.

To learn more about the Chancellor's Circle, visit giving.uams.edu/chancellorscircle.

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 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 1,030 medical residents and fellows, and two dental residents. 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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