

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES

NURSING

Educating
for the
Future



UAMS | College of Nursing



It is such an exciting time for the College of Nursing! We have finalized an ambitious strategic plan that aligns with UAMS Vision 2029. Our plan includes new academic programs to meet workforce needs, growth in interprofessional research, and expanded clinical engagement and community service.

Here we highlight our innovative educational programs, pioneering research, and community initiatives, as well as outstanding faculty and alumni.

New education programs, such as the newly accredited nurse anesthesia program under the leadership of Dr. Michelle Gonzalez and Dr. Mark Dunavan, will help address critical workforce needs in the state. The college continues to demonstrate its commitment to the community with special initiatives like Motherhood Together and the Medfest for Special Olympics athletes. Research is thriving at the College of Nursing; Dr. Sara Jones focuses on the mental health of first responders and Dr. Leanne Lefler works on social determinants of health.

We also highlight two of our fabulous faculty members and a recent alumna who are contributing to the health and education of the community.

We are proud of what we have accomplished, eager to implement our new strategic plan, and thankful for the support and commitment of our friends and alumni. Come visit!

Sincerely,
Patricia A. Cowan, Ph.D., RN, FAAN,
UAMS College of Nursing Dean

Chancellor's Letter



At UAMS we are committed to improving health and health care throughout the state in a lasting way. We demonstrate that commitment not just in what we do each day, but by the plans we make for the future.

It's been my great pleasure over the past year to work with employees from throughout our institution in putting together our strategic plan for the next decade, which we call Vision 2029. In it, one can see not just the goals we have set to help make Arkansas healthier, but the objective measures we'll use to determine the extent of our success in meeting those goals.

By investing in digital health, expanding our research and entrepreneurship, raising health awareness in all corners of the state and equipping our workforce and our students with the best training and cutting-edge technology, we aim to advance the science of health and establish a truly statewide system that combines education, clinical care, research and purposeful leadership.

In drafting this plan, we are holding ourselves accountable – not because we must, but because we choose to. In doing so, we will ensure that, regardless of where they live, Arkansans get better health care providers both now and in the future. Through Vision 2029, we will make Arkansas a regional leader in health.

Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA, UAMS Chancellor

our service

Caring for the Community

The UAMS College of Nursing faculty, staff and students are committed to giving back to the community, and many ongoing service outreach efforts demonstrate this principle.

In the last year, that outreach has included such efforts as helping provide prenatal maternity care for housing-insecure mothers, a donation drive within the college to collect blankets for the area's homeless and physicals for young athletes with disabilities participating in Special Olympics.

With as many as 30 housing-insecure newborn babies discharged from UAMS each month, nursing faculty and students, along with counterparts in the College of Public Health, launched "Motherhood Together: A Journey of Love," which provided women with a safe and comfortable environment in which to talk about their pregnancy and ask questions.

Further outreach to the housing-insecure this year included working with the Associated Student Government and volunteers from the College of Pharmacy to collect blankets donated from across campus and distribute them in partnership with Canvas Community Church. The effort collected 227 blankets, 100 tarps and 100 packages of socks.

Working with the 12th Street Health & Wellness Center, faculty at the college led students to launch Arkansas' first ever Medfest, offering no-cost physicals to students participating in Special Olympics. All told, 30 young athletes received complete physicals. UAMS volunteers included 11 students and six faculty preceptors from the colleges of Nursing, Health Professions and Medicine.



Top: Nursing students help deliver blankets to Canvas Community Church. **Middle:** Special Olympics athletes await testing of their vitals before getting a physical at the 12th Street Health & Wellness Center. **Bottom:** Nursing students administer an eye exam to a Special Olympics athlete.

our faculty

Understanding Every Patient

College of Nursing faculty are engaged in research to improve the health of all Arkansans. Recent efforts have included helping future health care workers better understand the social determinants of health and studying the mental health needs of emergency first responders.



Headed by nursing associate professor **Leanne Lefler, Ph.D., APRN**, with College of Health Professions colleague Jennifer Stane, M.P.H., students from nursing and other programs were challenged to participate in a

grant-funded simulation of living life in poverty. With nearly 20% of Arkansans living in poverty, the goal is to train a future health care workforce that understands its patients and the circumstances in which they live so they can provide better care.



The same is true of emergency first responders. **Sarah Jones, Ph.D., APRN**, has been funded by the National Institute of Mental Health to study services available to first responders and analyze responders' attitudes toward those services.

Her hope is to identify practices that work for this unique population and offer ideas on ways in which they can be improved so as to offer better service to those who serve everyone else.



Jean McSweeney, Ph.D., RN, associate dean for research, was named Healthcare Volunteer of the Year by the American Heart Association. McSweeney, who has been with UAMS for more than 20 years and was last year invested in the Women's Cardiovascular Health Professorship, is an internationally known researcher who has conducted groundbreaking research into women's cardiovascular disease.



Larronda Rainey, M.N.Sc., RN, was the first ever recipient from UAMS to be named the Nurse Educator of the Year by a company called PCI, which produces publications for nursing groups and state boards of nursing throughout the country. She was nominated for the honor by Donna Middaugh, Ph.D., RN, associate dean for academic programs. Rainey has secured grants to help nursing students pay for their education and to create online training for nurse educators.

Nurse Anesthesia Program

To meet the growing demand both locally and nationally, the College of Nursing has created a new program to train highly-qualified nurse anesthetists.



The program is led by **Michelle Gonzalez, Ph.D., CRNA**, who came to UAMS from the University of Maryland, School of Nursing, where she served as an assistant professor and simulation coordinator and performed clinical practice as a certified registered nurse anesthetist at the University of Maryland Medical Center. She also served in the U.S. Navy Reserve for 21 years, most recently as a Commander and Department Head for Anesthesia.

Gonzalez is joined by assistant director **Mark Dunavan, D.N.P., CRNA**, who comes to UAMS from Tennessee, where he worked with Medical Anesthesia Group at Methodist Healthcare Hospitals and Surgery Centers in Memphis and Germantown, Tennessee, Olive Branch, Mississippi, and Marion, Arkansas. He was an assistant professor at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, College of Nursing, Nurse Anesthesia Program

prior to arriving at UAMS. He is also a colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve assigned as an executive officer and clinical nurse anesthetist with the 75th Combat Support Hospital in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

As part of the preparation for launching the program, the college has added a new, simulated operating room in its Innovative Practice Center. The simulation center is complete with authentic, functional operating room equipment and designed to replicate the

details of this unique environment, including simulated vials of essential medications.



Pam deGravelles, Ph.D., RN, introduces BSN students to the operating room simulation and HAL, a programmable, lifelike manikin used in training.

Now accredited - Enrolling for Fall 2020

Supporting our vision

The College of Nursing has several goals this year, and with your generous support, we know we can achieve them. If you're looking for ways to help, please consider one of the following:

New Programs

The College of Nursing is launching a program to train certified registered nurse anesthetists and is looking at other program offerings that will help us keep pace with the growing demands of the health care workforce. Funding in this area would help in course development, hiring instructors, purchasing equipment and offering financial assistance to students.

Advanced Equipment

Modern health care requires advanced equipment. These needs include smart phones, tablets, accessories and software to expand training and implement our digital health initiatives. We also need additional high fidelity manikins for the college's Innovative Practice Center. These programmable manikins are able to reproduce the most intricate of human functions, from pulse and respiration to pupil dilation and reaction to medication. They provide our students with a realistic experience in a safe training environment.

Endowed Professorship

An endowed professorship is a powerful recruitment tool for the College of Nursing. It allows us to attract and retain faculty with national reputations for research that improves and even saves lives. Contributing to an endowment helps ensure the college draws the best, most innovative talent to solve pressing health care problems while mentoring and training tomorrow's nurse researchers.

Dean's Circle

The Dean's Circle provides tremendous support to the College of Nursing's operating budget. This group of alumni, donors and special friends of the college who commit an annual gift of \$1,000 or more provides funding for use at the dean's discretion. This year, funds were used to support student events and awards, bring nationally recognized speakers to campus, and support recruitment. As our Dean's Circle grows, we plan to use it to further faculty and student development.

College of Nursing

170 Graduates

May 2018

**650 Students
Currently Enrolled**

\$217,800

Scholarships Awarded in Fall 2019

**97.9% NCLEX-RN
First-time pass rate**

This is the highest of the BSN programs in Arkansas and exceeds state (93.5%) and national (91.6%) average 1st time pass rates.

121 Students

received
scholarships
fall 2019

**100% Cumulative
Pass Rates**

for Nurse Practitioner Certification

**8 Extramurally
funded grants**

**Only
College
of Nursing
in Arkansas**

offering these nurse practitioner specialty programs:

Acute Care Pediatrics
Nurse Practitioner

Primary Care Pediatric
Nurse Practitioner

Psych-mental Health
Nurse Practitioner

109 Faculty Members

**Only Ph.D. in
Nursing program**

WHY I CHOSE UAMS COLLEGE OF NURSING

I am committed to helping bridge the gap that exists between the Latino communities and health care. UAMS has fully supported me and helped guide me in this role. UAMS has pushed me and helped me grow not only as a future nurse but as a person.

— **Rosa Ruvalcaba Serna**
B.S.N. Student



Having completed the undergraduate and master's programs in the College of Nursing, I was so excited when the doctor of nursing practice program became available at UAMS! I felt confident that the College of Nursing would best prepare me for my new role as a nurse practitioner with a clinical practice doctorate."

— **Codi Anthony, B.S.N., M.N.Sc., D.N.P.**



I chose UAMS College of Nursing for the exceptional faculty and programs. They prepare students for academic excellence through advanced teaching, leadership and clinical experiences. They provided me with the best nursing education to address the needs of health care in the future."

— **Phuong Gip, B.S.N.**
D.N.P. Student

EDITOR:
Spencer Watson

ART DIRECTOR:
Leslie Norris

WRITER:
Spencer Watson

PRODUCTION
MANGER:
Karen Hodges

PHOTOGRAPHER:
UAMS Communications
and Marketing
Photography

nursing.uams.edu

UAMS Nursing is published by the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences College of Nursing
4301 W. Markham St., #529 Little Rock, AR 72205