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UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES

NURSING





FRIENDS,

As the shortage of nurses in the health care workforce reaches a crisis level across the nation, it's critical that we prepare our students to make an immediate impact in their profession and in the lives of their patients. I'm very proud to share that the UAMS College of Nursing is rising to meet that challenge.

This past year, we graduated the first cohorts for our Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Doctor of Nursing Practice Nurse Anesthesia programs. These students endured many long nights with rigorous course loads, and their dedication is reflected in the 100% pass rate they received on their licensure and certification exams. Even more exciting — many of them have chosen to remain in Arkansas for the next phase of their careers.

The 2023-24 academic year has brought a new group of students who already are showing the aptitude and compassion that are so important in the nursing field. We look forward to seeing their growth in the months and years to come.

These successes wouldn't be possible without the exceptional efforts of our faculty members. They make a difference not only through their classroom and clinical interactions, but also through their research in areas such as newborn screenings and interventions to help patients who experience physical or sexual abuse.

Thank you for continuing to support the work of the College of Nursing and its students, faculty and staff.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Cowan, Ph.D., RN, FAAN

Dean, UAMS College of Nursing



GREETINGS,

Each year, I'm amazed to see the commitment and enthusiasm shown by the students who come through the UAMS College of Nursing. They understand that nurses are one of the most important elements of our health care system, touching the lives of patients in every type of clinical setting.

As we strive to ensure high-quality care in every Arkansas community, we know these students will have a vital role in maintaining and extending our progress. The future is in good hands as they step forward as clinicians, leaders and teachers.

The UAMS College of Nursing continues to set a high standard for clinical education, garnering recognition as one of the top nursing schools in the country. UAMS again ranked in the Top 100 of *U.S. News & World Report's* annual list of the nation's best Bachelor of Science in Nursing programs, making it the only school in Arkansas to hold that distinction.

I am grateful for the members of our College of Nursing faculty and for all they do to make sure our students are set up for success.

Sincerely,

Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA

UAMS Chancellor, CEO, UAMS Health

GRANTS SUPPORT TRAINING IN RURAL, UNDERSERVED AREAS



Two doctoral programs in the UAMS College of Nursing have received federal grants intended to prepare students for careers in rural and medically underserved communities.

Students in the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Nurse Practitioner program are seeing the benefits of a four-year, \$2.6 million award from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The Advanced Nurse Education Workforce Grant will help prepare students to meet the specific needs of these communities.



The grant is funding a variety of initiatives to improve the educational experience of students and preceptors, said Teresa Whited, DNP, APRN, associate dean of academic programs. Additionally, it enabled the college to award between \$12,000 and \$15,000 in scholarship and stipend support to 35 students during the fall semester.

The other award, also funded by HRSA, will provide financial assistance for residents in the DNP Nurse Anesthesia program. The Nurse Anesthesia Traineeship grant is worth \$91,310 over four years, with 100% of that money going to the students.

Grant funding primarily will be used to offset the cost of housing for residents who leave the Little Rock area for their clinical rotations, said Michelle Gonzalez, Ph.D., CRNA, clinical associate professor and director of the Nurse Anesthesia program. Any leftover funds will be used to help students pay for their certification exams after graduation.

“These grants will enhance the education of our students, providing them with exposure to rural and underserved communities and teaching them the skills they’ll need to provide high-quality care,” said Patricia Cowan, Ph.D., RN, dean of the College of Nursing.



PROGRAMS GRADUATE FIRST COHORTS

The College of Nursing in 2023 celebrated the first graduating classes of its Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Doctor of Nursing Practice Nurse Anesthesia programs. These intensive programs are striving to address a critical shortage of nurses in the health care workforce.

Many of the graduates from the two inaugural cohorts have chosen to remain in Arkansas for the next stage of their careers. Chase Watson, DNP, a graduate of the Nurse Anesthesia program, is now working at Baptist Health Medical Center in North Little Rock. He said the college gave him the experience he needed to provide high-quality care for the patients he serves.

“I wanted to stay here in Arkansas to give back to this community,” he said.



STUDY EXAMINES HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR GENETIC CONDITIONS



Laura Hays, Ph.D., APRN, assistant professor in the UAMS College of Nursing, is leading a study that examines the long-term health outcomes of children diagnosed with rare genetic conditions.

The longitudinal study, part of the High-Risk Pregnancy Program in the UAMS Institute for Digital Health & Innovation, involves clinical data collected since 2012 and compiled in the Arkansas Newborn Screening Long-term Follow-up Database. Hays and her co-investigators are evaluating information about screening, prevention, medical management and interventions to gain insights into how these efforts affect health outcomes.

Hays said this research will give clinicians new and accurate data on treatment patterns and outcomes, as well as provide public health officials with population-based information that's vital for making systemic improvements.

"Arkansas was the first state to implement a comprehensive long-term follow-up program for newborn screening, so we are ahead of most states with the in-depth analysis we can perform," she said.

Hays has been a clinical consultant for the Arkansas Department of Health's Newborn Screening Program for the past eight years. The program helps ensure that newborns are tested for dozens of medical conditions that, if left untreated, could affect their physical and mental development or threaten their lives.

Hays joined the College of Nursing in 2019 with the goal of investigating racial differences in newborn screening results. She led the effort to expand the demographic section of a blood-sample collection card used across the state, enabling the tests to provide a more detailed picture for clinicians and researchers.

"This helps to inform us of true patterns of symptoms, diagnoses and outcomes in a way that accurately depicts the demographics of our state so that we can identify disparities that may exist," she said.

Exchange Program Offers New Perspectives for Nursing Students



Eight nursing students and a faculty member from Taiwan's Kaohsiung Medical University came to central Arkansas in July for a month of educational and cultural opportunities under an exchange program with UAMS.

The UAMS College of Nursing hosted the Taiwanese students, helping them gain insight into American medical practices through tours of the 12th Street Health & Wellness Center, UAMS Medical Center and Arkansas Children's. They also attended lectures from experts on advanced practice care, end-of-life care and smoking cessation.

Nursing student Jung-Hsuan Chang said their trip to the 12th Street center was particularly interesting.

"I really liked this experience because we don't have these kinds of clinics in Taiwan," she said.



UAMS WELCOMES FIRST GROUP OF PRE-NURSING SUMMER SCHOLARS

Seven students from colleges across the state came to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) last summer for the inaugural Pre-Nursing Summer Scholars program, a three-day session intended to give them the tools they'll need to gain acceptance to nursing school.

The program, a partnership between the UAMS College of Nursing and the Division for Academic Pathways and Workforce Partnerships, focused primarily on test preparation. Participants learned about study and testing strategies that would help them on the Assessment Technologies Institute's Test of Essential Academic Skills, an entrance examination required for prospective Bachelor of Science in Nursing students.

Participants also had a chance to see the types of training experiences offered at UAMS. The students spent time in the College of Nursing's Innovative Practice and Simulation Center, where they learned about blood-draw techniques and listened to a manikin that imitates the sounds of an infant's breathing.

At the program's closing ceremony, Patricia Cowan, Ph.D., RN, dean of the College of Nursing, urged the students to consider applying to UAMS, noting that the faculty is dedicated to helping them find success in their studies and in their careers.

Kennedy Abanihe, a sophomore at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, expressed gratitude for

the opportunities to network with faculty members, saying he could picture himself being among them as a colleague someday.

"I feel like I got so much of what I will need for my career within these three days," he said.



Exchange Program continued

She noted that students in Taiwan can only perform medical activities in hospitals, which limits their opportunities to gain hands-on experience before they graduate.

"Here in the United States, students can solve problems and have discussions with their professors," she said. "I think this can promote skills in communication and consultation."

The students also spent time at the College of Nursing's Innovative Practice and Simulation Center, where they watched as UAMS students conducted a simulation that involved evaluating, diagnosing and planning for the treatment of a patient.

After receiving a warm welcome at UAMS, the Kaohsiung Medical University students returned the favor in November, hosting five students from the College of Nursing. The UAMS students toured Taiwanese health units and visited underserved areas to learn about how medical care is provided to those populations.

"This program is meant to work both ways," said Natalie Capps, Ph.D., MNSc, clinical assistant professor in the College of Nursing. "The students visiting UAMS gain insights into health care and nursing roles in the United States, and our students learn about Taiwanese nursing practices and Eastern medicine. It's about taking the best pieces of each country's system so we can use what works best."

FAST FACTS: UAMS COLLEGE OF NURSING



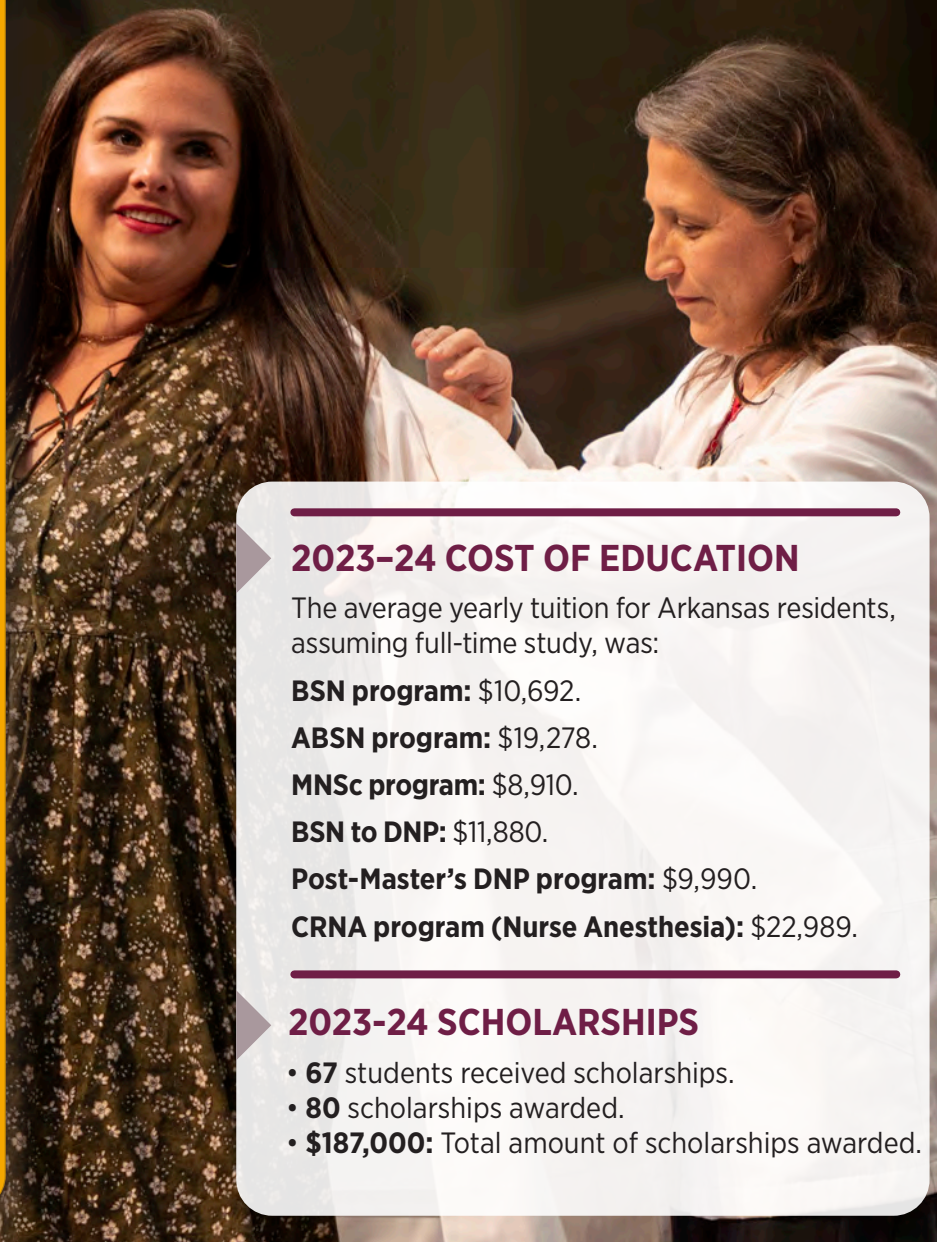
ABOUT THE COLLEGE

- Established in **1953**.
- **Member of the Hartford Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence**, dedicated to optimal health and quality of life for older adults and the highest level of commitment to the field of gerontological nursing.



OUR STUDENTS

- **175** graduates in 2022-23 academic year: BSN—89; RN to BSN—12; MNSc—40; BSN to DNP—28; Post-Master's DNP—6; Post-Master's Completion—3
- **5,641** students have earned a BSN degree.
- **2,124** students have earned their MNSc degree.
- **80** students have earned their Ph.D. in nursing.
- **167** students have earned their DNP degree.



2023-24 COST OF EDUCATION

The average yearly tuition for Arkansas residents, assuming full-time study, was:

BSN program: \$10,692.

ABSN program: \$19,278.

MNSc program: \$8,910.

BSN to DNP: \$11,880.

Post-Master's DNP program: \$9,990.

CRNA program (Nurse Anesthesia): \$22,989.

2023-24 SCHOLARSHIPS

- **67** students received scholarships.
- **80** scholarships awarded.
- **\$187,000:** Total amount of scholarships awarded.

NEW FACULTY MEMBER: JOCELYN ANDERSON



Jocelyn Anderson, Ph.D., RN, strives to improve health and justice outcomes for people who experience physical or sexual violence.

“It’s important that we understand the health impacts of violence and develop and implement interventions to address it,” said Anderson, a certified sexual assault nurse examiner.

Anderson joined the College of Nursing faculty in 2023 as an associate professor in the Department of Nursing Science.

Research is her primary focus, though she also teaches in the college’s doctoral programs and serves as a sexual assault nurse examiner in the UAMS Institute for Digital Health & Innovation’s TeleSANE program.

Her research includes two studies funded by the National Institutes of Health. One involves the development and testing of interventional content delivered to college students through text messages. In the other study, she’s testing a web-based tool that helps patients and health care providers make decisions about taking HIV-prevention medications after sexual assaults.

“These medications can be really significant for patients, allowing them to reclaim control over their bodies and health after a sexual assault,” she said.

Anderson said she’s enjoying her work at UAMS as well as the support she has received from the College of Nursing faculty. She noted that she’s already submitted grant applications for several new studies.

“Hopefully in the coming months, I’ll have more new projects to talk about,” she said.



DEGREE PROGRAMS

- Traditional and Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programs.
- RN to MNSc program.
- Advanced nursing practice degree programs at the master’s and doctoral levels.
- The first College of Nursing in Arkansas to offer nurse practitioner specialty programs in acute care pediatrics nurse practitioner, primary care pediatric nurse practitioner and psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner.
- The first College of Nursing in Arkansas to offer a Doctor of Nursing Practice in Nurse Anesthesia.
- The only College of Nursing in Arkansas to offer a research doctoral program (Ph.D. in Nursing Science).
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing program ranked 86th in nation by *U.S. News and World Report*.
- Doctor of Nursing Practice program ranked 66th in nation by *U.S. News and World Report*.



College of Nursing

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GIVING

Your help is what makes it possible for us to achieve our goals to educate well-prepared nurses, to serve the community and to engage in research that advances the health of our state, region and nation.

SCHOLARSHIPS

For many students, this year has proved especially challenging. Many have faced hardships as economic factors have affected their income and limited their opportunities for part-time employment. They depend on financial assistance to continue their studies. We can ease that burden, as funding allows, by offering donor-supported scholarship assistance.

DEAN'S CIRCLE

The Dean's Circle plays a vital role. Funding has provided several benefits over the years, including educational innovations, new programs, scholarships, and research and pilot programs in mental health, addiction, chronic disease, oncology and gerontology — all areas of greatest need in Arkansas.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- CON Dean's Circle Benefactor—\$5,000
- CON Dean's Circle Corporate—\$2,500
- CON Dean's Circle Individual/Household—\$1,000
- CON Dean's Circle Recent Alumni—\$500

nursing.uams.edu

To support the College of Nursing, you can donate directly in any amount at giving.uams.edu

