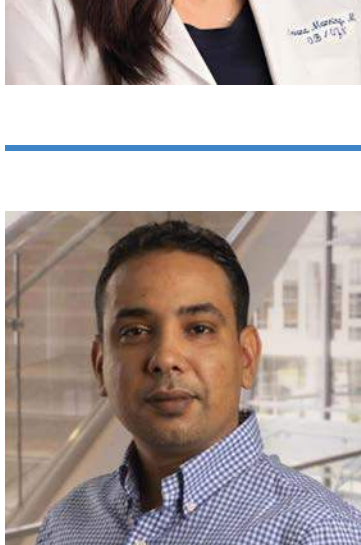


[View Online](#)

August 2026

Congratulations!



Nirvana Manning, MD, received a Congressionally Directed Spending (Community Project Funding) grant from the Department of Health and Human Services

Title: Arkansas Center for Women and Infants' Health

Period: 09/01/2026 – 08/31/2028

Total: ~\$8 million



Youssef Aachoui, PhD, received an R01 award from the National Institutes of Health

Title: Neutrophil Inflammasome Mechanisms in Host Defense and Inflammatory Responses

Period: 09/01/2026 – 08/31/2031

Total: ~\$3 million



Jinhu Xiong, MD, PhD, received a competing-continuation R01 award from the National Institutes of Health

Title: The role of Piezo1 in bone homeostasis and mechanotransduction

Period: 08/18/2026 – 07/31/2031

Total: ~\$2.3 million



Ryan Allen, PhD, received an R01 award from the National Institutes of Health

Title: Canonical and alternative functions of low-density lipoprotein in multiple myeloma

Period: 08/14/2026 – 07/31/2031

Total: ~\$2.1 million



Alicia Byrd, PhD, received an R01 award from the National Institutes of Health

Title: DNA Helicases: Mechanisms and Regulation

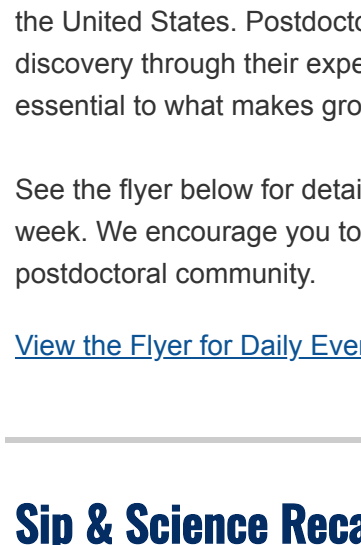
Period: 09/01/2026 – 08/31/2030

Total: ~\$1.46 million

News and Updates



Channel 7 Saturday Daybreak Interview: Erika Petersen, MD



Don't miss it! Tune in to Channel 7's *Daybreak* on **Saturday, September 12, from 8–9 a.m.**, as **Dr. Petersen** takes the spotlight to share insights from her groundbreaking research.

Dr. Petersen's research focuses on advancing neuromodulation approaches for chronic pain, including the development of new devices, applications and treatment methods.

Celebrating National Postdoc Appreciation Week

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs is proud to celebrate National Postdoc Appreciation Week, taking place **September 21–25, 2026**.

This year marks a special milestone: the 150th anniversary of the postdoctoral position in the United States. Postdoctoral scholars play a vital role in advancing research and discovery through their expertise, innovation, and dedication. Their contributions are essential to what makes groundbreaking research possible.

See the flyer below for details on the social and educational events planned throughout the week. We encourage you to join us in celebrating the achievements and impact of our postdoctoral community.

[View the Flyer for Daily Events & Celebrations](#)

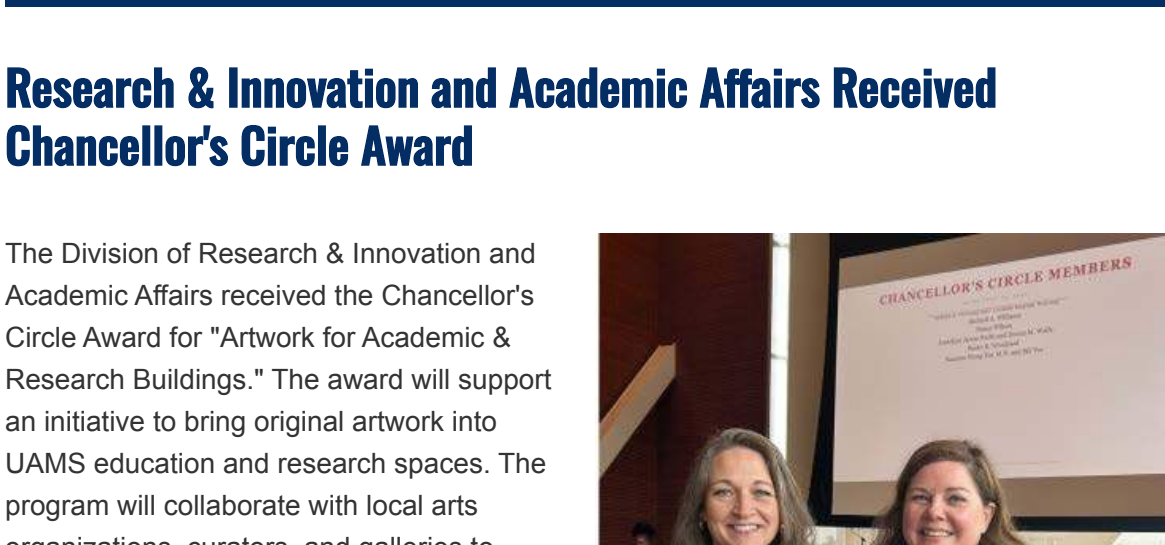
Sip & Science Recap: Psychiatry Research Sparks Lively Discussion

On August 20, UAMS's Sip & Science series returned to Hibernia Irish Tavern for an evening of candid conversation between our community and three researchers from the Department of Psychiatry: **Melissa Zielinski, PhD**, **Ashley Acheson, PhD**, and **Michael Cucciare, PhD**.

Rather than a traditional lecture, the event was driven largely by audience questions — and attendees didn't hold back. The conversation covered a wide range of topics, including the challenges facing incarcerated women re-entering their communities, how researchers define "evidence-based" treatment, the unknowns surrounding cannabis use and developing brains, the potential role of artificial intelligence in psychiatric care and research, the real-world effects of recent federal research funding disruptions, the role of genetics versus environment in mental health, and where psychedelic-assisted therapy research currently stands.

The lively exchange demonstrated the community's strong interest in engaging directly with UAMS researchers. Thank you to our panelists for their openness and expertise, and to everyone who joined us for the discussion.

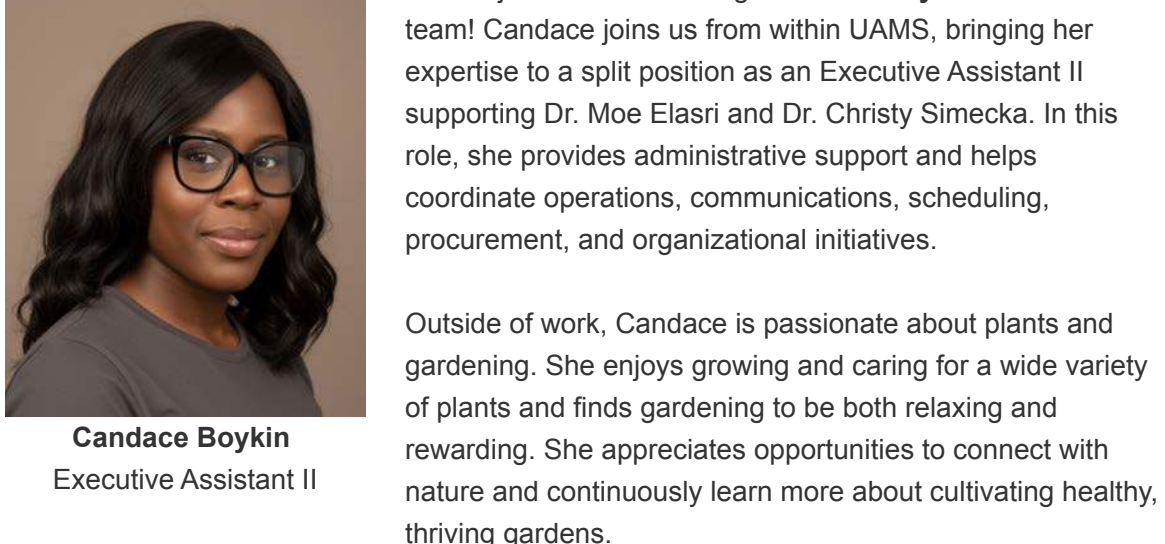
We welcome your suggestions for future topics of discussion. Please [send us your ideas](#).



BioVentures Innovation Day 2026 Draws Full House

BioVentures Innovation Day 2026 officially reached capacity, with a full house of registrants gathering at UAMS for a day dedicated to entrepreneurship and innovation in Arkansas.

The event featured an opening address from Dr. Lowry Barnes, followed by a lineup of insightful panels led by the BioVentures team — Eric Peterson, Allison Thompson, Joe Schaffner, and Rebecca Todd. Researchers, innovators, and industry leaders from across Arkansas came together for a day of learning, networking, and celebrating UAMS innovation.



From the R & I Team

Research & Innovation and Academic Affairs Received Chancellor's Circle Award

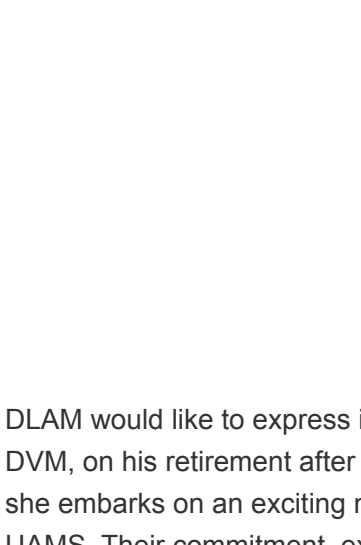
The Division of Research & Innovation and Academic Affairs received the Chancellor's Circle Award for "Artwork for Academic & Research Buildings." The award will support an initiative to bring original artwork into UAMS education and research spaces. The program will collaborate with local arts organizations, curators, and galleries to showcase artwork that reflects the cultural and community diversity of Arkansas.

Established in 1984, the Chancellor's Circle is UAMS' premier annual giving society, providing discretionary funding for projects and programs across the institution.



Pictured: Amy Stalls(right), Chief of Staff for the Division of Research & Innovation, and Kathryn Neill, Associate Provost, accepting the Chancellor's Circle Award.

Welcome, Candace Boykin!



Candace Boykin
Executive Assistant II

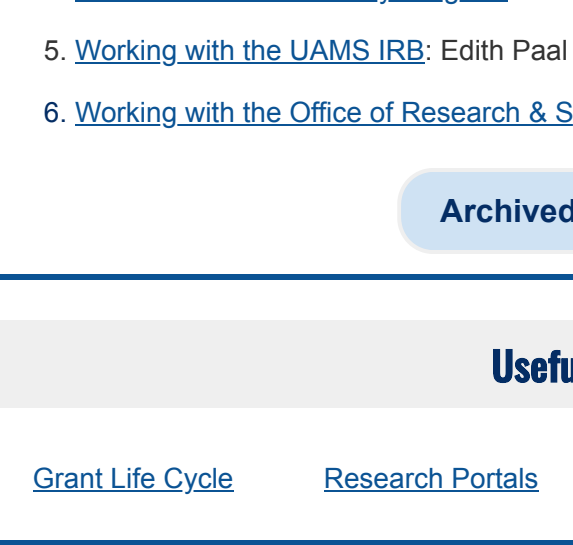
Please join us in welcoming **Candace Boykin** to the R&I team! Candace joins us from within UAMS, bringing her expertise to a split position as an Executive Assistant II supporting Dr. Moe Elasri and Dr. Christy Simecka. In this role, she provides administrative support and helps coordinate operations, communications, scheduling, procurement, and organizational initiatives.

Outside of work, Candace is passionate about plants and gardening. She enjoys growing and caring for a wide variety of plants and finds gardening to be both relaxing and rewarding. She appreciates opportunities to connect with nature and continuously learn more about cultivating healthy, thriving gardens.

Welcome to the team, Candace!

Behind the Scenes: Improving Our Biomed Buildings

Have you noticed our Biomed buildings looking brighter, functioning more smoothly, and becoming more welcoming?

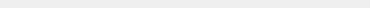


Left to right: Robin Mulkey, Mickey Thomas and Paul Browning.

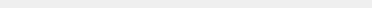
During the August Research & Innovation Directors Meeting, Stephanie Gardner, PharmD, EdD, Provost and Chief Strategy Officer, and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and Daniel Voth, PhD, Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation, proudly recognized Robin Mulkey, DLAM Director of Operations; Mickey Thomas, Research Space Planner; and Paul Browning, Building Manager. The three were honored for their exceptional efforts managing ongoing building challenges in Biomed I and II. Their can-do attitudes have been critical in navigating these complex issues and supporting building occupants. As a token of appreciation, each received a swag bag as a small thank-you for their outstanding and continued efforts!

Division of Laboratory Animal Medicine (DLAM)

Farewell to John Lowery, DVM, and to Robin Mulkey, CMAR



John Lowery, DVM



Robin Mulkey, CMAR

DLAM would like to express its deepest gratitude and sincere congratulations to John Lowery, DVM, on his retirement after 34 years of dedicated service, and to Robin Mulkey, CMAR, as she embarks on an exciting new career opportunity after 19 years of outstanding service to UAMS. Their commitment, expertise, and contributions have made a lasting impact on DLAM and the UAMS community. We thank them for their many years of dedication and wish them continued success, happiness, and fulfillment in this next chapter.

Welcome to Kim Murphy, CMAR, CPIA, to DLAM as the newly appointed Director of Operations! Kim joins our team from the Office of Research Integrity where she has worked with animal researchers for the past 13 years.

UAMS Research in the News

UAMS Cancer Institute receives \$2.3 million NIH grant — [Talk Business & Politics](#)

UAMS receives \$2.4 million grant to study aging and brittle bones — [KARK](#) | [AOL](#)

UAMS lands \$3.1 million grant to study cancer prevention — [KARK](#)

Video Recordings Available for Recent Virtual Seminars

1. [Microsoft Word Tips & Tricks](#): Eric Rathman, MS, ELS
2. [SciENcy Common Forms – Tips and FAQs](#): Nicole Schartz, PhD
3. [AI for Discovery – Accelerating UAMS Research](#)
4. [UAMS Research Security Program](#): Nicole Schartz, PhD ([PowerPoint Slides](#))
5. [Working with the UAMS IRB](#): Edith Paal
6. [Working with the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs](#): Andrea Ham, BS, CRA

Archived Seminars

Useful Links

[Grant Life Cycle](#)[Research Portals](#)[Core Facilities](#)[Feedback/Questions](#)

University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

[Division of Research and Innovation](#)

Biomedical Research Bldg. II, 159-2, Slot 718
4301 W. Markham St., Little Rock, AR 72205

[Make a gift today >>](#)

Follow us!

