



PULASKI COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY News

April 2024

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Pulaski County Medical Society

500 S. University Ave., Suite A14
Little Rock, AR 72205
Phone: 501.687.0039
Email: derek@pulaskicms.org
Website: www.pulaskicms.org

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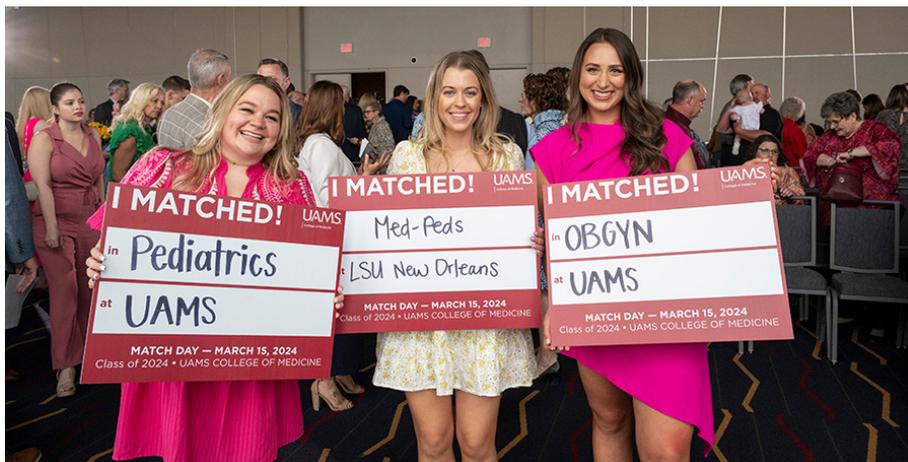
College of Medicine Class of 2024 Gathers on Gray Day for Colorful Match Day Celebration

By Linda Satter

On March 28, 2024 the rain and fog outside didn't dampen the bright smiles inside as students from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences' (UAMS) College of Medicine Class of 2024 gathered March 15 in downtown Little Rock for its Match Day celebration.

Inside a second-story ballroom in Robinson Center, where the Broadway Bridge over the Arkansas River loomed large through glass walls, tension began filling the air at about 10:30 a.m., as seniors, sitting among family and friends, awaited the arrival of 11 a.m.

That's when the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) would release results showing which of 44,853 budding medical doctors, doctors of osteopathic medicine and graduates of foreign medical schools had matched to just 38,494 available residencies in the United States. The NRMP uses an algorithm to match the ranked lists of seniors and institutions, following weeks of applications and interviews.



Left to Right: Meredith Ott, Tara Bates, and Kristen Stringfellow share their Matches.

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The Hidden Dangers of Online Trackers

BRIAN JOHNSON, INFORMATION SECURITY OFFICER, SVMIC; REPRINTED FROM THE SVMIC SENTINEL

Recent events have drawn attention to the widespread use of online trackers and raised privacy concerns for healthcare organizations. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has issued a bulletin following filed complaints, class action lawsuits, breach notifications, and investigations that bring attention to this issue. The bulletin specifically addresses the collection of protected health information (PHI) by online trackers and the possibility of unauthorized data sharing with third parties. It is essential that healthcare organizations take proactive measures to ensure that the data collected by these trackers and shared with third parties comply with the regulations set forth in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). An online tracker is a computer code placed within a website that is designed to collect information about a visitor's interactions with the site. Most trackers are supplied to website owners free of charge by third-party vendors such as Meta and Google. The trackers are generally invisible to website users. When the code runs, it sends the collected data to the tracking vendor for analysis. A common practice is to collect usage data to identify areas for improvement and provide a better experience for visitors. This includes collecting data on page load times, most visited pages, downloads, number of clicks, time spent and keyword searches. Additionally, trackers are often used to collect information on conversion rates, for example, the number of visitors who completed the process to schedule an appointment after clicking the "schedule now" button. Tracking vendors also benefit from the presence of the tracker. The collected data is often used for marketing and online ads. Website owners should be aware that in the presence of tracking technology any content on the page can be consumed by the tracking vendor. This can have unintended consequences for pages that include health data.

The concern for healthcare organizations is when trackers collect health data that leads to impermissible data sharing. According to HIPAA regulations, PHI data can only be shared with third parties when explicit permission has been granted, or in the case of permissible uses and disclosures not requiring patient authorization, such as for recognized health care operations or when a business associate agree-

ment (BAA) has been executed with the third-party tracking vendor.¹ To address the issue, OCR issued a bulletin titled, "Use of Online Tracking Technologies by HIPAA Covered Entities and Business Associates."² The bulletin provides guidance on tracking technologies, types of data collected, common usage scenarios, and compliance with the Privacy Rule.

The bulletin distinguishes between unauthenticated pages, such as the homepage of a publicly accessible website for a medical group, and user-authenticated pages, such as a patient portal. The former contains generic information about a practice and has less risk when a tracker is present. The latter requires users to log in and often contains individually identifiable health information (IIHI) such as patient name, address, phone number, appointment times, health history, prescriptions, and lab results. The presence of a tracker on a user-authenticated page likely has access to PHI and introduces the potential of impermissible sharing with third parties.

The OCR bulletin stresses that "Regulated entities are required to comply with the HIPAA rules when using tracking technologies." This means that Covered Entities and Business Associates must obtain explicit permission to share information with tracking vendors for marketing purposes. Otherwise, if the tracking vendor meets the requirements of a business associate, a business associate agreement (BAA) must be in place. However, simply providing protected health information (PHI) to a tracking vendor or having a signed BAA does not automatically make them a business associate.³ The tracking vendor must meet the explicit definition of a business associate, otherwise HIPAA compliant authorizations are required. The bulletin also cautions against the use of website banners that require visitors to accept the usage of tracking technologies, as this does not meet the requirements for HIPAA authorization. It is important for regulated entities to ensure that they are compliant with HIPAA rules when using tracking technologies to protect the privacy and security of PHI.

The bulletin does not mention specific trackers or vendors by name; however, Meta Pixel (formally Facebook Pixel) has been the subject of multiple class action lawsuits related to its tracking technology. An investigation by The Markup found thirty-three of the top one hundred healthcare providers using

the tracking technology with evidence of sensitive data being shared through patient portals and online schedulers.⁴ One example demonstrated the use of an appointment scheduler sending Facebook the name of the doctor, including her specialty, along with the patients' first name, last name, email address, phone number, zip code, and city. To help healthcare organizations identify the presence of Meta Pixel's tracking technology on their websites, The Markup has developed a tool called Blacklight.⁵ This tool can scan a website and alert healthcare organizations if Meta Pixel is present. If a healthcare organization finds the tracker on their website, they should investigate its presence.

It is crucial for healthcare organizations to assess their websites for all tracking technologies and evaluate compliance with HIPAA regulations. To achieve this, organizations should first identify where health data is displayed or collected from visitors. They should then search for the presence of trackers within those sections of the website. If trackers are found, organizations should determine what data they are collecting and if it's necessary to share with the tracking vendor. If the trackers have no value, they should be removed. However, if they are necessary, organizations must ensure that the trackers disclose the minimum necessary PHI, and that appropriate BAAs and authorizations are in place. Lastly, recurring examination of tracker technologies should be added to the risk analysis and risk management procedures for the organization.

In conclusion, the use of online trackers has raised privacy concerns for healthcare organizations. The previously discussed OCR bulletin addresses this issue, specifically focusing on the collection of protected health information (PHI) and the possibility of unauthorized data sharing with third parties. Practices must take proactive measures to ensure that the data collected by these trackers and shared with third parties comply with HIPAA regulations. The OCR bulletin provides guidance on tracking technologies, types of data collected, common usage scenarios, and compliance with the Privacy Rule. If you have questions about cybersecurity or access to these resources, contact Sharon Theriot using the information below.

1 45 CFR 164.502(e) - Uses and disclosures of protected health information
2 Use of Online Tracking Technologies by HIPAA Covered Entities and Business Associates | HHS.gov
3 Use of Online Tracking Technologies by HIPAA Covered Entities and Business Associates | HHS.gov
4 Facebook Is Receiving Sensitive Medical Information from Hospital Websites - The Markup
5 Blacklight - The Markup



Match Day Celebration

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The 157 UAMS seniors who took part in the NMRP represented the majority of UAMS' 168 seniors, all of whom will continue their next three to seven years of medical training after they graduate in May with their medical degrees. The 11 who didn't go through the NRMP program had already matched through programs for the military, urology and ophthalmology.

Although the NRMP seniors learned earlier in the week whether they matched to a residency, they had to wait until Match Day to know which of their choices was selected. The few UAMS seniors who didn't match through the NRMP or other programs were paired over the following days with other open positions, ensuring all have a place to go.

Seniors everywhere were able to peek at a mass email the NRMP sent out at the golden hour, but most at UAMS heeded the advice of Sharanda Williams, assistant dean of student affairs, who suggested that they wait to open sealed envelopes containing their matches until they walked across the stage. As they did, stopping at a microphone to briefly announce where they matched,



Macey Feimster and Troy Davidson

they were met by hoots and hollers from family, friends and classmates.

"To our families, thank you for believing in us and also helping us believe in ourselves," class president Tamanna Basri told the crowd shortly before College of Medicine officials led a verbal countdown of the final seconds until 11 a.m.

Before the countdown, representatives of corporate sponsors Baptist Health, Arvest Bank, Re/Max and Simmons Bank addressed the seniors, as did UAMS leaders, including Steven Webber, M.D., who became the new College of Medicine dean only two weeks earlier.

Altogether, 79 UAMS seniors will remain in Arkansas for their residencies, while 89 will attend programs in 26 other states.



Angel Castro finds out where he is Matched

Additionally, 48% of the Class of 2024 matched into primary care residencies, which include internal medicine, family medicine, obstetrics/gynecology, pediatrics and Med-Peds, which consists of two years in internal medicine and two years in pediatrics. Last year, 50% of the Class of 2023 matched to primary care residencies.

Phillip Wallace, a senior recruiter at Baptist Health, which has several partnerships with UAMS, reminded the seniors that a national physician shortage, which was underway when they started medical school in 2020, "has not abated."

Citing the ongoing need, he thanked them for their perseverance despite having to pivot during their first year of medical school to mostly virtual classes for about two years, because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"You are going to go on and do great things," Webber told the class. "We wish you the very best as your medical school days wind down."



Alyssa Jeffery (center) with friends and family.

CHI St. Vincent Hospitals Awarded for Organ Donation Awareness Efforts

Program with ARORA Earns Platinum Award From HHS

[CHI St. Vincent](#), a leading regional health network serving Central and Southwest Arkansas, announces that CHI St. Vincent Infirmery in Little Rock, CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs and CHI St. Vincent North in Sherwood have earned national recognition for their efforts to increase organ, tissue and eye donor awareness across the state through the DoNation Campaign.

Working with ARORA of Little Rock, an accredited organ procurement nonprofit, CHI St. Vincent hospitals in Little Rock, Hot Springs and Sherwood earned Platinum recognition from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

"CHI St. Vincent is honored to receive this recognition for its efforts, working with ARORA, to raise awareness about organ donation," CHI St. Vincent Market CEO Chad Aduddell said. "Transplantation is a miracle that restores

lives, and we are dedicated to helping share that miracle with patients and their families."

Formerly known as the Workplace Partnership for Life Hospital Campaign, DoNation unites HRSA and the organ donor community with hospitals across the country to spread the word about the importance of organ donation and increase the number of registered organ, eye and tissue donors.

Working with ARORA, CHI St. Vincent hospitals hold Donate Life walks, regularly discuss organ donation in nursing orientations, promote National Donate Life Blue and Green Day through special events, and observe Organ Donation Month each April with special messages throughout their facilities. CHI St. Vincent and ARORA also collaborate on processes and procedures to inform hospital patients and their families about organ donation options.

CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs Announced As Training Site for New Partnership to Expand Representation in Health Care

CommonSpirit Health and Morehouse School of Medicine have named CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs as one of seven sites that will address two of the most pressing challenges in health care – a shortage of diverse clinicians and the need for more equitable health care. The announcement launches the first phase of the More in Common Alliance, a 10-year, \$100 million initiative to increase cultural competency and expand representation to improve both access and quality of care patients receive.

"CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs was chosen because of the opportunity to impact patient outcomes in the diverse community that we serve," said Chad Aduddell, Market President of CHI St. Vincent.

Announced in December 2020, the partnership between CommonSpirit Health and the Morehouse School of Medicine will increase medical education opportunities for more Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC). More in Common Alliance was

established as the partnership name because research demonstrates that patients consistently fare better when treated by clinicians of similar backgrounds who share lived experiences. Other first-phase sites include undergraduate training opportunities at CommonSpirit hospitals in Chattanooga, Tenn., Lexington, Ky., and Seattle, Wash., and post-graduate residencies and fellowships in California in Bakersfield, Los Angeles, Santa Cruz, and Ventura County.

"We know that, statistically and anecdotally, patients have better outcomes when treated by a clinician who comes from a similar background," said Morehouse School of Medicine President and CEO Dr. Valerie Montgomery Rice. "Yet, in the medical field, there are far too few providers from underrepresented groups, and the impact that has on patient care is astounding. Through the More in Common Alliance, our aim is to change the math and the face of health care in the U.S."

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Student Project, 12th Street Clinic Pop-up Clinics, Draw Many New Visitors

A UAMS student led project, funded in part by the Pulaski County Medical Society in 2023, now has the right recipe for seeing many more patients in the community. Their collaboration with El Zocalo Hispanic Resource Center has been very rewarding. The students and faculty advisors, are timing their events with its food pantry drive to maximize exposure. They are also expanding to see children (previously only adults) and are providing real appointments to patients who ask or require them. In April they will also offer dental hygiene screenings as well. They are very excited that they have provided health screenings and offered continuity care to 102 adults and 5 children – higher than the combined total of the preceding 2 years.



Future plans include partnering with the UAMS mobile unit to provide flu shots in the Fall. Additionally, they have been invited to do health screenings at the Vestido Rojo (Red Dress) event put on by the Arkansas Human Development Corporation on October 26th in addition to doing 4 pop-up more clinics.



CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs Announced As Training Site for New Partnership...

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CHI St. Vincent established an internal residency program in 2021. Now with Morehouse School of Medicine as the program’s academic sponsor, post-graduate residents and fellows will benefit from training focused on addressing health inequities and underserved patients.

“We will expand our residency program with new opportunities that will build a more diverse and dynamic workforce that reflects the communities we serve.” said Dr. Douglas Ross, President of CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs and Market Chief Medical Officer for CHI St. Vincent.

Morehouse School of Medicine and CommonSpirit Health are uniquely positioned to impact health equity through education and training opportunities, and

improved access and care delivery. While there are 155 accredited medical schools in the U.S., Morehouse School of Medicine and the other three historically Black medical schools produce the majority of the nation’s Black physicians. CommonSpirit Health, one of the largest health systems in America comprised of providers such as CHI St. Vincent, serves some of the most diverse communities in the country and is a leading provider of Medicaid services.

“The More in Common Alliance is the perfect example of what can happen when two healthcare organizations devoted to the creation and advancement of health equity in underserved communities come together,” Dr. Montgomery Rice said.

Arkansas Marks First Sensation-Restoring Procedure for Breast Cancer Surgeries

Technique Offers Hope to Patients Facing Potential Post-Mastectomy Numbness

During the week of March 13, 2024, Arkansas marked the first use of **Resensation**[®], an innovative breast cancer surgical procedure designed to restore sensation after mastectomy. Together, Eric Wright, M.D., a board-certified plastic surgeon, and Yara Robertson, M.D., CARTI’s medical director of surgery and breast surgical oncologist, performed this procedure.

“Losing one or both breasts is a life-changing event that can significantly impact a woman’s sense of self,” said Dr. Eric Wright. “This procedure is designed to help women feel more like themselves after breast reconstruction surgery.”

With the advancement of the Resensation procedure, numbness no longer has to be the accepted norm. Specialty-trained Resensation surgeons can now use an allograft nerve to reconnect cut nerves in the chest so they can heal over time and potentially restore feeling for patients.

“CARTI is dedicated to offering women the resources and support they need for informed decision-making



Dr. Robertson and Dr. Wright performing Resensation procedure

throughout their breast cancer journeys,” said Dr. Yara Robertson. “We want to ensure they have a clear understanding of their choices, including access to promising procedures like Resensation that could enhance their quality of life.”

Every year, more than 90,000 women in the U.S. have one or both breasts removed for breast cancer treatment or risk reduction. Peer-reviewed studies show that up to 60% of these patients experience persistent breast numbness, an outcome often associated with a decreased quality of life and reduced sexual function.

Baptist Health Offering Free ‘Eat Smart, Live Strong’ Program for Seniors

Baptist Health Community Outreach invites able-bodied seniors to join “Eat Smart, Live Strong,” a new four-week wellness program.

This free program, which starts Wednesday, May 1, focuses on eating more fruits and vegetables and getting more physical activity to help delay and prevent the effects of diet-related disease. Through group discussion and facilitated activities, participants will decide on and plan for lifestyle changes they wish to make.

Sessions will be Wednesdays through from noon to 1:30 p.m. at Baptist Health Community Outreach, 10117 Kanis Road in Little Rock.

Lunch will be provided. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. For more information or to register, visit bit.ly/BHlivelstrong or call (501) 202-1540.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- April 15th Tax Day**
- April 24th Administrative Assistants Day**
- April 25th Take our Daughters and Sons to work Day**
- May 4th Kentucky Derby Day**
- May 5th Cinco de Mayo**
- May 6th National Nurses Day**
- May 7th National Teachers Appreciation Day**
- May 12th Mother’s Day**
- May 15th Peace Officers Memorial Day**



30+ Year Leukemia Survivor to Share Story at UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute April 17



Mel Mann

Mel Mann, a retired U.S. Army major and 32-year chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) survivor, will speak to cancer patients, caregivers and health care providers at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute grand rounds on Wednesday, April 17.

The free event will be held at noon in the Walton Auditorium on the 10th floor of the Cancer Institute. No registration is required.

Diagnosed with CML, a rare cancer of the white blood cells, in 1995, Mann was given three years to live. Unable to find a bone marrow donor, he was only the second person out of thousands to participate in the landmark 1998 Phase 1 clinical trial of the life-saving drug, Gleevec.

Approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in May 2001, Gleevec is now a standard treatment for CML and widely considered one of the most successful cancer treatments with an 89% overall survival rate. Before Gleevec, only 30% of patients with CML survived five years after being diagnosed.

Gleevec is the first tyrosine kinase inhibitor approved by the FDA and is also referred to by its chemical name, *imatinib*.

Mann's cancer remains in remission, and he still takes the same medicine today. He travels the U.S. sharing his story, spreading cancer awareness and advocating for clinical trials, particularly among African Americans, a group that continues to be underrepresented in clinical trials.

"I am Exhibit A of why patients should consider clinical trials," he said. "I saw clinical trials as a chance to get tomorrow's medicine today."

Michael Birrer, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, says bringing Mann to Arkansas to share his story is important as the Cancer Institute expands the number of interventional treatment trials it can offer to cancer patients.

"We have the only academic Phase 1 Clinical Trial Unit in Arkansas and are actively testing many novel treatments that are helping patients who have failed standard treatments," said Birrer.

Patients who want to learn more should email cancerclinicaltrials@uams.edu or call the UAMS Cancer Clinical Trials Office at 501-686-8288.

Join Baptist Health for Two-Part Diabetes Education Program With Day, Night Options

Baptist Health Community Outreach invites residents of central Arkansas to register for a free, two-session diabetes education class in May.

Classes will be available during the day or at night at the Baptist Health Community Outreach Center, 10117 Kanis Road in Little Rock:

- Day classes will be Thursdays, May 2 and 9 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Lunch will be provided.
- Night classes will be Tuesdays, May 7 and 14 at 5:30 p.m.

Over the course of the program, participants will learn how to manage their health through nutrition and physical activity as well as techniques to reduce stress and help them cope. Topics will also include diabetes risk factors, complications and self-management.

Space is limited and registration is required, so call (501) 202-1540 to reserve your spot and for additional information.

 **Baptist Health**
COMMUNITY OUTREACH

New UAMS Clinic to Treat Youth, Adolescents for Substance Use

A bridge is defined as a means of connection or transition. The newest clinic at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) hopes to serve as a transition for the numerous young people in Arkansas dealing with substance use disorders.

The Six Bridges Clinic is the first of its kind at UAMS, treating patients between the ages of 12 and 21 for dependency on substances like opioids, alcohol and marijuana. The outpatient program, developed in conjunction with Arkansas Children's Hospital and funded by a grant from the Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas, is located in UAMS' Psychiatric Research Institute.

According to the 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, approximately 4% of Americans ages 12 to 17 suffer from a substance use disorder — about 1 million adolescents. The rates of substance use in Arkansas youth are highly concerning, especially for alcohol (12%) and marijuana (14%), which are higher than the national average.

The clinic, whose name honors the six bridges that span the Arkansas River between Little Rock and North Little

Rock, offers screening and evaluation services in addition to treatment for substance use disorders and provides up-to-date recovery resources.

"We are currently in a serious public health crisis. In Arkansas, there are only a handful of providers that treat substance use disorders in adolescents," said Srinivasa Gokarakonda, M.D., the clinic's medical director. "I profusely thank the Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas for their support to help establish an outpatient substance use treatment program at UAMS for youth and young adults."

The vision of the Six Bridges Clinic, added Gokarakonda, is to provide comprehensive assessment and treatment of adolescents and young adults with substance use disorders and to provide a broad range of community outreach efforts to raise awareness and enhance prevention, screening and referral to treatment.

The Six Bridges Clinic is open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Tuesday and Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Anyone wanting to schedule an appointment with the clinic should call (501) 526-8487.

Join Baptist Health Community Outreach For Free Cooking Classes This Spring

Baptist Health Community Outreach holds a variety of monthly classes to help central Arkansas residents make easy and delicious meals at home that won't break the bank or health goals.

The Cooking with Community Outreach classes are taught by Baptist Health registered dietitian Samantha Stadter and are designed to help participants gain confidence in the kitchen. During each class, students will prepare, cook and taste different dishes using a variety of ingredients. Topics include nutrition benefits, ingredient selection, money-saving tips and more.

Classes are held every second Thursday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Baptist Health Community Outreach, 10117 Kanis Road in Little Rock:

- Thursday, April 11: Gallo Pinto (Costa Rican rice and beans)
- Thursday, May 9: Mediterranean turkey burgers and cucumber salad
- Thursday, June 13: Chicken tacos with homemade salsa

Each student will leave class with a satisfied stomach, written recipes and tips, and best of all – the Community Outreach staff will handle kitchen clean up!

To register for one of the Cooking with Community Outreach classes listed, visit bit.ly/BHcookingclass or call Baptist Health Community Outreach at (501) 202-1540.