

# THE TRIBUNE

MARCH 2019

## Surgery or Not?

### Study Aims to Settle Treatment Debate for Deadliest Stroke



UAMS neurosurgeons Thomas W. Morris III and J.D. Day (holding the BrainPath tube) are co-principal investigators in a national study testing intracerebral hemorrhage treatments.

Arkansas may be a small state, but as part of the so-called stroke belt, it produces a large number of patients with intracerebral hemorrhage, the deadliest and most disabling type of stroke.

More than 100 such patients are seen every year by UAMS neurosurgeons, said J.D. Day, M.D., who chairs the Department of Neurosurgery in the College of Medicine.

Day and his team have been using a breakthrough minimally invasive technique to remove clots from intracerebral hemorrhages. Last year, Day accepted an invitation to make UAMS part of a 26-center national study, called the ENRICH (Early MiNimally-invasive Removal of ICH) Trial, to determine if the procedure leads to better outcomes than standard medical management. UAMS neurosurgeon Thomas W. Morris III, M.D., is co-principal investigator, and the Translational Research Institute (TRI) is providing regulatory and research nursing support.

Day was among the first neurosurgeons in the world invited to train on the NICO BrainPath® surgical technology in 2013. He enthusiastically embraced the technology, which uses brain imaging

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## TRI Focused on Involving Community in Research



Dear Colleagues,

One of our goals at the Translational Research Institute is to make research part of “everyday conversations.”

We believe that research should expand beyond our formal research laboratories, be part of clinical and educational activities, and be a topic of interest to the community. An important part of bringing research to the community involves building bidirectional relationships with the people who make up Arkansas’ diverse population.

TRI has established and supported a number of successful community oriented programs to ensure our research dovetails with the needs of our communities. Particular attention has been paid to rural and underserved communities.

To take this one step further, we have invited the community to UAMS to help us make research funding decisions that are community-responsive. Our efforts have caught the attention of translational research leaders in other states. This month, we received funding that will allow us to share lessons learned and test our best practices. Please join me in congratulating Dr. Kate Stewart and TRI staff Amy Jo Jenkins and Nia Indelicato as they begin work to teach four other academic institutions how to engage community members in decision-making for pilot grant studies.

Sincerely,

Laura James, M.D.  
Director, TRI  
Associate Vice Chancellor for Clinical and Translational Research,  
UAMS

# Surgery or Not?

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and high-definition optics to help guide a small bullet-shaped tube deep into the brain. The BrainPath tube has a tip that markedly improves surgeons' ability to navigate the brain's natural folds and delicate fibers with minimal trauma. In addition to evacuating hemorrhage clots, Day uses it to remove brain tumors and other brain abnormalities.

It has been used aggressively with patients who get to UAMS quickly after an intracerebral hemorrhage.

"I believe that people do better with early clot evacuation," Day said.

Based on his experience, patients treated with BrainPath have shorter hospital stays, fewer complications, and sometimes, depending on the location of the clot, an improved neurological outcome. It may also be more cost effective to operate than treating them conservatively.

The problem is that past studies have not conclusively shown the benefits of clot evacuation. It is an issue Day hopes will be settled with the ENRICH Trial.

"The selection criteria are very restrictive," Day said. "It's meant to be the cleanest of all the studies done to date to answer this question."

Led by Emory University, the study's controls include video of each surgery for review by the main research team.

UAMS has recently outperformed other sites in subject enrollment, with four patients entering the trial in the last quarter of 2018, the most of all sites.

Day said TRI's regulatory and clinical management of the study have been crucial.

"If we didn't have help, especially with a study coordinator, this would be pretty tough to do," he said.

## NCATS Funds TRI Community Reviewer Training Study



(L-R) Kate Stewart, Nia Indelicato and Amy Jo Jenkins

A potentially groundbreaking strategy developed by TRI for including community members in the scientific review process will be studied by UAMS and four other Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) Program institutions over the next year.

The one-year, \$100,800 CTSA Administrative Supplement is funded by the NIH National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS). The five institutions will evaluate the impact of TRI's best practices as community members participate in the pilot grant review process.

TRI's Amy Jo Jenkins, M.S., executive director, and Nia Indelicato, M.N.O., senior project manager, drafted the application with Kate Stewart, M.D., M.P.H., the faculty lead who also directs TRI's Community Engagement program.

The participating institutions are the University of Southern California, Ohio State University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and University of California, Irvine.

## Researcher Profile



**J.D. Day, M.D.,  
FAANS**

*Professor and  
Chairman, Department  
of Neurosurgery*

*UAMS College of  
Medicine*

*Director, Neurosciences  
Service Line*

**What inspired you to become a clinical researcher?**

*I view it as an integral part of my career as an academic neurosurgeon.*

**What do you like most about your area of research?**

*The opportunity to impact the care of people with devastating strokes.*

**What career would you have chosen if not research?**

*Football coach*

**What current or former biomedical researcher (from anywhere) do you admire most? Why?**

*Michael L.J. Apuzzo, M.D., formerly at University of Southern California, for his innovation in applying technology to engineering problems in stereotactic neurosurgery.*

# Community Scientist Academy Recast for High School Students



Students from the Little Rock School District's Excel Program participate in the Community Scientist Academy.



Cynthia Booker was enjoying a UAMS Community Scientist Academy class last year when she thought of her 11th and 12th grade students.

A teacher in the Little Rock School District, Booker believed the academy, with a few modifications, could be a great fit for her Excel students in the Advanced Medical Sciences Program.

"I absolutely enjoyed it," she said, adding that the researchers who spoke to the class answered all of her questions, including about the process, the kinds of studies conducted, and how they are funded.

"Before graduation, I was already thinking of ways to get my students involved," she said.

TRI's Community Engagement team, led by Kate Stewart, M.D., M.P.H., Nicki Spencer, M.H.A., and Rachel Hale, M.A., loved the idea and worked with her to recast the academy for the Excel program, which offers college credit in partnership with the University of Arkansas - Pulaski Technical College.

"Our goal with the Community Scientist Academy is to help as many people as possible learn about the research we're doing at UAMS and how it is conducted," said Stewart, who also directs the Office of Community-Based Public Health at the College of Public Health.

To accommodate the Excel class, the typically six-week academy was extended to 10 weeks. The students had to write a research paper and were given a poster project that will be displayed at their graduation April 25, 1 - 3 p.m., Rahn Building, 8240.

## Research on the Horizon: New TRI Study of the Month



Jonathan Dranoff, M.D., meets with TRI's Erica "Ashley" Sides, CRA, CCRP, CRS, research coordinator.

- **UAMS Principal Investigator:** Jonathan A. Dranoff, M.D., Jerome S. Levy Professor of Medicine; Director, Div. of Gastroenterology & Hepatology; Chief, Gastroenterology Service, Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System.
- **Summary:** A phase 3 study of obeticholic acid's effectiveness in changing the natural history of fatty liver disease in subjects with compensated cirrhosis.
- **Significance:** Fatty liver disease is now the most important liver disease worldwide, particularly in Arkansas, given its high obesity rate, and threatens to overwhelm capacity to treat it.
- **TRI Services:** Medicare coverage analysis, study budget review and negotiation, IRB submission, completion of sponsor's regulatory startup packet, training for study staff/investigators, oversight of enrollment startup, and research nurse coordinator services.

- **Sponsor:** Intercept Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

## TRIBUTES

*The following UAMS researchers cited the Translational Research Institute (TRI) in publications after utilizing TRI resources or funding:*

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*Thank you for remembering to cite TRI in your publications resulting from studies that receive TRI support.*  
Find the appropriate citation language at [tri.uams.edu/about-tri-2/cite-tri](http://tri.uams.edu/about-tri-2/cite-tri).

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