

# THE TRIBUNE

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## Pooling Resources TRI, Researchers Help CTSA's Innovate Pilot Reviews

When TRI pilot grant applications come in, Nia Indelicato, M.N.O., needs an efficient system for finding qualified reviewers at UAMS and outside institutions. Fortunately, she has one.

In 2017, TRI became a founding member of the CTSA External Reviewer Exchange Consortium (CEREC). The nine institutions that make up CEREC share reviewers, enhancing reduction of bias in evaluations of pilot grant applications due to local relationships.

CEREC is one of the first formalized reviewer exchanges with an online dashboard. The dashboard was developed by the University of California, Irvine, a CEREC member. All nine CEREC members use the dashboard for submitting reviewer requests and for tracking the status of the replies as well as other exchanges.

"The dashboard really helps streamline the process," said Indelicato, TRI assistant director of programs. "It does a great job limiting any confusion when emails are flying around with all these requests."

Other CEREC members include Harvard University, Medical College of Wisconsin, Ohio State University, University of Alabama, Birmingham, University of Southern California, University of Washington, and Virginia Commonwealth University.



*TRI's Pilot Award Program, directed by Donald Mock, M.D., Ph.D., (left) has been recognized by CTSA leaders for its innovations. (File photo - TRI Fall 2019 Planning Retreat: Mock and College of Nursing Dean Patricia Cowan, Ph.D., R.N.)*

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Dear Colleagues,

As with most at UAMS, COVID-19 has required adjustments at TRI as we continue to serve you and make our institution a clinical and translational research leader. We are grateful that technology has allowed us to maintain our mission as we practice social distancing. As we rise to meet this challenge, I hope

that you, your families and colleagues stay safe and well.

In this issue, we're highlighting a critical multi-center reviewer exchange, an innovation known as the CTSA External Reviewer Exchange Consortium (CEREC). As a founding member of this nine-CTSA collaborative in 2017, TRI has been an active participant and great beneficiary of this exchange.

CEREC membership gives us the resources to find external reviewers for TRI pilot grant applications. Likewise, other members of CEREC look to UAMS for reviewers, and you have

stepped up. Sixty-six UAMS research faculty have provided their expertise and many hours of their time to make sure the best applicants receive funding.

Thank you to all who have participated. We could not be a CEREC member without you.

This issue also highlights exciting TRI funding awards, two of which are new: Data Scholars awards and Team Science vouchers. We also named our second group of Health Science Innovation and Entrepreneurship Scholars. Congrats to all!

Sincerely,

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

## Lending an Ear

(Continued from page 1)



Nia Indelicato

CEREC depends on faculty who are willing to contribute their time and talent. “The reviewers not only submit a review, but they also participate remotely in the study section that assigns the consensus merit of the proposals,” said Donald Mock, M.D., Ph.D., who directs TRI’s Pilot Award Program. “The review and participation takes several hours for each reviewer. We really appreciate that they can carve out time to provide their special expertise.”

UAMS is both a beneficiary and a contributor to CEREC. UAMS faculty have participated in 64 application reviews since the 2017 inception of CEREC. Collectively, the CEREC members have provided more than 500 reviews.

### MODEL FOR COMMUNITY REVIEWERS

CEREC’s reviewer exchange is supported by a supplemental grant from the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS). In 2019, NCATS funded a study of TRI’s innovative training model designed to involve and train community members as proposal reviewers. Five of the nine CEREC institutions are participating in the one-year study and the remainder are anxious to support and learn from the study results. TRI Community Engagement Program director Kate Stewart, M.D., M.P.H., helped develop the model in collaboration with Mock and Indelicato.

CEREC members have offered positive feedback, such as:

“The model UAMS had set forth was a great way for us to actually incorporate a diverse pool of community reviewers into the pilot grant review process,” said Aileen Dinjian, M.P.H., research project manager at the Southern California Clinical and Translational Research Institute. “The model had a good foundation in laying out the training for community members.”

“The training was very well organized and thought out,” said Margaret Schneider, Ph.D., a researcher at the University of California, Irvine. “It made it easy for us to deliver education about reviewing to our community reviewers.”

TRI’s External Advisory Council (EAC), which performed its annual review in March, also praised the pilot program for its leadership.

“The engagement of external and community reviewers is innovative, decreases bias in the review process, and involves community from the beginning, potentially increasing research dissemination,” the EAC’s report said.

The report also noted that TRI’s Community Scientist Academy teaches community members about the research process, which has created a pool of potential community reviewers. Further, video summaries produced by grant applicants as a TRI requirement for the full pilot application facilitate community participation in the reviews and help investigators learn “to provide clear, broad scientific communication.”

## TRI Announces Inaugural Class of Data Scholars

TRI has selected three faculty for its inaugural Data Scholars Program class.

The one-year program supports UAMS faculty in learning and applying the principles and methods of data analytics and data sciences to inform clinical practice and policy. Starting July 1, scholars will pursue formal course work in addition to mentoring during their data-driven research project.

The scholars and their project titles are:



### Nishank Jain, M.D., M.P.H.

Assistant Professor,  
College of Medicine

“Predictors of Bleeding in Patients on Chronic Dialysis on P2Y12inhibitors (PREDICT BLEED study)”



### Margarete Kulik, Ph.D., M.Sc., M.A.

Assistant Professor,  
College of Public Health

“Using (Arkansas) All-Payer Claims Data to Examine Utilization and Prescription Patterns of Tobacco Cessation Treatments among Medicaid Enrollees in Arkansas”



### Yasir Rahmatallah, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor,  
College of Medicine

“Temporal Trajectory Analysis Promotes Data-Driven Knowledge Extraction and Identifies Critical Intervention Points to Disrupt Disease Progression Pathways”

Data Scholars receive 20% salary support and reimbursement for tuition and fees up to \$5,000 per year. They will also receive close mentoring from UAMS TRI faculty and staff in developing their research projects using existing UAMS data resources such as the UAMS Arkansas Clinical Data Repository (AR-CDR), LifeLink, Arkansas All-Payer Claims Database, Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project or Veterans Affairs Administration data.

# Seven Receive TRI Team Science Vouchers

TRI recently named seven recipients of its new Team Science Voucher Program.

Awards of up to \$50,000 went to seven UAMS teams from a pool of 26 applications. A study section of 10 UAMS faculty reviewers selected the recipients.

The funding will help the teams generate key data and increase their projects' translational potential. TRI will also provide resources and training to facilitate the teams' implementation of team science.

The recipients, project titles and team members are:



## **David Bumpass, M.D.**

"Establishment of a Center for Musculoskeletal Value and Outcomes Research;" Jeffrey Stambough, M.D., Steven Cherney, M.D., Nalin Payakachat, Ph.D., Alison Cabarello, M.P.H.



## **Craig Porter, Ph.D.**

"Development of a Translational Burn Research Team at UAMS;" Esther Teo, M.D., Miranda Yelvington, M.S., Elisabet Borsheim, Ph.D.



## **Corey Hayes, Pharm.D., Ph.D.**

"Developing and Validating PREMMAT, a PREDictive Model for MAT Dropout, among Veterans with an Opioid Use Disorder;" Michael Cucciare, Ph.D., Bradley C. Martin, Pharm.D., Ph.D., Keith Bush, Ph.D., Adam Gordon, M.D., M.P.H., Bo Hu Ph.D.



## **Kate Stewart, M.D., M.P.H.**

"A Team Science Approach to Evaluation: Participatory Observation of the Development and Implementation of the TRI's Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Scholars Program;" Traci Abraham, Ph.D., Tiffany Haynes, Ph.D., Keneshia Bryant-Moore, Ph.D.



## **Linda Larson-Prior, Ph.D.**

"A Trans-disciplinary Approach to Reducing Caregiver Burden in Arkansas;" Aliza Brown, Ph.D., Corey Hayes, Pharm.D., Ph.D., Jonathan Bona, Ph.D., Carolyn Greene, Ph.D., Merideth Addicott, Ph.D., Aaron Kemp, MBA, Michael Rutherford, M.S., Jennifer Gan, MBA.



## **Aravindhyan Veerapandiyan, M.D.**

"Perceived Attitudes, Parenting Practices, and Beliefs of Nutrition and Psychosocial Interplay in Families of Children with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy;" Kindann Fawcett, Ph.D., and Seth Sorensen, Ph.D.



## **Nalin Payakachat, Ph.D., B.Pharm.**

"The time is NOW! Integrating Pain-Related Electronic Patient-Reported Outcomes Data in Electronic Health Record (iPRO-Pain);" Johnathan Goree, M.D., Erika Petersen, M.D., Kimberly Stephens, Ph.D., M.P.H., Joseph Sanford, M.D., Kevin Sexton, M.D.

"I am thrilled with the number, diversity and quality of applicants for this inaugural team science initiative," said Carolyn Greene, Ph.D., who directs the institute's Team Science Program. "Each of these teams is a multidisciplinary collaboration that is conducting truly innovative research."

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## TRI Names Four Entrepreneurship Scholars

TRI's Health Sciences Innovation and Entrepreneurship (HSIE) Postdoctoral Training Program has named four postdoctoral scholars for its class of 2022. The scholars, selected in a competitive application process, will begin two years of mentored entrepreneurship training July 1.

The program includes stipends up to \$55,000 per year and helps promising scientists move their discoveries more quickly into everyday practice by teaching them commercialization and team science skills.

The HSIE Post doctoral Scholars – all from the UAMS College of Medicine - their mentors and project plans are:



**Emilie Darrigues, Ph.D.**, will be mentored by Analiz Rodriguez, M.D., Ph.D., in the Department of Neurosurgery. Her research project will focus on improving circulating-tumor DNA detection in glioblastoma liquid biopsies and devising therapeutic nanoparticles as a strategy to specifically target glioblastoma.



**John Sherrill, M.P.H., Ph.D. Candidate**, will be mentored by David Bumpass, M.D. in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. He proposes to design a customized 3D printed stabilizer for orthopaedic applications.



**Shana Owens, Ph.D. Candidate**, will be mentored by Craig Forrest, Ph.D., in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology. She plans to develop an improved gammaherpesvirus (GHV) vaccine.



**Zachary Waldrip, Ph.D.**, will be mentored by Marie Burdine, Ph.D., in the Department of Surgery, Division of Surgical Research, at Arkansas Children's Research Institute. He will continue research focused on targeting specific kinases to improve transplant immunotherapy.

## TRIBUTES

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

Alkam D, Jenjaroenpun P, Wongsurawat T, Udaondo Z, Patumcharoenpol P, Robeson M, Haselow D, Mason W, Nookaew I, Ussery D, Jun SR. Genomic Characterization of Mumps Viruses from a Large-Scale Mumps Outbreak in Arkansas, 2016. *Infect Genet Evol.* 2019 Nov;75:103965. doi: 10.1016/j.meegid.2019.103965. Epub 2019 Jul 15. PubMed PMID: 31319177; PubMed Central PMCID: PMC6832845.

Alzghoul BN, Abualsuod A, Alqam B, Innabi A, Palagiri DR, Gheith Z, Amer FN, Meena NK, Kenchaiah S. Cocaine Use and Pulmonary Hypertension. *Am J Cardiol.* 2020 Jan 15;125(2):282-288. doi: 10.1016/j.amjcard.2019.10.008. Epub 2019 Nov 19. PubMed PMID: 31757354; PubMed Central PMCID: PMC6920567.

Emerson AM, Smith S, Lee J, Kelly PJ, Ramaswamy M. Effectiveness of a Kansas City, Jail-Based Intervention to Improve Cervical Health Literacy and Screening, One-Year Post-Intervention. *Am J Health Promot.* 2020

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Stevens MW, Rüedi-Bettschen D, Gunnell MG, Tawney R, West CM, Owens SM. Antibody Production and Pharmacokinetics of METH in Rats following Vaccination with the METH Vaccine, IXT-v100, Adjuvanted with GLA-SE. *Drug Alcohol Depend.* 2019 Nov 1;204:107484. doi: 10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2019.05.016. Epub 2019 Aug 30. PubMed PMID: 31521953; PubMed Central PMCID: PMC6878175.

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