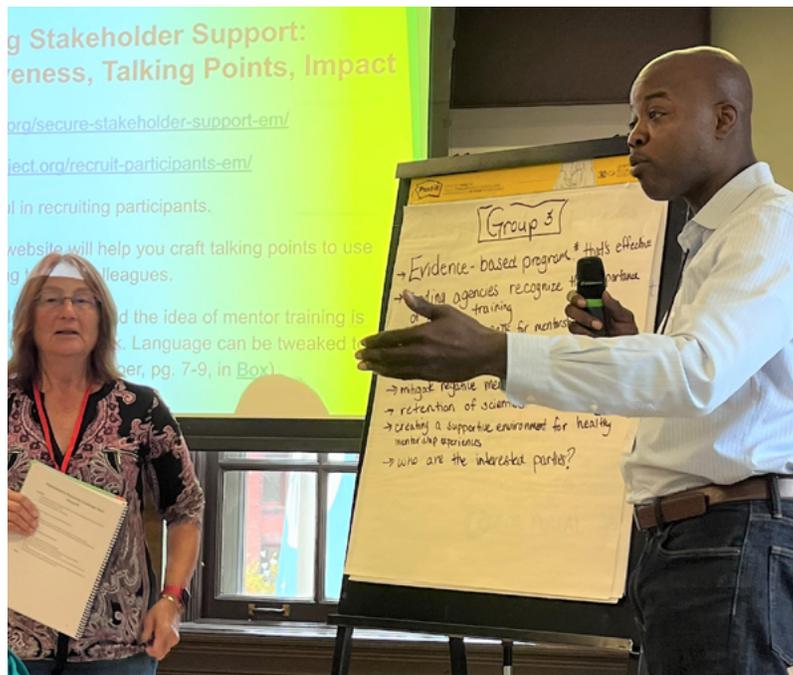


THE TRIBUNE

JANUARY 2023

Mentoring Evolution

TRI Programs Now Require Evidence-Based Mentor Training



Antiño Allen, Ph.D., (right) was among five UAMS research leaders who completed mentorship facilitator training at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Mentoring comes with the job for researchers. For many UAMS-affiliated faculty, it will soon come with evidence-based training and support.

By the end of February, dozens of research faculty at UAMS and Arkansas Children's will have assisted the Translational Research Institute (TRI) in piloting



Greene

a nationally recognized mentor training program. TRI's Carolyn Greene, Ph.D., is spearheading the work along with John Arthur, M.D., Ph.D., Antiño Allen, Ph.D., Jessica Snowden, M.D., and Jennifer Vincenzo, Ph.D., MPH, PT.

"It's almost impossible to be a successful researcher unless someone has shown you the ropes, and that is supported by a growing body of empirical evidence," said Greene, TRI associate director of Programmatic and Strategic Planning. "Today we're seeing changes in the research landscape that make quality mentorship more important than ever."

TRI's mentorship training efforts reflect a priority of the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) at the NIH.

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Dear Colleagues,

The future success of junior scientists depends largely on the quality of their mentorship. A responsibility as vital as mentoring deserves formal, evidence-based training – something UAMS faculty will see more of starting this year.

As you will read in this Tribune, TRI is implementing a nationally recognized training program from the Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research (CIMER) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Our adapted version of the training was very well received last fall by a group of 20 UAMS-affiliated research leaders, senior faculty and junior faculty. Based on their feedback, we made additional refinements to the training and will present it again to a diverse cross-section of faculty in February.

Once finalized, we will require primary mentors in our TRI programs to participate in the training. In addition, our primary mentors will be required to have a written agreement with mentees supported by our training programs. This will ensure that mentor-mentee expectations are fully aligned so that they can start on the right foot.

Research Day

As we entered 2023, we were already planning for our second annual Research Day. Please mark your calendars for April 4 at Heifer International in Little Rock. See additional information about this exciting event on page 3.

Sincerely,

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

Mentoring Evolution (continued from page 1)

“We’re leading this initiative to expand UAMS’ capacity for high quality mentorship,” said Greene, also associate director of TRI’s KL2 Mentored Research Career Development Scholars Program.

Greene, Allen, Arthur, Snowden and Vincenzo have received facilitator training from the Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research (CIMER) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) to lead mentorship trainings for UAMS faculty. UW is the lead site for the mentor training core of the NIH-sponsored National Research Mentoring Network.



Allen

Allen is a professor in the UAMS College of Pharmacy, associate dean of Pipeline and Career Development at the UAMS Graduate School, and TRI associate director of Diversity Initiatives, and its STARs Program.



Arthur

Arthur is a professor and chief of the Division of Nephrology in the College of Medicine Department of Internal Medicine, and is TRI associate director and co-director of the KL2 program.



Snowden

Snowden is vice dean for Research in the UAMS College of Medicine; professor and chief of the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases, Department of Pediatrics; and TRI co-director of Translational Workforce Development.

Vincenzo is an associate professor in the College of Health Professions and former TRI KL2 program scholar.



Vincenzo

Positive Feedback

TRI modified the curriculum to ensure the training accomplishes its goals while being mindful of participants’ needs and busy schedules. It was field tested in October with a cross-section of veteran and early-career researchers. They included leaders such as Peter Mourani, M.D., president of Arkansas Children’s Research Institute; Mark Williams, Ph.D., dean of the Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health; Joseph Sanford, M.D., director of the UAMS Institute for Digital Health & Innovation; and Fred Prior, Ph.D., distinguished professor and chair of the College of Medicine Department of Biomedical Informatics.

Prior, a mentor with decades of experience, went into the training with an open mind but unsure



Prior

whether it would teach him much.

“I was surprised,” he said afterward.

“The training was not only very good, it gave me important new perspective about the needs of our mentees, and I plan to adjust my approach as a result.”

He said it was also a great opportunity to network and learn from the perspectives of other participants such as Mark Williams, Ph.D., dean of the Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health.

“Our table had very interesting discussions,” he said.

Prior’s positive reaction was echoed by others. All 20 attendees said the training was a valuable use of their time and 18 said they are likely or very likely to recommend it to colleagues.

Today’s early-career researchers are more diverse, and they face increasingly complex and multiple types of research. Team science, for example, is a relatively new, more complicated approach to research, requiring strong team-building and communication skills.

“There are a lot of things our faculty need to learn that are different from 20 to 30 years ago,” Greene said.

‘Exciting Change’

Past evidence-based mentorship trainings sponsored by TRI have been well attended, but optional. That will change this year for all primary mentors in TRI-funded career development programs. Mandatory training will ensure that all mentors have a strong foundation in quality, evidence-based practices.

Final refinement of the mentorship curriculum will follow a February 24-25 training when UAMS-affiliated researchers will be invited to attend and provide feedback on the training. Greene is seeking a cross-section of UAMS-affiliated faculty for the February training. If interested, email CJGreene@uams.edu.

As part of the training, mentors will learn about a contract to help ensure the most constructive mentor-mentee relationships possible. Such agreements will be required this year for primary mentors of TRI-support scholars.

“Sometimes mentors and mentees get off on the wrong foot because expectations are not aligned or clearly established,” Greene said. “The evidence supports having a more formalized contract that clearly communicates these critically important aspects of their partnership.”

Greene said the goal is to offer mentorship trainings at least four times a year, including smaller sessions within departments or programs.

“This is an exciting change for mentorship at UAMS,” she said. “We will help mentors learn from each other and provide them with tools, techniques and resources that they may not be familiar with, even if they have been mentoring for a long time.”

RESEARCH DAY!

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

UAMS

Use the QR code to register.



Join Us April 4 for TRI Research Day

All are invited to TRI Research Day on Tuesday, April 4, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Heifer International headquarters in Little Rock.

Our keynote speaker is Duane Mitchell, M.D., Ph.D., professor of neurosurgery and director of the University of Florida Clinical Translational Science Institute (CTSI). He is also assistant vice president for Research and associate dean for Clinical and Translational Sciences at the UF College of Medicine.

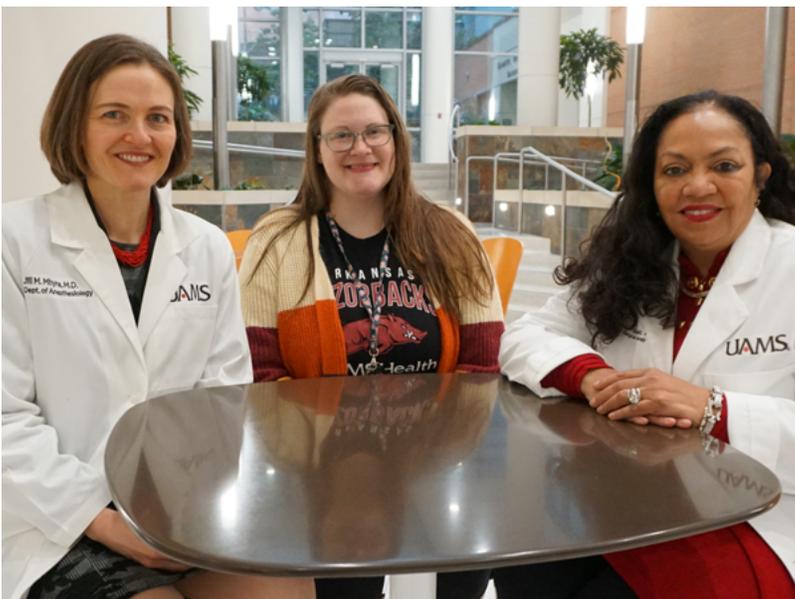
The event will showcase TRI-supported research with oral presentations from select TRI-supported investigators. A poster session (with prizes!) will include an array of TRI-supported projects across its range of funding and training programs.

Please mark your calendars.

Contact:

Robin Liston,
rliston@uams.edu

TRI Study of the Month



Jill Mhyre, M.D. (l-r), and TRI's Amanda Daniell, B.S., the study's lead research coordinator, meet with collaborator Ronda Henry-Tillman, M.D., UAMS chief of Breast Surgical Oncology, who will help identify potential study participants through her clinic.

- **UAMS Principal Investigator:** Jill M. Mhyre, M.D., professor and chair, College of Medicine Department of Anesthesiology; director, Division of Obstetric Anesthesia.
- **Summary:** "Optimizing the Use of Ketamine to Reduce Chronic Postsurgical Pain," is a Phase 3 multi-site randomized clinical trial to study the effectiveness of ketamine in reducing chronic post-mastectomy pain.
- **Significance:** Ketamine is an FDA-approved non-opioid drug used as a general anesthetic and analgesic, and it was recently approved to treat depression. The study will help determine how well ketamine reduces opioid use and whether it helps with mood, sleep and function following mastectomy surgery.
- **TRI Services:** Medicare coverage analysis, study budget development, regulatory and nurse/clinical coordinator support, administration of Clinical Trial Management System, and post-award financial management
- **Sponsor:** New York University Langone Health (administered by CTSA Trial Innovation Network)
- **Funding:** National Cancer Institute/NIH HEAL Initiative



Did You Know? TRI Mock Study Sections Give Grant Applications a Competitive Edge

UAMS investigators, did you know that TRI offers Mock Study Section Grant Reviews to help investigators successfully compete for funding? Senior faculty with strong histories of extramural funding provide free feedback on your application.

Reviews are available for laboratory, animal and human subjects projects and may be requested for any external grant application (e.g., NIH, CDC, DOD, USDA, etc.). Both new applications and resubmissions will be considered.

Learn more at TRI.uams.edu in the Services and Resources section. To request a Mock Study Section, click the Request Services button.

TRI Seeking Pilot Award Applications

Letters of Intent Due Feb. 9

TRI is inviting applications for pilot grants to support a range of translational research projects. Budgets up to \$25,000 for a one-year project will be considered.

TRI is accepting applications that will employ novel approaches in or address any of the following focus areas: Health concerns and challenges of rural and underrepresented populations; implementation science to incorporate new research findings into the health care system, including rural practices; biomedical informatics approaches that examine unique state data resources; team science approaches to address health challenges in Arkansas or overcome barriers to translational science; and/or community and/or stakeholder-partnered research.

Full-time UAMS faculty, including at Arkansas Children's and the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System, are invited to apply.

Letters of Intent are due Thursday, Feb. 9, 2023, by 5 p.m. Invited full applications will be due by Monday, April 3, 2023.

Visit TRI.uams.edu for more information.

Questions? Contact **Crystal Sparks**, csparks@uams.edu.

