

## The Future of Medicine: COM Launches Genetics Division



With the ongoing avalanche of understanding about the genetic links to health, one thing's certain. Medicine is changing forever.

Next month, a national leader in medical genetics, G. Bradley Schaefer, M.D., will launch the College of Medicine's freestanding Division of Genetics. His mission is to expand on existing genetics expertise at UAMS and ensure that tomorrow's physicians are well prepared for the era of personalized medicine.

"We will integrate genetics into all levels of medical education," said Dr. Schaefer, who also will serve as chief of pediatric genetics and metabolism. He previously was director of the Hattie B. Munroe Center for Human Genetics, associate director of the Munroe-Meyer Institute for Genetics and Rehabilitation and an endowed professor in child health at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

"The sequencing of the DNA code opened new doors of medicine—and new challenges," said **Kent McKelvey, M.D. '96,**

an assistant professor and director of pre-doctoral education in the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine and director of cancer genetics services in the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute. He recently piloted a novel curriculum in the junior clerkship to teach the ethical, legal and social implications of genetic testing in primary care.

Expanding clinical services is a major priority for the new division. "We need to build a critical mass of medical geneticists," Dr. Schaefer said. "Based on national workgroup studies, Arkansas needs 11 full-time geneticists." Dr. McKelvey and Stephen G. Kahler, M.D., a professor of pediatrics in the College of Medicine, are the state's only board-certified clinical geneticists. Dr. Kahler specializes in diagnosing and treating genetic birth defects, hereditary problems and rare metabolic disorders.

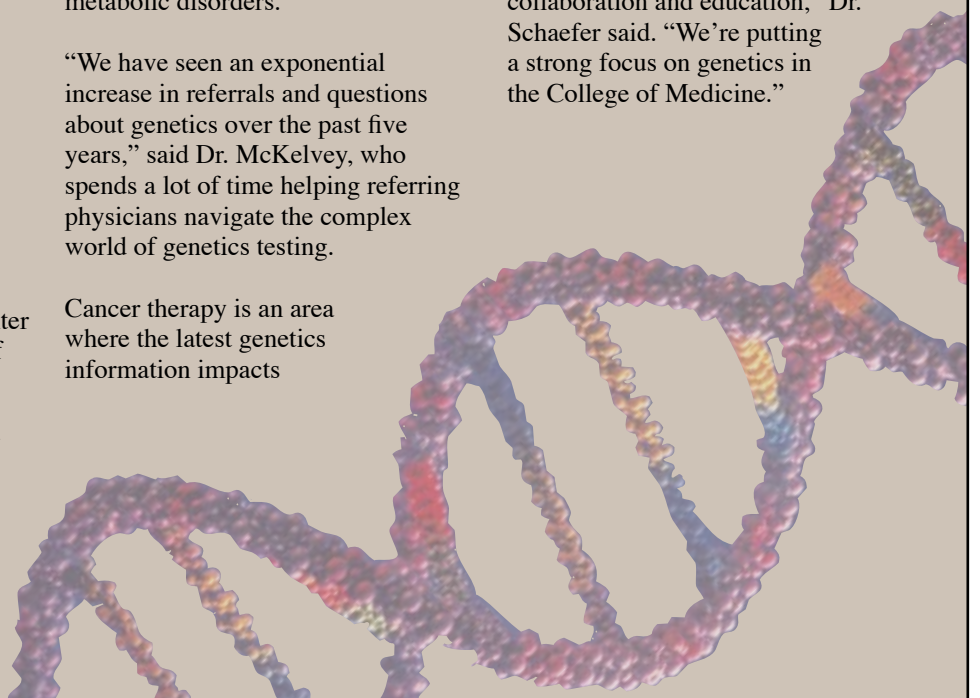
"We have seen an exponential increase in referrals and questions about genetics over the past five years," said Dr. McKelvey, who spends a lot of time helping referring physicians navigate the complex world of genetics testing.

Cancer therapy is an area where the latest genetics information impacts

patient care. For example, the UAMS Myeloma Institute for Research and Therapy (MIRT) conducts microarrays on all new patients to help tailor treatment. MIRT researchers identified 17 genes whose level of activation in tumor cells can predict low and high-risk cases and guide their therapy.

Other UAMS researchers are leaders in "Spit for the Cure," a national study to collect saliva samples from thousands of women nationwide to create a DNA database for future studies relating to breast cancer risk and treatment.

Meanwhile, gene-related research is thriving in basic science laboratories throughout campus. "Outstanding research and clinical care are being done, but there's never been a central focal point to pull these groups together from the standpoints of collaboration and education," Dr. Schaefer said. "We're putting a strong focus on genetics in the College of Medicine."



## A Note from the Dean, Debra H. Fiser, M.D.

A little Disney-style “pixie dust” settled over UAMS last month, and our patients and others will reap the benefits for years to come.

UAMS Medical Center and the College of Medicine (COM) have been working with the Disney Institute for almost a year to develop a comprehensive, patient-centered service campaign called the “Circle of Excellence.” In May, 5,152 faculty, clinical team members, hospital support staff and others participated in lively training sessions to learn about this important effort and their role in it.

The Circle of Excellence is built around the service theme: “We create comfort, hope and healing for our patients and families.” The campaign promotes service standards focusing on patient safety, compassion and respect for patients and families and for fellow employees, excellence in all areas, personal and institutional image, and efficiency. The initial training will be followed by training for even more staff, support for managers, enhanced orientation for new employees, and new strategies to recruit service-oriented staff for the future.

There is growing awareness in the health care industry that high-quality care must be coupled with outstanding service. Studies have shown that only 20 percent of patients switch



physicians or hospitals because they think they’re getting poor care. A whopping 54 percent change because of a perceived attitude or indifference on the part of providers.

While our overriding goal is to exceed patients’ expectations with every visit to UAMS, two other groups will benefit greatly from the Circle of Excellence and additional measures in the COM to promote professionalism and foster a culture of service. Borrowing from Disney’s successful strategies, the UAMS campaign emphasizes the importance of every one of our team members. All staff members are vital, and all will do a better job if they know they are valued.

Just as importantly, our students will mirror our collective improvements. As we become more team-oriented, so will they. As we become more patient-centered, our students will learn the importance of going the extra mile.

If you’d like to be part of our efforts as a volunteer, you are always welcome. Give the Alumni Office a call!

*Debra H. Fiser, M.D.*

## A Note from the Director, Judith McClain



The end of a school year is always bittersweet. My internal calendar seems to be based around a school year nowadays – winding down in June and starting up again in August. As we close the book on another school year, it will be hard to forget the infectious spirit of the students and future College of Medicine alumni. We’ve celebrated another Match Day, Convocation and, finally, Commencement with this year’s graduating class. I hope you’ll enjoy

reading about some of the year-end events in this issue of Alumni Matters.

In March, Ginny Rice and I were invited and pleased to speak at the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Group on Institutional Advancement’s national conference in San Diego. Planning our presentation, “Revitalize, Reconstitute and Recast Your Alumni Association,” evoked fond memories of the progress we’ve made in helping you reconnect. We shared with the group some of the challenges we’ve faced, the core values we’ve built upon, and our vision for the future.

Just in the past year, we’ve added a travel program, achieved exciting success with the Dean’s Society, and most importantly, we’ve broadened the scope of our mission and participation. After all, our goal is to help you stay connected with one another and with the College of Medicine.

As we learned from a fellow presenter at the AAMC conference, “It’s not getting there quickly that matters, it’s getting there.” These words resonate as we continue to expand alumni programming and our reach. The number of alumni opportunities and events continues to grow at UAMS. You all are so important in the development of the College of Medicine. We hope to see many of you at Alumni Weekend August 22-23 at the Peabody Hotel in Little Rock.

*Judith*

## Ambassadors Program Connects Students and Alumni

The Student Ambassador program was initiated last fall as a link between our current students and alumni. We had an overwhelming response with more than 37 students signed up to participate during the school year.

The student ambassadors helped plan and execute events that brought students together with alumni. Not only did they offer creative input on programming, they served as the general student representative at the events.

During Alumni Weekend, the students boarded buses to serve as guides for tours of the campus and the Clinical Skills Center. They also helped out at alumni receptions, the Founders Society dinner and the Dean's Society luncheon.

Most importantly, they were able to make life-long connections with the College of Medicine family. The program instilled a spirit of volunteerism and fostered loyalty among our future alums. We're excited to see the enthusiasm and sense of pride continue in our next group of student ambassadors in the upcoming year.



*John McCracken, M.D. '58, visits with sophomore Colt McClain. The student ambassador enjoyed participating in alumni events during the year.*

## Dean's Society

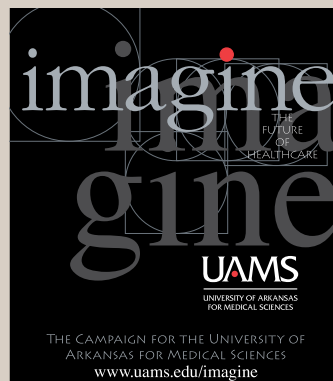
Members of the Dean's Society have pledged to make annual unrestricted gifts to the College of Medicine. Our lists include members who joined between November 15, 2007, and May 15, 2008.

### Individuals (\$1,000)

Rex A. Amonette, M.D.  
Robert W. Arrington, M.D.  
Betty S. Ball, M.D.  
Michael E. Barnett, M.D.  
Stephen E. Carter, M.D.  
James S. Deneke, M.D.  
Deborah K. Fulbright, M.D.  
Jeanne K. Heard, M.D.  
Don G. Howard, Sr., M.D.  
Richard F. Jacobs, M.D.  
Anthony D. Johnson, M.D.  
Robert H. Knitzer, M.D.  
David A. Lupo, M.D.  
Duong N. Ly, M.D.  
W. Steven Metzger, M.D.  
Elmer M. Purcell, M.D.  
Nancy F. Rector, M.D.  
John D. Ross, M.D.  
Mrs. Cathy Oldham Sanders

### Couples (\$1,500)

Drs. William Meek and Gail Eisenhauer  
Dr. George and Julie Fiedler  
Dr. R. Whit Hall and Lisabeth Longacre Hall  
Drs. David and Teresa Hunton  
Dr. Larry and Tish Peebles



## Alumni Advisory Board Welcomes New Members

Dean **Debra H. Fiser, M.D. '77**, and Medical Alumni Association Director Judith McClain welcomed six new members to the Alumni Advisory Board as the 16-member panel kicked off its second year in April.

The new members are **Stephen E. Carter, M.D. '85**, **Andrew A. Finkbeiner, M.D. '99**, **Whit Hall, M.D. '73**, **Jeanne K. Heard, M.D. '85**, **Don G. Howard Sr., M.D. '60**, and **Anne R. Mancino, M.D. '84**. They joined continuing members **R. Lee Archer, M.D. '82**, **David W. Bevans Jr., M.D. '66**, **Sally S. Harms, M.D. '81**, **Stacie M. Jones, M.D. '89**, **Betty A. Lowe, M.D. '56**, **Tina W. Hatley-Merritt, M.D. '96**, **Toni L. Middleton, M.D. '97**, **Chadwick Rodgers, M.D. '98**, **Dola Thompson Pauly, M.D. '49**, and **Gerardo S. San Pedro, M.D. '84**.

The College of Medicine thanks the following alumni who served on the board in 2007: **H. Marks Attwood, M.D. '81**, **Hannah Beene, M.D. '84**, **James E. Hunt, M.D. '03**, **Allison M. Johnson, M.D. '03**, **James J. Pappas, M.D. '56**, and **E. Brian Russell, M.D. '99**.

The board represents a cross section of relatively recent graduates, prime-of-life alumni and retired alumni. It meets in April and October to discuss alumni programming and opportunities. All alumni are welcome to contact board members or alumni association staff with ideas.



## UAMS Celebrates COM Class of 2008

The culmination of four years of hard work and the fulfillment of professional growth was celebrated at the Honors Convocation and the UAMS Graduation ceremony. The Class of 2008 was recognized with the hooding ceremony and reciting the Hippocratic Oath at the Honors Convocation ceremony May 16 at the Statehouse Convention Center. The following day, donning their cap and gowns, they processed into Barton Coliseum in front of proud family and friends. The medical degrees were conferred and the graduates left the stage with a true sense of accomplishment in preparation for the next phase of their lives.

*Erin Alexander Large (left photo) is awarded the College of Medicine Alumni Association Senior Community Service Award by Lee Archer, M.D. '82, a member of the Alumni Advisory Board. Dr. Large was chosen by her senior class for her ideals of humanitarian public service and achievement in civic and community programs. Pictured below at Convocation are (left photo) Justin Lieblong and Debbie Lieber; and (at right) Dot Mecum and Leah McVay.*



*Sophomore Brian Caldwell presents his award-winning research focusing on variations of a circle of arteries at the base of the brain that can affect stroke victims.*

## Class of 1955 Sponsors Annual Student Research Week

Student Research Week kicked off in mid-April when medical students, house staff, postdoctoral fellows and graduate students presented posters to faculty members for judging. Sophomore **Brian Caldwell** won first place in the medical student division for "Angiographic Variations in the Circle of Willis in the New Zealand White Rabbit." The awards were presented after the keynote address by Jacqueline M. Stephens, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at Louisiana State University.

The week was sponsored by the COM Alumni Class of 1955. "We are very grateful for the willingness of this class to support and encourage the next generation of medical researchers," said Larry Cornett, Ph.D., executive associate dean for research. "It is one time of the year when we focus on the accomplishments of our budding researchers, be they medical students, fellows or graduate students."



## Ceremony Marks Students' Transition to Residents

Seniors torched their short white coats at a symbolic burn ceremony during Senior Week to signify another mark in their lifelong professional journey. It was also an affirmation of new responsibility for the graduating class. They received the short white coats at the beginning of their professional journey as a student and will exchange them for a long white coat – the transition to becoming a resident physician and a new level of responsibility and professional commitment.

Seniors **Tiffany Gillam** (top photo, front) and **Candace McAlpine** say goodbye to the short white coats they wore through four years of medical school. Both are headed to Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston Salem, N.C., for their residencies. Dean **Debra H. Fiser, M.D. '77**, (inset) addresses students at the ceremony.

## Students Unveil and Celebrate Match Day Destinations

Members of the Class of 2008 tore open the sealed envelopes - a Match Day tradition - to learn the next step in their medical careers. The seniors gathered at a local restaurant on March 20 for the highly-anticipated unveiling when the results of more than 15,000 students at medical schools were released simultaneously at ceremonies across the country. 2008 was the nation's largest match.

Overall, 77 COM seniors were appointed to residency positions in Arkansas and 59 received out-of-state residences in 23 different states. Fifty percent of the seniors received residences in a primary care specialty (internal medicine, pediatrics, family medicine or obstetrics and gynecology).

To see which new residents will be in your area, visit [www.uams.edu/com/alumni](http://www.uams.edu/com/alumni).



Seniors **Garrett Lewis** (top) and **Angela Maxwell** are excited to learn their residency matches.



## Freshmen Honor Cadavers with Memorial Service

The first-year students honored the human bodies donated to UAMS for education in an April 29 service of gratitude and reflection. Freshman **Beth Weiss** coordinated the Cadaver Memorial and shared her thoughts and experience with her fellow classmates. The red maple tree (left) was planted as a memorial outside of the Shorey building by the class.

*"As the receiver, then, of a gift of such magnitude and significance as we have each been given this year, I am reminded of something my father told me over and over again as a child: 'From those to whom much has been given, much is required.' It is therefore up to each of us now to match the incredible gift of these donors by giving ourselves via the use of the knowledge we have gained to heal and care for others." – Beth Weiss*



**Ray Biondo, M.D. '67**, was honored with the 2008 Asklepion Award from the Arkansas Medical Society at the annual meeting in April. The award is presented to an AMS member physician who promotes the art and science of medicine and the betterment of public health; embodies the

values of the medical profession through leadership, service, excellence, integrity and ethical behavior; and enriches patients, colleagues and the community through dedicated medical practice.



*First-year students Ryan Dare, Tyler King, Max Malotky, Chandon Das, Justin Farmer, and Krissy Posey take a break with David Jacks, M.D. '76, of Pine Bluff at the 132<sup>nd</sup> Arkansas Medical Society annual meeting in Branson, Mo. Dr. Jacks was inducted as president of AMS this year.*



**Joseph W. Thompson, M.D. '89, M.P.H.**, an associate professor of pediatrics, has been named one of four recipients of National Committee for Quality Assurance's Health Quality Awards.

As surgeon general of Arkansas and director of the Arkansas Center for Health Improvement (ACHI), Dr. Thompson is one of the nation's leading advocates for prevention of childhood obesity, banning indoor smoking and promoting healthy lifestyles. He was a leader in developing the Tobacco Settlement Proceeds Act of 2000, which dedicated Arkansas' \$1.6 billion share from the national settlement with tobacco companies to improving health care. To combat childhood obesity, he has led efforts to measure the body mass index of Arkansas schoolchildren and send the results home.

Each year, NCQA presents Health Quality Awards to individuals and organizations that highlight the need for – and drive – health care improvement. The other honorees were U.S. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, and King County, Wash., executive Ron Sims.



We recently learned that **Arl Van Moore Jr., M.D. '74**, has been ranked as radiology's fourth most powerful and influential leader by RT Image, a weekly news magazine for administrators, educators and radiologic science professionals. Dr. Moore also received the Silver Medal Award from the North Carolina Radiological Society. As chairman of the American College of Radiology's Board of Chancellors, Dr. Moore has been a leading authority on patient safety and quality-of-care issues in teleradiology and an advocate for

ensuring appropriate reimbursement for imaging and radiation oncology services. Dr. Moore is president of Charlotte Radiology, one of the largest radiology groups in North Carolina and the Southeast with more than 60 board-certified radiologists.

## "Lost" Alumni

We're missing addresses for some of your classmates. If you know how to reach someone on this list, please let us know.

- Rose H. McClanahan, M.D. '43
- Anthony T. De Palma, M.D. '49
- Richard E. Lord, M.D. '49
- Thurman C. Dabbs, M.D. '54
- James L. Chandler, M.D. '69
- Louise Pinson, M.D. '74
- Cynthia C. Almond, M.D. '79
- Robert L. Nolan, M.D. '79
- Trudy J. Nelson, M.D. '79
- James D. Perkins, M.D. '79



One of the College of Medicine's newest graduates is already gaining well-deserved recognition. The Arkansas Medical Society (AMS) spotlighted **Leigh Shirey, M.D. '08**, in the February issue of *The Journal*. Dr. Shirey's work with student bone marrow drives and campaigning for the Clean Indoor Air Act, the Patient Protections Act and trauma system legislation have earned her honors

including the 2007 AMS Student Leadership Award and the 2006 AMS Special Recognition Award. Dr. Shirey has served as vice chair of the student sections of the AMA and the AMS and as a member of the AMS Board of Trustees. The AMS student chapter was named the AMA's National Chapter of the Year during her leadership.

## Calling All Alumni Surgeons!

Watch your mail for details of a reception that the Medical Alumni Association, the Department of Surgery and the Arkansas Chapter of the American College of Surgeons are co-hosting during the American College of Surgeons Annual Clinical Congress in San Francisco in October.

In the spirit of "catching up," I'm pleased to share that the Department of Surgery continues to grow and prosper. I am honored to serve as interim chairman following the departure in late 2007 of Michael Edwards, M.D. A search committee will continue to interview candidates in the months ahead. This summer we're graduating three general surgery residents, one vascular surgery resident, one pediatric surgery resident and a breast fellow. New residents are on the way, and several new faculty have joined us.

This spring UAMS invested Suzanne Klimberg, M.D., as the Muriel Balsam Kohn Chair in Breast Surgical Oncology, our department's third endowed chair. A fourth endowed chair is being established for the new department chairman. Research funding continues to grow, with significant new grants for Ronda Henry-Tillman, M.D., Martin Hauer-Jensen, M.D., Ph.D., and Mohammed Moursi, M.D.

**Sam Smith, M.D. '80**  
Interim Chair, Department of Surgery

**Share Your News!** E-mail: [riceginny@uams.edu](mailto:riceginny@uams.edu), or mail to: UAMS Medical Alumni Association, 4301 W Markham ST, #642, Little Rock, AR 72205.

## Remember?



*This painting of Peck's was a hit at Alumni Weekend 1999. (If you know the artist, please give us a call!)*

Many of you may have frequented Peck's the popular dive bar from the 1950s up until it was razed in 1988. In fact, when second-year student **Joseph Sanford** called on an alumnus during Phonathon this spring, the alumnus asked Sanford about it. "When I spoke to him he said that he would be happy to donate if I could answer one question for him," Sanford said. "I said I was up for the challenge and he asked me for the name of a popular bar that was across the street from the medical center, where Taco Bell is now." Sanford was about to ask around when Medical Alumni Director Judith McClain overheard and told him it was Peck's. "I called him back with the answer and he generously made a donation. After that we chatted for a bit about the bar and shuffleboard," he said.

**To read more about the former hot spot, visit [www.uams.edu/com/alumni](http://www.uams.edu/com/alumni).**



Department of Pediatrics Chairman **Richard F. Jacobs, M.D. '77**, (left) was invested as the Robert H. Fiser, M.D., Endowed Chair in Pediatrics at Arkansas Children's Hospital (ACH) on May 19. Dr. Jacobs has been department chairman since 2007, after serving as interim chairman for a year. He joined the faculty in 1982 and was chief of the Pediatric Infectious

Diseases Section for 16 years. He has been president of the Arkansas Children's Hospital Research Institute (ACHRI) since 2004. The endowed chair honors **Robert H. Fiser Jr., M.D. '66**, whose tenure as chairman of Pediatrics from 1975 to 1994 was a time of enormous growth and transition for pediatric care and training at UAMS and ACH.

## In Memoriam

### 1930s

**Henry Wallace Thomas, M.D. '39**, of Dermott, died April 2, 2008. He was 90. Dr. Thomas practiced in Dermott for 52 years and served as president of the Arkansas Medical Society in 1968.

### 1940s

**Burch Vandon Raley, M.D. '41**, of Fayetteville, died May 31, 2008. He was 91. An internist, Dr. Raley worked for the Veterans Administration hospitals in Little Rock and Fayetteville, where he retired as chief of medicine in 1979.

**Clifton Clay Long Jr., M.D. '44**, of Fort Smith, died April 26, 2008. He was 88. Dr. Long practiced family medicine in Ozark for many years. He served as a leader in the Arkansas Medical Society and founded the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care.

### 1950s

**Robert Allen Chandler, M.D. '53**, of Shawnee Mission, Kan., died April 4, 2008. He was 82. Dr. Chandler was a clinical professor of plastic surgery at the University of Missouri and served as president of the Missouri chapter of the American Medical Association.

**Arthur Eugene Thorne Jr., M.D. '53**, of Camden, died May 22, 2008. He was 81. Dr. Thorne practiced general medicine in Van Buren and radiology in Camden.

**Austin Dale Gullett, M.D. '54**, of Perryville, died Feb. 26, 2008. He was 86. Dr. Gullett specialized in occupational and general preventive medicine.

### 1960s

**Dr. Jim Stalker, M.D. '62**, of Batesville, died April 17, 2008. He was 78. Dr. Stalker was a surgeon.

**Dr. Jay B. Crabtree, M.D. '69**, of Hot Springs Village, died April 13, 2008. He was 69. Dr. Crabtree practiced radiology in Bolivar, Mo.

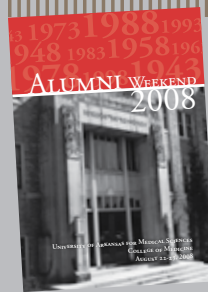
## Harry P. Ward, M.D., 1933-2008



Former UAMS Chancellor Harry P. Ward, M.D., who led UAMS' transformation from a small medical school with a charity hospital to an academic health center with world-class clinical and research programs, died March 11, 2008. He was 74. Dr. Ward's tenure as chancellor from 1979 to 2000 saw student enrollment almost double. He

championed the Area Health Education Centers and other statewide programs. Clinical programs and research expanded substantially, and the Graduate School was formed.

## Alumni Weekend 2008



Alumni Weekend is a great chance to reconnect with the colleagues you haven't seen in awhile. Alumni whose class years end in 8 or 3 will reunite August 22-23. Instead of a second cocktail reception and dinner on Saturday night, each class is in charge of planning their own event. We've heard that one class is having a picnic and another a dinner at a classmate's home. The rest of the traditional events will remain.

## Pack Your Bags!



More and more of you are enjoying the most beautiful sights in the world with fellow alumni thanks to the College of Medicine's Travel Program. Sue and **Pat Hale, M.D. '67**, of St. Augustine, Fla., (pictured) took in the Eiffel tower and other attractions on the spring trip to Paris.

Join us in the fall for these special tours: **Ireland, September 19-27**; and an all-Arkansas college alumni trip to **Tuscany and the Italian Riviera, September 26-October 4**. For more information, visit [www.uams.edu/com/alumni](http://www.uams.edu/com/alumni).

## Recent Events



Alumni caught up on progress in the College of Medicine at a May 7 reception at the Fayetteville home of **Hershey Garner, M.D. '86**, (left) and Denise Garner, whose catering company, the Brick House Kitchen, co-sponsored the event. Also joining Dean **Debra H. Fiser, M.D. '77**, in this photo are co-hosts **Kathie and Al Gordon, M.D. '91**, **Sally Harms, M.D. '81**, and **Steve Harms, M.D. '78**.

### Get Alumni Matters Via E-mail!

Just send an e-mail request to [riceginny@uams.edu](mailto:riceginny@uams.edu) and ask that your name be added to our e-mail broadcast list.

*Alumni Matters is a quarterly publication of the UAMS Medical Alumni Association and the College of Medicine Office of the Dean.*

*Publisher: Debra H. Fiser, M.D.  
Editor: Judith K. McClain  
Writers: Tamara Robinson;  
Carolyn Finnie  
Contributor: Ginny Rice  
Art Director: Keith Runkle*

# UAMS



COLLEGE OF MEDICINE  
ALUMNI AFFAIRS

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES

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