

UPCOMING DATES

- **May 27, 2008**
Summer registration
Classes begin
- **June 3, 2008**
Last day to register for
Summer Session
Last day to add a class
- **July 3, 2008**
Last day to drop a class
- **July 4, 2008**
Independence Day
holiday
- For additional
important dates see
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SPRING 2008

Letter from Dean McGehee

For those of us in academia, I think without question this is one of our best times of the year. We celebrate and honor all our new graduates through receptions, brunches, convocations, dissertation parties, and a multitude of other events, all of which culminate at our spring commencement. I hope to see many of you at our graduate school brunch and commencement this coming weekend. It is a great time for family, friends and colleagues to get together and share the excitement for all our soon to be new alumni as they move on to the next stages of their lives. For me personally, this week and time of year is my annual "end of the rainbow". Everything is upbeat, positive, summer is upon us, there's a remarkable excitement in the air and life is good.



It has been a great year for our graduate school. This year we have 24 Ph.D. graduates, 44 M.S. graduates and 56 M.N.Sc. graduates. Having gone to many of the dissertation and thesis defenses, I continue to be incredibly impressed with the quality of work our students accomplish and the level of mentorship our graduate faculty provide to them. The recognition and awards component of our graduate school receptions keep getting a bit more extended because the number of students who receive national and international attention continue to rise. So it really is a time for all us in the UAMS Graduate School to be excited as we celebrate another successful year.

I am also very excited about many new initiatives that are underway for next year and we will be getting more details out on those as we approach the fall semester. More importantly, while most of us really no longer have summers off, I hope each of you take the opportunity to spend some quality time with your families to get outside and enjoy yourselves. I love summers in Arkansas and at every opportunity we can find, Kay and Mack and I will be on the water at Lake Ouachita. If you are in the vicinity, look for us, we'll strap some skis on you and tug you around for a while. So thanks again for a great year, a better one next year, and in the interim have a great and safe summer.

UAMS Student Honored with Prestigious Research Seed Grant

Rebecca Gilbride, a student in the [M.D. | Ph.D.](#) program at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, has been honored by the American Medical Association (AMA) Foundation for her research endeavors – one of only 47 selected nationally. Gilbride was chosen for the 2008 Seed Grant Research Program based on her research in the category neoplastic diseases. Her project titled “Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) and Galectin-3 Binding Interactions: Implications for Prostate Cancer Progression” focuses on the possibility that PSA — a biomarker for prostate cancer — also is an agent in progression of the disease.

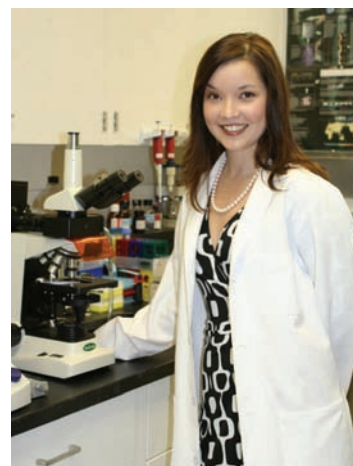
As one of the 47 national recipients, she will receive a

\$2,500 seed grant to further her research. The AMA Foundation established the Seed Grant Research Program to encourage medical students, physician residents and fellows to enter the research field. The grants are intended to encourage small basic science, applied, or clinical research projects.

“Rebecca is an excellent student and has shown an exceptional commitment to her education,” said Alan B. Diekman, Ph.D., assistant professor in the UAMS College of Medicine [Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology](#) and Gilbride’s research mentor. “Research such as hers is essential to understanding the biology of prostate cancer and positively influencing men’s

health.”

More than 218,000 men are expected to be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year, according to the American Cancer Society. When caught early, prostate cancer has a 90 percent cure rate. However, that rate drops dramatically once the disease has metastasized to the bone.



UAMS Grad Students Selected to Present at St. Jude's Symposium

Two [UAMS graduate students](#) have been invited to present their research at the 2008 St. Jude National Graduate Student Symposium.

Lauren Blair, a fourth-year doctoral student in the [Biochemistry and Molecular Biology program](#), and Sarah Cullen, a fourth-year doctoral student in the [Microbiology and Immunology program](#), were among 43 students selected

from about 700 students invited to apply to present their work at the symposium. The conference is March 25-29 at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis.

Blair is studying the structure of a helicase, an enzyme that unwinds DNA, allowing replication to occur. Understanding its structure, she said, could lead to the development new medical treatments. Dr. Kevin Raney,

Professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, is her advisor.

Cullen's work focuses on identifying the molecular basis of increased inflammation in the elderly. Her advisor is Dr. Usha Ponnappan, Professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology

UAMS Graduate School Travel Awards

This year the UAMS Graduate School awarded over 30 travel awards to graduate students who attended national or international meetings to formally present their research. Some of the conferences that students presented at include the Experimental Biology meeting, the American

Society for Neurochemistry annual conference, and the Southern Nursing Research Society. Contingent upon the availability of funds, the Graduate School will pay expenses of \$120 per day up to a maximum of five days to cover allowable costs (travel, hotel, registration fees, meals, etc.) provided the department the graduate

student belongs to pays the rest. For additional information, please contact the Graduate School at 686-5454. Travel award application materials can be downloaded at <http://www.uams.edu/GRADSCHOOL/faculty/TravelFundsApp.doc>.

Congratulations to our 2007-08 graduates

Ph.D. Graduates

Barbara Baker
 January Baumgardner
 James Cassat
 Brian Donahower
 Xinxin Gandhi
 David Heister
 Arvind Jamakhandi
 Thomas Jennings
 Thetsu Mon
 Xiaojun Ning
 Nirmal Phulwani
 Yinghui Pu
 Vishnu Ramani
 Anandi Sawant
 Zabeena Shaik
 Jennifer Shoemaker
 Shalini Singh
 Rohit Singhal
 Taasin Srivastava
 Rajesh Vadlapatla
 Toby Ward
 Courtney Wilkins
 Rijin Xiao
 Dongdong Yu

M.S. Graduates

Cecile Artaud
 Lauren Bailey
 Carla Bell
 Zachary Brodrick
 Emily Cheatham
 Robert Conrad
 Megan Davis
 Sonya Davis
 Kristyn Fraley
 Kelli Halcom
 Stephanie Hatton
 Darlene Ho
 Jennifer Hoelzeman
 Cassie Jackson
 Erin Johnson
 Jennifer Jones
 Sudeep Karve
 Sarah Kennedy
 Helen Kim
 Rajshekhar Kore
 Kimberly Lockhart
 Christopher Lyle
 Leslie Miles
 Katrinia Monroe

Maria Montes
 Diane Odom
 Joshua Parish
 Prathamesh Pathak
 Bradley Petkovich
 Elizabeth Robken
 Ian Ross
 Kelly Saviers
 Siddharth Sehgal
 Brooke Selig
 Kelley Sharp
 Dena Stoneburner
 Kristen Tepera
 Kimberly Thomas
 Laura Tsang
 Carol Tumilson
 Allyson Turinski-Bourg
 Debra Vittitow
 Jennifer Wentz
 Rebecca Wynne

Graduate Student Association

The Graduate Student Association has had a busy spring term. We began with a night of bowling and food which was well received. We also had a pool tournament in which Thomas Jennings, a graduating MD/PhD from the Biochemistry department, managed to leave his permanent mark on the graduate student lounge in the form of a trophy which will record his win. Also listed on this trophy will be our second place winner, Dean McGehee, third place winner, Wassim Eljouni of Physiology and fourth place, Matt Forestiere of Biochemistry. We had a successful meeting with Dean McGehee to address any student concerns and we have gotten the wheels rolling on a recycling committee for the Biomedical buildings. We wrapped up the term with a canoe trip to the Buffalo River. Elections for the 2008-2009 GSA are under way. We hope everyone has a wonderful summer!

Lauren Blair
 GSA President



Graduate Student and Faculty Accomplishments and Awards

Graduate Student National Awards

Ying Su received a Gerber Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship.

Bruno Pereira and Shuliang Liu received Young Investigator's Educational Enhancement travel awards to the 2008 American Society for Neurochemistry.

David Terrano received a Central Society for Clinical Research travel award.

Sherin Boctor received a 2008 Neurobehavioral Teratology Society Conference travel award

Shankar Munusamy received a Travel award from the Chair Fund of the Gordon Conference Committee for the "Oxygen Radicals" Meeting in Ventura, CA.

Venkata Bhogaraju won 2nd place in Neuropharm Division of ASPET at the 2008 Experimental Biology meeting

Biny Joseph tied for first place in the oral competition for graduate students in the Cardiovascular Division of ASPET at the 2008 Experimental Biology meeting.

David Heister was selected to attend to NINDS/AUPN/ANA How to Combine Clinical and Research Careers in Neuroscience Symposium. All of his travel and hotel costs will be covered by the NINDS.

To view a list of graduate student awards received during the 2007-08 school year, visit <http://www.uams.edu/gradschool/awards/>.

May 2008 Graduate School Mentor Awards

Dr. David Carroll

Dr. Marie Chow

Dr. Edgar Garcia-Rill

Dr. Randy Haun

Dr. Charlotte Peterson

Dr. Kevin Raney

Dr. Robert Reis

Dr. Martin Ronis

Dr. Mark Smeltzer

Dr. Xuming Zhang

Dr. Jimmy Zhou



Graduate School
Mentor Award
plaque

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Summer 2008 Important Dates

July 21-August 8, 2008

July 18, 2008

July 28, 2008

August 8, 2008

Registration for Fall Semester 2008-09

Last day of summer session

Last day to submit thesis and dissertation to Library

Degrees awarded