

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Leading with Care

MAGAZINE + ANNUAL REPORT 2023



UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS
College of Education
& Health Professions





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Letter from the DEAN

Dear colleagues, students, and friends,

This year has been collaborative, constructive, celebratory, and a testament to our caring college. I was appointed dean of the college on February 1, 2023, after serving as interim dean for seven months. I'm so proud of all we have accomplished during this time. We launched the [WE CARE Strategic Plan](#) to advance impactful research, foster a caring culture, and expand our service to Arkansas; established the Dean's Executive Advisory Board of alumni, community partners, and other stakeholders committed to the college's vitality and advancement; and started many new initiatives and traditions.

Enrollment has been robust for our new 1-credit hour Dean's Seminar that began in the spring. Students from any major can enroll in the seminar, which focuses on a different complex societal challenge at the intersection of education and health each semester. Our inaugural WE CARE-A-VAN tour across Arkansas was a huge success, and we enjoyed the opportunity to hear from a wide range of constituents from various communities. We're already planning another tour in March. I always enjoy hearing from faculty and staff in the college, so I started monthly Donuts with the Dean events, which alternate among our four main buildings. We also became more intentional about staying in touch with alumni and stakeholders in 2023. Our new Leading with Care newsletter allows us to share the college's top news every month.

Our top priority, of course, is our students. We welcomed 6,199 undergraduate and graduate students this fall. They are thriving in our diverse programs across six different departments.

I hope you enjoy reading more about these programs and initiatives, along with many other stories, in the 2023 magazine. I'm honored to be the dean of this incredible college.

With Care,

Kate Mamiseishvili



Stay Connected

The college recently launched a monthly *Leading with Care* newsletter to offer our alumni and friends regular updates. Visit our website, LeadingwithCare.uark.edu, to subscribe.



Launching the **WE CARE** Strategic Plan



Everything we do is filtered through the lens of one guiding principle — WE CARE — which stands for Wellness and Education Commitment to Arkansas Excellence. The college launched its new WE CARE strategic plan in August, and the dean unveiled a new website that outlines its goals and strategies: wecare.uark.edu

The **WE CARE** strategic plan focuses on three priorities:

IMPACTFUL Research

Advance impactful research that generates knowledge and promotes innovative solutions in education and health.

SERVICE to Arkansas

Expand service to Arkansas through transformative educational experiences and meaningful partnerships.

CARING Culture

Foster a caring culture that empowers all students, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders to thrive.



Celebrating Commencement

In the 2022-23 academic year, the college awarded 1,246 undergraduate and graduate degrees. We offer 18 bachelor's degree programs, 20 master's degree programs, two educational specialist degree programs, 11 doctoral degree programs, and 13 certificate programs. We collaborate with the U of A Global Campus to offer 28 of these programs online.





College Celebrates 25th Anniversary of Name Change

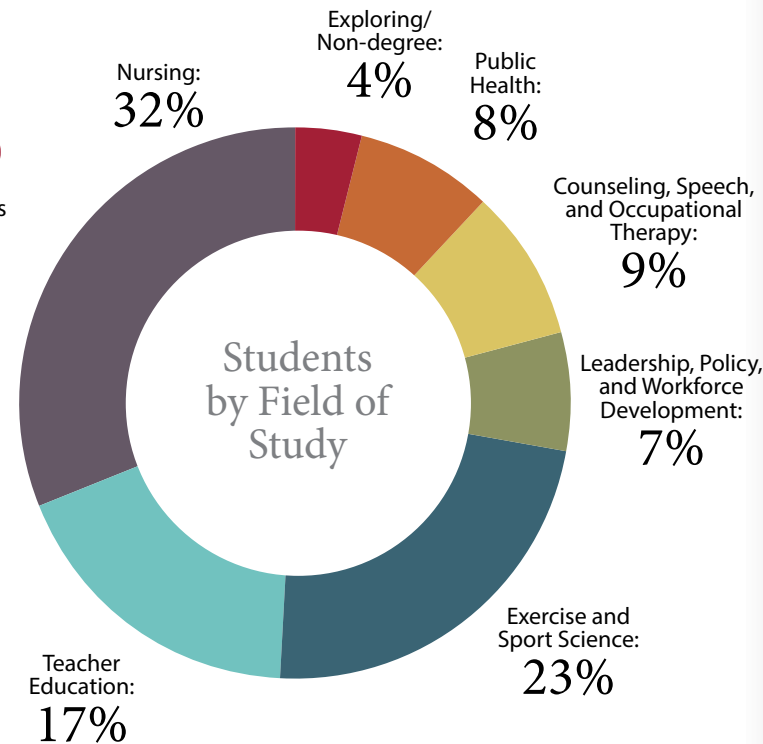
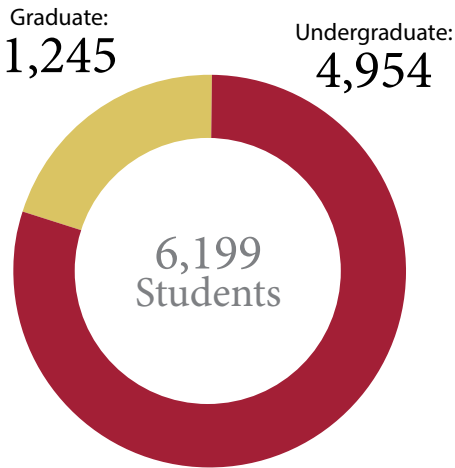
Nearly 200 alumni, former deans, faculty, staff, friends of the college, and the chancellor gathered to celebrate the [25th anniversary](#) of its name change. The college added “health professions” to its name in 1997 to better reflect the diversity of its academic and professional programs.

At-A-Glance Fall 2023

\$1.1 Million Scholarship awards
(Academic year 2022-23)

1,246 Degrees awarded
(Academic year 2022-23)

520 Honors students



Q&A with the DEAN



WHAT’S YOUR FAVORITE WAY TO UNWIND AFTER A BUSY DAY?

I love going for a walk. It’s the best way to clear my head, disconnect, and give my mind a break.

IF YOU WERE AN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT IN COLLEGE TODAY, WHAT WOULD YOU STUDY?

I would probably study journalism. I would enjoy getting to know people and telling their stories, uncovering the truth, connecting the dots, and researching and reporting the information. I think journalism would match well with my inquisitive mind and curious nature.

WHAT’S YOUR FAVORITE WAY FOR PEOPLE TO SHOW YOU THEY CARE?

There are so many ways people can show that they care — by being kind, by getting the job done well, by putting in the hard work, by showing up for each other in times of need, or by celebrating life’s moments, big and small.

IF YOU COULD HAVE ONE SUPERPOWER, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

I would like to have the ability to create more time in a day. I often think about how much more I could accomplish if there were more time in a day. The ability to expand time would be a great superpower.

WHAT’S THE BEST PART OF BEING THE DEAN?

All the people I meet and get to work with are the best part of being the dean. I feel inspired and energized every day, thinking about how I can best promote and support their work and advocate for our college. I firmly believe that the work of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni changes lives. Education and health are two vital cornerstones for people’s well-being and economic prosperity. The work that we do matters. It’s so rewarding to be a part of this community and support this meaningful and important work that helps people thrive.

WHAT THREE WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF?

Determined, resilient, and grateful.

WHAT’S YOUR FAVORITE QUOTE?

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” ~ Maya Angelou.



TELL US ABOUT YOUR HUSBAND, JOHN.

John has a brilliant mind. He is one of the smartest people I know and a great dad to Jack. He takes good care of our family and always makes it easy for me to focus on being the dean and give it my best effort.
[John Pijanowski is a professor of educational leadership at the University of Arkansas. Jack is 14 and loves basketball and hockey.]

IMPACTFUL Research

College Initiates Early-Career Faculty Research Program

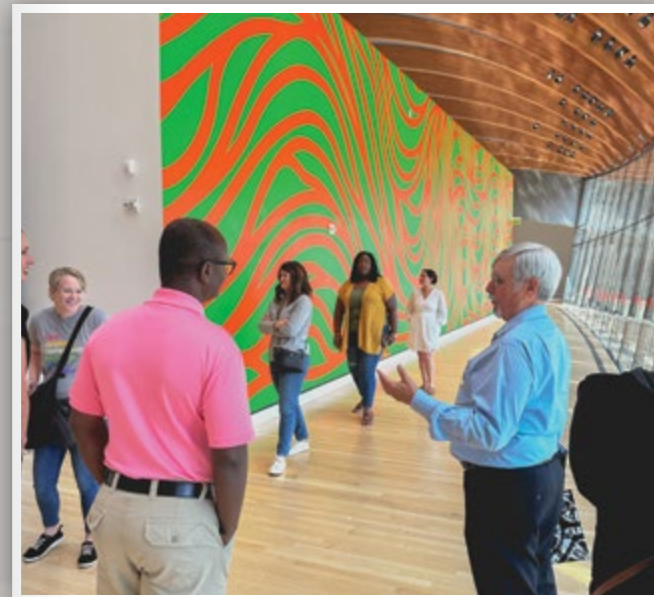
The college welcomed 26 new faculty members this year and is supporting them through several new programs, including the Early-Career Faculty Research Engagement and Mentoring Program.

The program includes a series of workshops, panel discussions, and roundtable conversations on issues related to identifying funding opportunities, writing successful proposals, managing start-up funds, building research teams, and planning a research-productive summer.

It's specifically designed to provide early-career tenure-track faculty with targeted grant and research development support. All nine new tenure-track faculty members have research agendas focused on improving pressing issues in education and health. Their research interests range from inclusive education for students with extensive support needs to preventing compassion fatigue among crisis counselors.



Several new faculty members recently met to explore Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art together. From left, Bernard Muriithi, Associate Dean Michael Hevel, Renee Speight, Sheida Raley, Becca Bassett, Danielle Acurio, Emily Goucher, Julie Hill, Karynecia Conner, and Jennifer Muriithi.



Becca Bassett, who joined the higher education program, draws on cultural sociology and organizational theory to examine inequality in higher education and student success among first-generation and low-income college students. Julie Hill, a new tenure-track faculty member in counseling, has a special research interest in underserved populations with chronic illness and disability, such as those living with rare diseases. Lindsay Lundeen, another tenure-track counseling faculty member, brings scholarship focused on crisis counseling and self-directed violence.

Several tenure-track faculty members' research focuses on helping children and adolescents. Among them is Shristi Bhochhibhoya, an assistant professor of public health, who researches the impact that social determinants of health have on adolescent and sexual health. Mehmet Gultekin, who joined the childhood education program, studies multicultural children's literature and culturally relevant practices. Sheida Raley, a new assistant professor of special education, is an expert on assessment and intervention for building self-determination in all students, including students with extensive support needs learning in inclusive contexts. Another assistant professor of special education, Renee Speight, brings a wealth of knowledge for supporting in-service and pre-service teachers who want to implement evidence-based practices to improve academic, social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes for adolescent learners at risk for and with disabilities.

The college's occupational therapy program also hired two new tenure-track faculty members, including Glenda Hux, with a research focus on the impact of adverse childhood experiences on role performance and health, and Bernard Muriithi, with a research interest in music and health.

SEC Fellowship

Dr. Matthew Ganio, the college's associate dean for academic and student affairs, received the SEC ALDP Alumni Fellowship as part of the SEC Academic Leadership Development Program (ALDP). This competitive fellowship will allow Dr. Ganio to examine faculty workloads at the U of A and how factors such as equity, fairness, and consistency are implemented in workload assignments and evaluations. He will also visit other SEC universities over the next year to see how they have analyzed their faculty workloads, developed policies, and implemented changes at their institutions.



Matthew Ganio



Christine Holyfield

Improving Communication with AI

Dr. Christine Holyfield, associate professor of communication sciences and disorders, and Dr. Elizabeth Lorah, associate professor of special education, received a \$749,960 [National Science Foundation Convergence Accelerator grant](#) to research how artificial intelligence can improve communication tools for people with limited speech. Augmentative and alternative communication devices allow people with developmental and intellectual disabilities to communicate by selecting photos or words on a tablet. The faculty members are researching how to make these AI-enabled devices easier to customize to help speed up communication.



Kevin Murach

Age-Defying Effects of Exercise

The National Institutes of Health awarded more than [\\$2.5 million to researchers](#) in the college to study how exercise can mitigate the decline of tissue function with aging. Dr. Kevin Murach, assistant professor of exercise science and director of the college's Muscle

Mass Regulation Lab, is the principal investigator. He expects their innovative approaches to serve as a foundation for understanding skeletal muscle mass regulation with aging and provide new directions for exploring what mediates the age-defying effect of exercise.

Highest Honor

The National Association of Biology Teachers named Dr. William McComas, distinguished professor of science education and the Parks Family Endowed Professor, an [“Honorary Member,”](#) the highest honor bestowed by the organization recognizing a lifetime of achievement and service to the association. Dr. McComas is an expert on the “nature of science,” and his articles, talks, and books have transformed science education.



William McComas



Inaugural Nursing Science Day

Our Eleanor Mann School of Nursing hosted its inaugural Nursing Science Day in the spring, featuring nationally and internationally known nurse scientist speakers. The keynote was Elizabeth Tarlov, Ph.D., R.N., director of the National Institute of Nursing Research's Division of Extramural Science Programs at the National Institutes of Health. Students from other disciplines and area healthcare professionals were invited to participate. They, along with online and on-campus nursing students, presented posters framed by the theme, “Optimizing and transforming health and healthcare delivery outcomes through nursing discovery, research, and scholarship.”

This academic year, **256** student teachers are interning in **47** school buildings in Northwest Arkansas. These future teachers will dedicate more than **120,320** service hours to local schools.



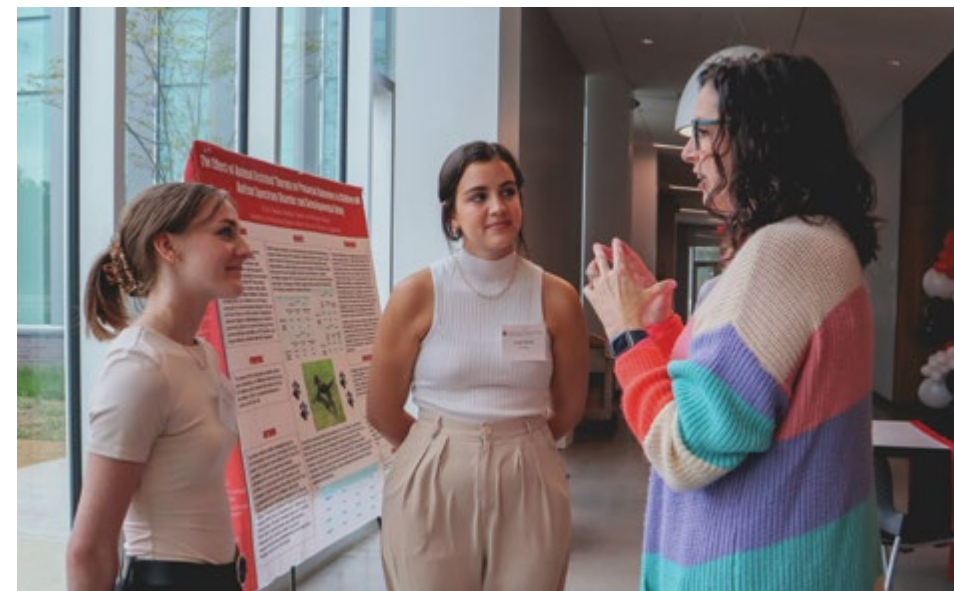
Suzanne Kucharczyk, Brent Thomas Williams, and Sheida Raley

STAR Grant for Youth with Disabilities

A faculty team in the college, along with partners across several Arkansas state agencies, were awarded a \$9.9 million [Seamless Transition for Arkansas \(STAR\) grant](#) to help improve the economic self-sufficiency of 14 to 18-year-old Arkansas students with disabilities. The U.S. Department of Education grant is focused on bridging the gap for youth with disabilities from high school to career success and independent living. The overarching goal is to help these students find competitive employment.

Honors Research Symposium

Each spring, the college's honors program hosts a symposium for students to present research posters to faculty and peers. Their research seeks to solve problems in education and health. Three students took home awards at this year's event: Grace Rugger, Tyler Merreighn, and Kyra Sampaio Resende.



A faculty member discusses research with two honors students.



Razorback-Sooner Scholars

Leaders for Transition doctoral students and faculty gather annually for summer retreats.

The [Razorback-Sooner Scholars Program](#), a collaboration between the college and the University of Oklahoma, received a \$2.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to continue this successful program. There's a shortage of university professors and state leaders who understand transition services and planning for

youth with disabilities. This program aims to increase the number of higher education faculty and state special education leaders ready to prepare special educators and engage in high-quality, applied research to improve post-school outcomes for these students.

Success of College Students with Autism

Dr. Brett Ranon Nachman, assistant professor of adult and lifelong learning in the college, was awarded a prestigious Spencer Foundation Grant to continue a [nationwide study of college success](#) among students with autism. Dr. Nachman and principal investigator Dr. Bradley E. Cox have dedicated much of their scholarship around autism in higher education. Both bring their personal and professional expertise to this work: Nachman is a researcher with autism who has experienced higher education as a student, scholar, and educator, and Cox is the founder of the College Autism Network (CAN) and associate professor of higher education at Michigan State University.



Brett Ranon Nachman



Tyrone Washington

American College of Sports Medicine Fellowship

Dr. Tyrone Washington, associate professor of exercise science, was named a [fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine](#), the most prestigious distinction within the organization. Dr. Washington gained recognition based on his published manuscripts in prestigious journals and his international, national, and regional presentations. He has won various awards for his research, teaching, and mentorship over the years. Dr. Washington's research lab employs molecular biology techniques with in vivo and in vitro models examining muscle plasticity.

Empowering Discovery

The college's Office of Research and Grant Administration provides resources, support, and guidance on securing funding and managing funded projects. Stacy Stuart, Kathleen Smoot, and Kristen Hartung help our faculty win significant grants and keep the college's impactful research moving forward. Ultimately, that research benefits Arkansas and beyond. Dr. Michael Hevel, associate dean for Research, Strategy, and Outreach, leads the team.



Stacy Stuart, Kathleen Smoot, Michael Hevel, and Kristen Hartung

Influential Edu-Scholars

Drs. Robert Maranto, Jonathan Wai, Gema Zamarro, and Patrick J. Wolf from the college's Department of Education Reform were ranked among the [200 most influential education scholars](#) in the country by Education Week. Edu-Scholar rankings are based on a balanced scorecard designed to capture how education faculty can influence scholarship and public policy. Professors receive points for their Google Scholar H-index, published books, works listed on the published syllabi of other faculty, legacy media mentions, Twitter impact, and mention in the U.S. Congressional Record. Two hundred education policy faculty in education, economics, history, political science, and sociology are ranked each year, out of the estimated 20,000 faculty who qualify.





Michele Kilmer (right) and Danielle Randolph with Gryffin

Access for Autism

Dr. Michele Kilmer, assistant professor in our Eleanor Mann School of Nursing, was awarded \$220,000 by the FAR Fund Foundation in New York City, supporting, in part, her work in establishing the [Access for Autism \(A4A\) Program](#). Inspired to increase access and perform diagnostic evaluations for families, Dr. Kilmer partnered with the Community Clinic of Northwest Arkansas to start the program on campus. She works with registered nurse Danielle Randolph and Gryffin, a two-year-old black Labrador retriever. Gryffin is the first canine to be trained in both therapy and service dog techniques to assist children with autism.



Nursing skills lab

ANew: Training Nurse Educators

The college's Eleanor Mann School of Nursing recently received a four-year, \$2.6 million Health Resources and Services Administration grant to continue the [Advanced Nursing Education Workforce \(ANew\) program](#). Dr. Marilou Shreve, associate professor of nursing, is the ANew grant project director. For the past six years, the grant team has worked to develop meaningful academic and clinical partnerships as well as high-quality learning opportunities for family nurse practitioner students who want to work in rural and underserved areas. Students chosen to participate in the program receive financial support, mentoring, assistance with site placement, and additional experiential training.

Arts Integration Primer

A Primer on Arts Integration: Strategies, Lessons, and Collective Wisdom of Teacher Leaders is an edited collection of practical essays written by award-winning educators who have participated in the college's ARTeacher Fellowship Program and successfully integrated the arts into their middle and high school classrooms. The open-access book was made available for free to teachers across Arkansas through support from WE CARE funding. "Educators can use these lessons immediately in their own classrooms or initiate an arts-integration program school-wide," said lead co-editor Christian Z. Goering, professor of English education and ARTeacher co-founder. The cover was designed by chapter author Jessie Lorimer, an area high school teacher whose students' mapmaking artwork is featured. The ARTeacher Fellowship program was launched in 2012 by the Center for Children & Youth (CCY) in partnership with the Walton Arts Center and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. The CCY was established by a generous gift from the Windgate Foundation in 2008 to enrich the educational experiences of students and teachers through the arts and creative practice.



Teacher Quality Partnership

The college's Department of Curriculum and Instruction was awarded a \$525,013 [Teacher Quality Partnership grant](#) from the U.S. Department of Education to help produce a pipeline of teachers in small, rural Northwest Arkansas schools. The backbone

of the program is enhanced and ongoing professional development for teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and current teachers through face-to-face training, coaching, and mentoring.



Three college faculty members (middle) met with Decatur School District officials to discuss their new partnership. From left, Matt Boeving, Steve Watkins, Christy Smith, Jennifer Beasley, Christine Ralston, Kevin Matthews, and Ederlee Gomez.

SERVICE to Arkansas

College Embarks on WE CARE-A-VAN Tour Across Arkansas

The college embarked on its inaugural WE CARE-A-VAN tour in late September, enjoying a royal Razorback sendoff.

Big Red was there to cheer the travel team on, and the Razorbug escorted the caravan off campus. Dean Kate Mamiseishvili and 16 faculty and staff members set off on the maiden voyage in four vehicles adorned with WE CARE-A-VAN signage.



The tour's name is a play on words based on the college's WE CARE strategic plan. The two-day adventure included stops in Morrilton, Pine Bluff, Little Rock, and Jacksonville. In Morrilton, the college's development team hosted an alumni meetup, while the dean and her leadership team met with the vice chancellor for academic affairs, Dr. Richard Counts, and other officials at the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton.

That evening, the college hosted a reception at the Pine Bluff Country Club to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Arkansas Teacher Corps. The Arkansas Teacher Corps is a partnership between the college, the Walton Family Foundation, and the Arkansas Department of Education. ATC recruits, trains, and supports Arkansans of all

backgrounds and majors to become empowered teachers. A large crowd convened at the Pine Bluff Country Club to celebrate ATC, including directors past and present, alumni, and its energetic staff. Other guests included Dean Kimberley Davis and faculty from the School of Education at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff; leaders, parents, and students from the Ivy Center for Education; and Sarah Moore, an alumna from the college and chair of the Arkansas State Board of Education. The college was also honored that U of A Trustee Col. Nate Todd, who lives in Pine Bluff, attended the event.

On day two, the WE CARE-A-VAN team split into groups that traveled to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Partners for Inclusive Communities, and Jacksonville Lighthouse Elementary School, led by co-education directors John Osborn and Anita Hart McNair, who are Impact Arkansas Principal Fellowship alums. IMPACT

is the college's innovative leadership preparation program that supports K-12 education in the state by building leadership capacity in high-needs schools.

The entire WE CARE-A-VAN team reunited at Arkansas Children's Hospital for a tour led by Dr. Ashlie Hilbun, an alumna from the college and senior vice president and chief strategy officer at the hospital. Several College of Education and Health Professions nursing students took a break from their clinical learning experiences to stop by and say hello before the group departed for a behind-the-scenes look at the hospital, including an educational space for its young patients and the helipad for the hospital's transport helicopter, Angel One. Arkansas Children's owns and operates five ground ambulances and two twin-engine helicopters, which transport about six patients a day. The team also enjoyed meeting Lucy, a standard poodle who's part of the hospital's T.A.I.L.S. (Therapeutic Animal Interventions Lift Spirits) Program.

"Our first WE CARE-A-VAN tour could not have gone any better," said Dean Kate Mamiseishvili. "Our alumni and partners generously shared their time and explored future collaborative opportunities with us. From witnessing scholar-led conferences at Jacksonville Lighthouse Elementary School to viewing the Angel One helicopter at Arkansas Children's Hospital, we have also created long-lasting memories. We are now more determined than ever to strengthen relationships and care for communities across Arkansas."

WE CARE-A-VAN tours provide an opportunity to hear from a wide range of constituents from various communities. The college plans to visit schools, clinics, alumni, and other stakeholders across the state several times a year.

"Our first
WE CARE-A-VAN
tour could not have
gone any better."

Dean Kate Mamiseishvili





Better Together: Historic Partnership with University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

A P.R.I.D.E. of Lions and a band of Razorbacks listened and learned from one another in spring 2023 when 22 delegates from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff School of Education visited the Fayetteville campus. The college hosted UAPB Dean Kimberley Davis, nine

faculty and staff, and 12 students from the school's teacher education program, one stop on its "Teach P.R.I.D.E Tour." Dean Mamiseishvili and Dean Davis believe they are better together and are planning future collaborative learning experiences for students.

Care for the Carers

The college began offering a 1-credit hour Dean's Seminar in spring 2023 for students from any major. Each semester, the seminar focuses on a different complex societal challenge at the intersection of education and health. The goal is to serve Arkansas by strengthening the preparation of educators and health professionals, ultimately improving the lives of their future students and patients. The first seminar focused on addiction and was co-taught by Drs. Kara Lasater, associate professor of educational leadership, Erin Popejoy, associate professor of counselor education and supervision, and Bart Hammig, professor of public health. The fall seminar, "Care for the Carers," took a deep dive into the unique chronobiology, nutrition, movement, and psychosocial needs of people in the caring professions. Future professionals who are more aware of their own physical and emotional health are better equipped to care for themselves and, in turn, the patients or students who need them most. Dr. Hope

Ballentine, teaching assistant professor, and Emily Richardson, clinical instructor, from the college's School of Nursing, taught the seminar. Dr. John Pijanowski, professor of educational leadership, served as a guest lecturer from the education side of the college.



Students from multiple majors participate in the Care for the Carers Dean's Seminar course.



Making an IMPACT

Cohort eight of the IMPACT Arkansas Principal Fellows program

The college hosted a reception at the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts in Little Rock over the summer to raise awareness across the state about our [IMPACT Arkansas Principal Fellows program](#). Alumni and school partners from the current and previous cohorts attended the event and shared personal success stories. IMPACT is an innovative principal preparation program that trains a cohort of 20 future leaders annually for high-poverty schools throughout Arkansas. Since 2014, the

program has recruited 146 aspiring school leaders serving 124 high-poverty schools in 88 Arkansas public school districts and eight charter schools. Candidates for the fellowship must work in schools serving at least 70% of students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. Through generous financial support from the Walton Family Foundation, the Windgate Foundation, and the Carl B. & Florence E. King Foundation, fellows receive a scholarship that covers 80% of the tuition and fees for the 18-month program. They also receive individualized coaching and mentoring throughout the program. IMPACT has graduated 106 well-prepared aspiring school leaders for our state.

New Dual DNP-EMBA Degree

The college collaborated with the Sam M. Walton College of Business to launch a [dual-degree program](#) that allows nurses to earn two diplomas simultaneously: a Doctor of Nursing Practice and an Executive Master of Business Administration. The primarily online program, also called a DNP-EMBA dual-degree program, is designed for master's prepared, licensed advanced practice nurses who want to take on executive leadership positions beyond the director level. Some of those positions include chief nursing officer, chief operational officer, chief executive officer, vice president, or president. Courses began in the summer of 2023.



Empowering Teachers

The Arkansas Teacher Corps (ATC), a partnership between the college, the Arkansas Department of Education, and Arkansas public school districts, celebrated its 10th anniversary this year. Since 2013, ATC has recruited, trained, and supported 11 cohorts of more than 267 teachers in 98 schools and 40 school districts throughout central, eastern, and southern Arkansas. ATC recruits an annual cohort of 35 fellows to teach for three years in a geographic or subject shortage area. Fellows teach in schools where over 70% of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. Fellows complete an initial six-week summer intensive program, followed by over 40 hours of professional development and 40 hours of individualized classroom coaching each year during the fellowship. They also receive a \$5,000 stipend and financial assistance for Praxis exam costs and other licensure fees. Most of ATC's funding is through the Walton Family Foundation.



WE CARE+Wellness

An interdisciplinary faculty team in the college developed a wellness program for Arkansas Teacher Corps fellows with funds from a WE CARE grant. [WE CARE+Wellness](#) kicked off over the summer with a workshop for the 38 new fellows in ATC's 11th cohort. These educators all teach in high-needs Arkansas school districts, and the mental health programming is designed to help prevent burnout and exit from the teaching profession. The faculty

team working with fellows includes Dr. David Christian, associate professor of counselor education and supervision; Dr. Kara Lasater, associate professor of educational leadership; Dr. Brandon Lucius, executive director of the Arkansas Teacher Corps; Smruthi Chintakunta, a counseling doctoral student; and Jennifer Sugg, lead school counselor at Har-Ber High School in Springdale.

David Christian works with two ATC fellows during the summer workshop.



Serving through Summer Camps

Faculty and students served the community this summer through camps and programs for children of various ages. The college's STEM education faculty hosted 32 students from Reed Elementary School in Dumas as part of the Science Education Partnership Award program, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. Professor Michael Daugherty, in the college's Department of Curriculum and Instruction, is a key collaborator on the project awarded to the U of A. The \$1.25 million award supports STEAM education (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) for underrepresented students. Faculty in the Speech and Hearing Clinic hosted a new literacy camp, WE R.E.A.D., sponsored by a WE CARE grant. It addressed reading issues for students with dyslexia and other learning differences. The Clinic for Literacy also hosted several camps for students ranging from kindergarten through 11th grade.



Sarah Bemis (front row, third from left) poses with fellow nursing faculty at the Arkansas State Capitol.

Nurse Leader

Dr. Sarah Bemis, assistant director of our Eleanor Mann School of Nursing, was voted president-elect of the Arkansas Center for Nursing this year. The organization is the state's nursing workforce center and is a member of the National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers. Among the center's goals is to publish reports related to the supply, demand, and educational capacity of the nursing workforce in the state.

This academic year, more than **1,000** Eleanor Mann School of Nursing students will complete practicum hours at **70** clinical sites in Arkansas and surrounding states. The students transition to working with real patients in acute and community settings after completing foundational skills training.



Moving Arkansas Education Forward

The college's Office for Education Policy and Department of Education Reform organize the annual Moving Arkansas Education Forward Conference, which allows faculty and students to share research on K-12 issues with a diverse group of stakeholders across the state. Over 150 teachers, policymakers, and other stakeholders participated in this year's event. Education Reform faculty and

doctoral students, along with various other guest speakers, shared their Arkansas education-related research and discussed the future of the teaching workforce, career and technical education, and other education issues in the state. The Office for Education Policy provides Arkansas educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders with research and advice about current education policy issues to help all students reach their full potential. The Department of Education Reform's mission is to produce high-quality research, shape education policy, and grow influential scholars.

Creating Connection through Art

Arkansas A+ provides after-school arts opportunities for students in underserved schools in the Little Rock School District. The pARTners After School Program increases access to after-school care for families while providing arts enrichment opportunities for students from Watson, Chicot, Mabelvale, and Stephens elementary schools. Each after-school program runs for eight weeks and includes performing and visual arts modules led by experienced teaching artists. At the close of each semester's program, Arkansas A+ sponsors a showcase to share the students' work with their families and school communities.



PHOTO CREDIT: Ashlee Nobel

Watson Elementary students at the fall showcase event

Maternal Health Hackathon

Our School of Nursing collaborated with the School of Art and the Sam M. Walton College of Business to host the Arkansas Maternal Health Community Hackathon, designed to start conversations, build connections, and develop community-led solutions to address the maternal health crisis in Arkansas. Participants from across the state gathered to help identify the root causes of the maternal mortality crisis and generate actionable ideas for change.



PHOTO CREDIT: University Relations

Occupational Therapy Capstones

Students in our Doctor of Occupational Therapy program participate in 14-week Doctoral Capstone Experiences, partnering with community organizations across the state to demonstrate how powerful occupational therapy can be in making a positive difference in the lives of Arkansans. Capstone projects address health disparities or develop innovative occupational therapy practices, with students applying what they learn in class to real-life situations in their chosen practice area. The OTD program is a collaborative program between the college and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. It's the first joint clinical program between the two universities, which provides enhanced support and services for students in the program.



Whole-School Arts Integration

Arkansas A+ has partnered with 28 schools throughout Arkansas since 2011, nurturing creativity in every student through a research-based, whole-school arts integration. The most recent [schoolwide implementation](#) started this summer at Guy-Perkins Elementary in Guy, Arkansas. Teachers learned new methods for integrating the arts into every part of their curriculum. The three-year collaboration between the school and A+ will evolve into a long-term partnership with ongoing professional development, an intricate support network, and active research. Arkansas A+ is generously supported by the Windgate Foundation.



Nursing with Care

Eleanor Mann School of Nursing students and faculty volunteers completed 101 sports physicals at the Decatur School District in the spring to care for the community and provide healthcare access. Seven Bachelor of Nursing Science community students, six Doctor of Nursing Practice students — along with Drs. Marilou Shreve and Allison Scott — provided this needed service.

CARING Culture



Dean's Executive Advisory Board

Pride. Dedication. Partnership. Future. Opportunity. Connection. Community.

These are just a few of the words our Dean's Executive Advisory Board members used to describe the fall meeting.

The college formed the Dean's Executive Board this year. The board — made up of alumni, community partners, and other stakeholders — functions as an advocacy group for the college and provides counsel to the dean. Members met for the first time in March 2023, offering input to Dean Kate Mamiseishvili when she was creating the college's strategic plan. The completed plan was revealed over the summer on a new website, wecare.uark.edu.

At the fall meeting on October 20, the group shared insights, ideas, and updates on progress related to the college's three WE CARE strategic plan priorities: Service to Arkansas, Impactful Research, and Caring Culture.

The day was punctuated by laughter, hugs, meaningful connections, discovery, camaraderie, and riddles related to Arkansas cities (most didn't realize there's one named after the college's dean, Kate). One board member brought the audience to tears when she expressed pride and gratitude for the college's impact throughout the state.

Perhaps the most moving sessions were those where board members heard directly from students and faculty, who shared about substantial research, projects, and progress related to the college's three priorities. For example, Dr. Elizabeth Lorah, associate professor of special education, discussed her research around AI-enabled devices that help people with limited speech communicate



more effectively. Hailey Thomas, a graduate student in counselor education and supervision, told the group about her crusade to increase the number of play therapists in the state since children in Arkansas are more likely to go through adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) than those in any other state. Dr. Michele Kilmer, assistant professor in the college's Eleanor Mann School of Nursing, introduced board members to Gryffin, a two-year-old black Labrador retriever who's the first canine to be trained in both therapy and service dog techniques to assist children with autism.

"It was humbling to see board members so moved by all the things we're accomplishing in the college to advance impactful research, expand service to Arkansas, and foster a caring culture," said Dean Kate Mamiseishvili. "I'm grateful to each board member for their unwavering support, insights, and shared enthusiasm about the college's vision. They're all so engaged and passionate about education and healthcare. It has been an amazing first year of caring together."

The board provided input and counsel to Mamiseishvili when she was creating the college's strategic plan. The completed plan was revealed over the summer on a new website, wecare.uark.edu.

Dr. Ashlie Hilbun, senior vice president and chief strategy officer at Arkansas Children's Hospital, served as the inaugural board chair. Hilbun earned an Ed.D. in higher education from the college. When the board reconvenes in March 2024, Judd

Semingson, nursing alum and CEO of Community Clinic, will serve as chair. Three-time college alum Dr. John L. Colbert, who recently retired from his long-time role as superintendent of the Fayetteville School District, was announced as the chair-elect.

U of A Chancellor Charles Robinson kicked off the event's evening reception with a brief speech, praising the college for its care of Arkansas and noting the wise decision to make Mamiseishvili dean of the college in February.

Each member was gifted a medallion denoting their service on the inaugural Dean's Executive Advisory Board. The partnership and involvement with board members will continue to drive what comes next in the success of the college, Mamiseishvili said.

The board will meet twice a year in the fall and spring. In addition to regular meetings, the chair may call special meetings of the board and its committees.

“It was humbling to see board members so moved by all the things we're accomplishing in the college to advance impactful research, expand service to Arkansas, and foster a caring culture.”

Dean Kate Mamiseishvili



Donuts with the Dean

Dean Mamiseishvili is intentional about fostering a sense of community among faculty, staff, and students. Each semester, she hosts monthly Donuts with the Dean events, alternating among the college's four main buildings – Peabody Hall, Graduate Education, Epley Center for Health Professions, and Health, Physical Education and Recreation. Faculty and staff are invited to enjoy donuts, coffee, and chats with the dean and their colleagues.



Inaugural Dean's Advisory Student Council

The Dean's Advisory Student Council is new to the college. Students work closely with the dean and communications team to share authentic and creative content about their chosen major, assist with marketing campaigns, offer feedback, and enhance students' knowledge of opportunities and day-to-day life in the college. The inaugural advisory council includes (from left) Rachel Sweningson, Kaylie Mahar, Joseph Evangelista, Anahi Francis, and Olivia Peterson.



Outstanding College Alumni

The college is proud of its many alumni who are making an impact in their professional fields and communities. Every year, our Outstanding Alumni Awards honor former students who represent the college's highest values. The [2023 award recipients](#) are (clockwise from top left) Drs. Fred A. Bonner II, John Buckwalter, Debbie Faubus-Kendrick, and Yuri Hosokawa. Dr. Bonner is a professor and Endowed Chair in Educational Leadership and Counseling and founding executive director and chief scientist of the Minority Achievement, Creativity and High-Ability Center at Prairie View A&M University. Dr. Faubus-Kendrick has been an educator for 42 years and director of the Crawford County Adult Education Center for 16 years. Dr. Buckwalter is the provost and vice president for academic affairs at Boise State University, a metropolitan doctoral institution that serves about 25,000 students. Dr. Hosokawa, a certified athletic trainer and American College of Sports Medicine fellow, is an associate professor in the Faculty of Sport Sciences at Waseda University in Japan.



Kay Brusca

WE CARE Rounds of Applause

WE CARE Rounds of Applause celebrate those in the college who "have been caught caring." Faculty and staff are encouraged to nominate colleagues for this award at any time to applaud their generosity of time, effort, and care. Kay Brusca, the dean's chief of staff, was the first recipient this fall. She dreamed up the award name during a planning meeting about the college's Caring Culture priority. One of the goals under that priority is to cultivate a culture of recognition, inclusion, engagement, and well-being. Haley Carney, last year's Staff Advisory Council chair, recommended the "You've been caught caring" catchphrase for the awards.

Honoring Emeriti Faculty

The college values its emeriti faculty and hosts two luncheons each year to share ideas and celebrate their contributions to the college and the Arkansas communities they continue to serve.

Emeritus status is an honorific title given to faculty who have served the university for an extended period and have retired.



Spring Emeriti Luncheon



Hogs Teach InspiRED

Hogs Teach InspiRED is the new unifying identity for the college's teacher education programs. The "RED" in InspiRED stands for Razorback Educator Development, and the branding is part of a more extensive strategy to promote teaching careers and recruit future teachers. The newly named Razorback Educator Development Hub assists students from all teacher preparation programs with the licensure process and field placement.



Faculty and Staff Award Winners

Each year, College Council reviews multiple applications for Outstanding Faculty Awards, focusing on essential aspects of scholarly life and work. Winners are selected based on their remarkable dedication and contributions to the college. The 2023 faculty award winners are (front row, left to right) Drs. Albert Cheng, Alissa Blair, Jonathan Wai (back row, left to right) Kenda Grover, Karmen Bell, Rhett Hutchins, Christine Holyfield,

and Page Dobbs. The college also named 2023 Superior Staff Service Award winners (front row, left to right) Erica Langley, Deb Henderson, Stacy Stuart, Shannon Magsam (back row, left to right) Matthew Fey, JL Jennings, Myra Haulmark, and Karan Baker Burnette. These awards recognize staff members who consistently go above and beyond to serve the college, students, and the community.



Paul Calleja

We Care Together

The college offered two opportunities for faculty and staff to participate in University Recreation's American Red Cross CPR/AED and First Aid certification course at no cost. Dean Mamiseishvili wanted to equip faculty and staff to help one another or students in an emergency. In addition to adult CPR, participants learned first aid and how to operate an automated external defibrillator (AED), a medical device designed to analyze the heart rhythm and deliver an electric shock to restore the heart rhythm to normal. Dr. Paul Calleja, associate dean for administration, leads the college's caring culture priority.

This academic year, **56** Communication Sciences and Disorders students will complete clinical practicum hours in over **30** school districts, hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, and outpatient clinics throughout Northwest Arkansas. These students will gain more than **22,480** combined hours of direct clinical experience before graduation.



From left, Kate Mamiseishvili, Ashlie Hilbun, and Michael Hevel



Outstanding Students and Departmental Alumni

The college's annual awards banquet, held in April, honored more than 100 outstanding students and several distinguished alumni from our departments. Aside from commencement, this annual event is the college's largest celebration of student achievement. Dean Mamiseishvili acknowledged the breadth and diversity of the college's programs but said there's a common thread: each represents the caring professions. Our students are training for fields in which they make people's lives better every day. Selected by faculty in their respective departments for extraordinary contributions to their respective fields were Dr. Sarah Burks Moore, chair of the Arkansas State Board of Education; Dr. Ashlie Hilbun, chief strategy officer and senior vice president of strategic marketing at Arkansas Children's Hospital; and Katey Peterson, a clinical instructor in the college's Eleanor Mann School of Nursing.

PHOTO CREDIT: Beth Hall



Kate Mamiseishvili and Sarah Burks Moore



Kate Mamiseishvili and Katey Peterson



Fall Kickoff

Dean Kate Mamiseishvili joins the college's associate deans and department heads in the WE CARE photo booth.

As part of its caring culture, the college celebrates moments big and small. When the academic year ends and begins, the dean hosts events to welcome back faculty and staff and to thank them for their hard work. In addition to great food and conversation, there are children's activities to keep guests of all ages happy. Students from our teacher preparation programs facilitated activities in the children's area this fall.



Football Fridays

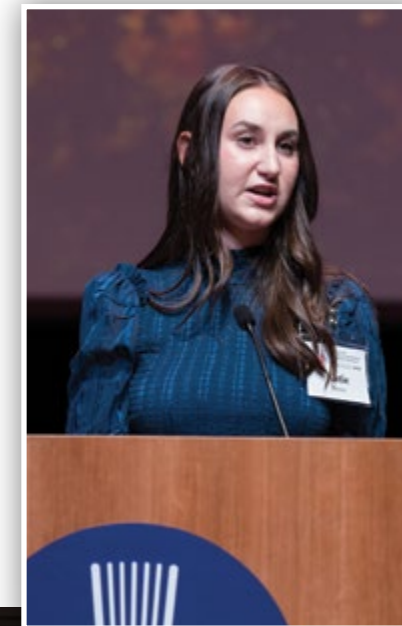
Many of our students are front and center on game days (or working hard behind the scenes). Whether they're making music in the Razorback Marching Band or cheering/twirling their hearts out (and many more roles), these students help make the magic happen.



(left to right): Summer Hill, Cooper Getz, Abby Jones, Acacia Simmons

Scholarship Recipients and Benefactors

The college hosts a Scholarship Recipients and Benefactors Luncheon every fall to congratulate students on their academic achievements and thank our benefactors for supporting our remarkable students. This year's speakers were Dr. G. David Gearhart, Chancellor Emeritus of the University of Arkansas, on behalf of benefactors and Katie Moore, a childhood education major, on behalf of students.



Contact Tory Gaddy, our director of development, to learn more about supporting students, programs, or departments in the college:
gaddy@uark.edu.



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