



Testimonials

Arkansas Biosciences Institute: Luke Howard, PhD, a professor of food science at the University of Arkansas System, Division of Agriculture investigates the naturally-occurring phytochemicals that can turn ordinary foods into health-boosting “functional foods.” Dr. Howard stated, “The potential to turn ordinary foods that are already in people’s diets into healthier foods that people want to eat everyday holds remarkable promise for human health. We have found ways to stabilize the bioactive compounds and fix their optimum potency during the processing, storage, and marketing. Most of the fiber and up to half of the bioactive compounds . . . are in the pomace that was once considered waste material after making fruit juice. . . . They have potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Inflammation is involved in virtually all human diseases. If you can suppress inflammation with functional food compounds you can mitigate many diseases or ease their symptoms.”

UAMS Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health: Pebbles Fagan, PhD, a leading expert on tobacco-related health disparities, received the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco (SRNT) President’s Award. She is the fifth recipient of the award in the society’s 28-year history. Megan Piper, PhD, Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco president and professor at the University of Wisconsin presented the award to Fagan. Dr. Piper shared, “It is my great honor to bestow upon Dr. Fagan the 2022 SRNT President’s Award in honor of her decades of work in nicotine and tobacco science and health equity. . . . The President’s Award is not given out every year, but this year I wanted to culminate the SRNT’s work on racial equity by recognizing the preeminent leader in the field.”

Arkansas Minority Health Initiative: The MHI partnered with Pulaski Technical College to host a health fair designed to educate participants on preventative health screenings, maintenance, physical activity, and nutrition, and to provide screenings and educational literature to attendees. One attendee shared, “I feel the health fair staff was great, knowledgeable, and friendly. They made the testing painless and gave good info.”

Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Program: The Arkansas Cancer Coalition held the 23rd Arkansas Cancer Summit on March 8. The Summit focused on mental health, screenings, and survivorship. Comments from the event evaluation highlighted what participants learned that would apply to their professional or personal lives. One participant said, “The mental health wellness session was powerful and practical.” Another shared, “I learned that disposable e-cigarettes are the most used form of e-cigarettes among our youth.” A third participant reflected, “Menthol cigarettes were directly, intentionally, and specifically marketed to Black and African Americans.” Another participant stated, “You must take care of yourself so you can effectively take care of others.”

UAMS Centers on Aging: A participant in a Schmieding Center program said this about the center, “You are a very popular resource for our Social Work department as you are a wealth of information regarding caregiving, dementia, and local/state resources. . . . Thank you for sharing your expertise and information during these sessions. It can seem very lonely caring for someone with dementia, and you have widened our world a bit.”

UAMS East Regional Campus: A patient at UAMS East’s Family Medical Center this quarter praised the clinic, “This was the best experience I have ever had at a doctor’s office. They were very helpful. The front desk staff were both very pleasant. The nurse Kayla was nice. Dr. Lauren listened to me and explained everything so I could understand. Thank you so much for this staff. They are amazing.”

Program Progress and Evaluation



ABI Program Description and Goals

Program Description

The Arkansas Biosciences Institute, the agricultural and biomedical research program of the Tobacco Settlement Proceeds Act, is a partnership of scientists from Arkansas Children's Research Institute, Arkansas State University, the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. The ABI supports long-term agricultural and biomedical research at its five member institutions and focuses on fostering collaborative research that connects investigators from various disciplines across these five institutions. The ABI uses this operational approach to address the goals as outlined in the Tobacco Settlement Proceeds Act. These goals are to conduct:

- Agricultural research with medical implications;
- Bioengineering research that expands genetic knowledge and creates new potential applications in the agricultural-medical fields;
- Tobacco-related research that identifies and applies behavioral, diagnostic, and therapeutic knowledge to address the high level of tobacco-related illnesses in Arkansas;
- Nutritional and other research that is aimed at preventing and treating cancer, congenital and hereditary conditions, or other related conditions; and
- Other areas of developing research that are related or complementary to primary ABI-supported programs.

Overall Program Goal

The goal of the ABI is to develop new tobacco-related medical and agricultural research initiatives to improve the access to new technologies, improve the health of Arkansans, and stabilize the economic security of Arkansas.