BioVentures

2025

Year in Review

In this *report*

Foreword by Eric Peterson

Eric Peterson, PhD.
President of BioVentures

"Our innovation ecosystem is maturing, accelerating, and becoming more deeply integrated into the mission of UAMS and the economic future of Arkansas."

The past year has been one of meaningful momentum for BioVentures and for the innovators we serve at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. As we reflect on 2025, one theme stands out clearly: **our innovation ecosystem is maturing, accelerating, and becoming more deeply integrated into the mission of UAMS and the economic future of Arkansas.**

This year, our team guided **40 new invention disclosures, 42 patent filings, 8 issued patents, and 4 new licensing agreements**, reflecting both the quality and the range of discovery happening across UAMS. We also celebrated the formation of three new startup companies, each rooted in research designed to improve patient care, ranging from early detection of internal bleeding to novel anti-biofilm therapeutics and precision diagnostics for acute kidney injury. These companies demonstrate what is possible when scientific excellence is supported by strong partnerships, strategic investment, and a culture that believes in translational impact.

BioVentures also reached several operational and strategic milestones. We advanced our transition to a modern intellectual property and portfolio management platform that will improve transparency, tracking, and long-term sustainability of our IP assets. We expanded our

incubator community, supporting **eight Arkansas-based startups** pursuing growth on our campus.

At the programmatic level, 2025 marked extraordinary progress. The **ACTIVE program** completed its final cohort, equipping 25 socially and economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs with the tools to navigate the healthcare innovation landscape. The **AR Health Ventures Accelerator** continued its strong trajectory, providing critical funding and mentorship to therapeutics teams with the potential to transform kidney disease, transplantation outcomes, gastrointestinal health, liver marker breakthroughs and other promising biotech advances. Our events this year, such as the **Innovation & Entrepreneurship Week**, the **Inventors Recognition Ceremony**, the **PCAR Summer Program**, and our expanding educational tracks for PhD and medical students have engaged faculty, trainees, and industry leaders in conversations that strengthen the innovation culture at UAMS.

Importantly, we also welcomed new team members and deepened our internal capabilities across licensing strategy, grant writing, and operational support. The BioVentures team members' dedication and expertise shape every success reflected in these pages.

As BioVentures looks to 2026 and beyond, we do so with a clear vision: **to help researchers shorten the distance between discovery and societal benefit.** With the support of our campus partners, our Board of Directors, and the talented researchers and clinicians of UAMS, we will continue to build an innovation engine that serves Arkansas while making a national impact.

Thank you for your partnership, your ideas, and your commitment to moving science forward. Together, we are turning breakthroughs into solutions that improve lives.

organization and people

Growing Together

Team incorporations and organizational changes in FY 2024

Eric Peterson

President | Member since February 2022

Eric C. Peterson, PhD, was named President of BioVentures in December 2024. He had previously served as Executive Vice President and Interim President, contributing to the organization's direction and its support for UAMS innovators. He is also a Professor in the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology at UAMS. His research has focused on NIH/NIDA-funded antibody and gene-therapy technologies targeting methamphetamine use disorder, and he has served on NIH study sections since 2012. He is listed as an inventor on multiple related patents.

Britney Bobo

Project Coordinator | Member since November 2024

Joining the team in 2024, Britney Bobo is a Project Coordinator at BioVentures, where she supports technology management, inventor outreach, and IP administration. She holds a B.S. in Healthcare Administration and Management from Jackson State University and is currently pursuing a Master of Public Health (MPH) in Health Policy and Management at UAMS. With prior experience as a Team Lead in healthcare administration, Britney brings strong leadership and operational expertise to advancing biomedical innovation at UAMS.

Amy Hopper Swan

Strategy Consultant | Member since April 2025

Amy Hopper Swan is the founder of Swan Impact Strategies, where she helps mission-driven organizations design and manage programs with measurable outcomes. With over a decade of experience in program management, coalition building, and entrepreneurship, she holds an MBA in entrepreneurship and certifications as a Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) and Professional Community and Economic Developer (PCED). At BioVentures, Amy leads the development of an impact report and metric tracking systems that highlight the organization's contribution to Arkansas' innovation economy, creating clear, data-driven frameworks to demonstrate results and strengthen BioVentures' communication of its impact to stakeholders.

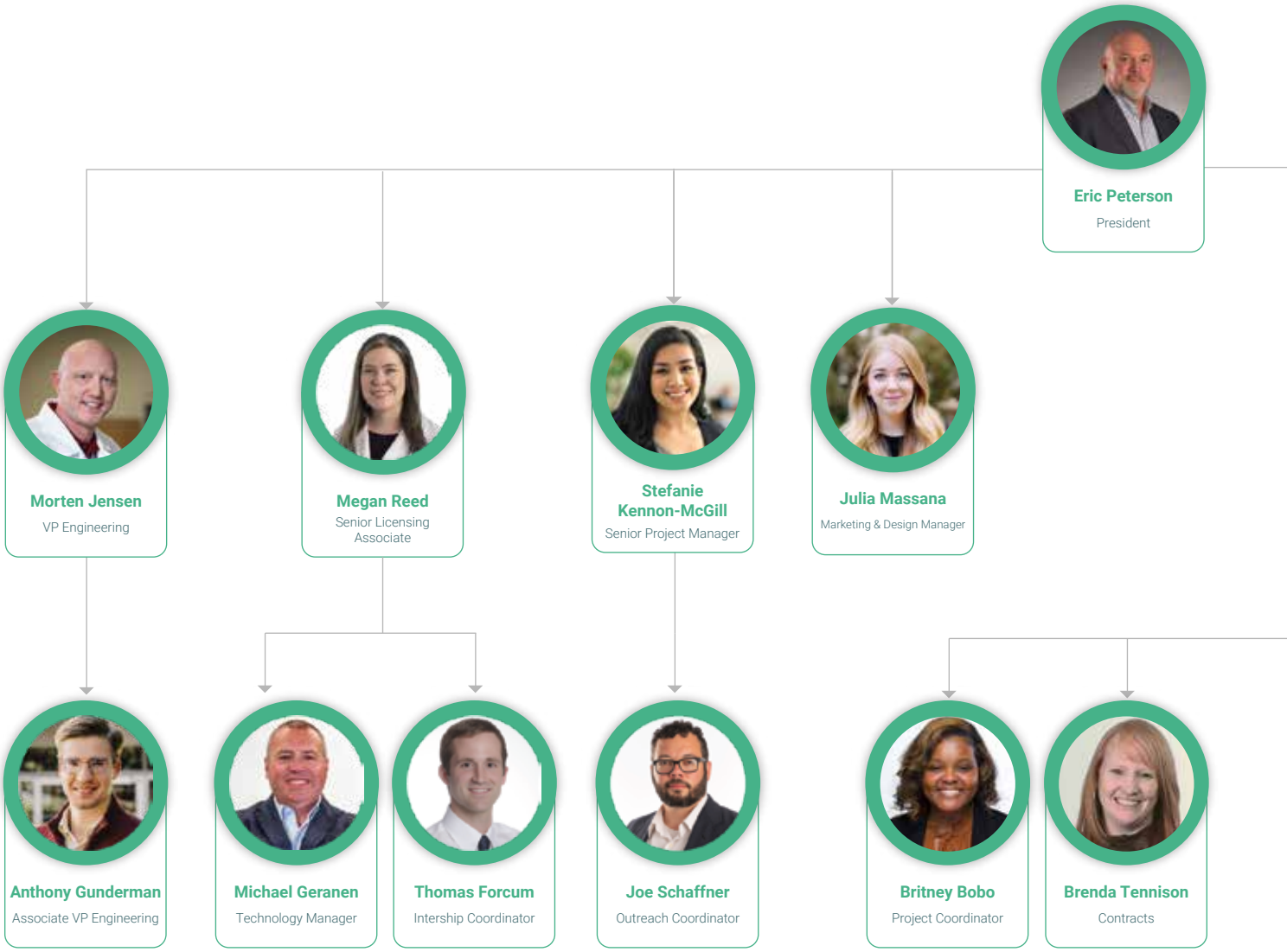
Megan Reed

Senior Licensing Associate | Member since October 2024

Megan Reed joined BioVentures as Senior Licensing Associate. She holds a Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from UAMS and an Executive MBA focused on entrepreneurship from the Sam M. Walton College of Business. Before transitioning into technology transfer, she conducted cancer immunology research on T cell therapies and published in leading journals. At BioVentures, Megan evaluates new technologies, manages intellectual property, and develops commercialization strategies that move UAMS discoveries toward real-world impact. A recipient of the Susan Riley Keyes Technology Transfer Training Fellowship and an active AUTM member, she is dedicated to supporting inventors and advancing patient-focused innovation.

BioVentures team members at the strategy meeting, April 25, 2025.

Organizational **Chart**



Alex Escobar
VP Operations

John Imig
VP Technology Acceleration

Rachel Ott
Director Grant Writing

Sarah Heinz
Asst Director, Business Operations

Tracie Seidl
Admin Services

Rob Griffin
VP Faculty Small Business Concerns

Jay Gandy
Entrepreneur in Residence

Amy Hopper Swan
Strategy Consultant

Rebecca Todd
Grant Writer

Nichole Smith
Grant Writer

BioVentures Board

Steve Abell

Steve Abell manages investments and planning at Arkansas Blue Cross, serving in leadership roles since 1996 and retiring as VP of Strategic Innovations in 2021.

Amanda George

CPA

Amanda George, CPA, is UAMS Vice Chancellor for Finance and CFO, with prior roles including associate vice chancellor for clinical finance and CFO of the integrated clinical enterprise.

Stefanie Gardner

PHARM.D., ED.D.

Dr. Gardner oversees academics, strategy, and Vision 2029 implementation, fostering excellence across UAMS programs and services.

Michelle Whittier Krause

M.D., MPH

Dr. Krause is CEO of UAMS Medical Center and Senior Vice Chancellor for UAMS Health. She is a professor of Internal Medicine and a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine.

Arthur Orduña

Arthur Orduña leads The Venture Center, co-founded its Arkansas Fund, and drives early-stage ventures at Circumference Group.

Nancy Rusch

PH.D.

Dr. Rusch is chair of Pharmacology and Toxicology at UAMS, co-founded PinPoint Testing LLC, and led NIH-funded cardiovascular research for 30 years.

Bobby W. Sandage

PH.D.

Leads Euclises Pharmaceuticals, manages the Riney Foundation, and is a General Partner in Cultivation Capital Life Sciences Fund II, with 37 years in pharmaceuticals.

Daniel Voth

PH.D.

Dr. Voth is the Vice Chancellor of Research and Innovation at UAMS as well as a Professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology.

licensing and innovation

Licensing Overview

Translating UAMS Innovation into Health and Economic Value

In FY2025, BioVentures strengthened its role as the strategic engine for translating discoveries from UAMS into meaningful impact through licensing, startup formation, and intellectual property management. The office continued to bridge the gap between research and real-world application, guiding technologies from disclosure to market adoption while advancing the UAMS mission to improve health and drive economic growth.

This year, BioVentures managed a robust and diversified intellectual property portfolio that included 14 new provisional applications, 8 PCT conversions, 8 issued patents, and 40 invention disclosures. The portfolio's breadth reflects growing activity across multiple disciplines, from medical devices and diagnostics to digital health and therapeutics.

Licensing activity remained steady and strategically focused, with four new option agreements executed with NK Biosciences, PulseArk, NephSmart, and Vanguard Biofilm. Active licensees also achieved important milestones this year, including clinical trial progress, regulatory designations, and expanded market adoption. Examples such as Dialectic Therapeutics, advancing Phase 1b/2 trials for targeted cancer therapies, and Fujirebio Diagnostics, scaling the CA-125 ovarian cancer test globally, illustrate the lasting value of these partnerships and their patient-centered impact.

Startup formation continued to play a central role in BioVentures' commercialization strategy. In FY2025, three new spin out companies, PulseArk, NephSmart, and Vanguard Biofilm, were established to further develop UAMS-originated technologies. These ventures are not only extending the university's reach into the marketplace but also contributing to Arkansas's innovation economy through potential job creation, investment attraction, and industry collaboration.

Each partnership helps move a UAMS technology toward clinical validation, market adoption, and ultimately toward improving patient outcomes.

Megan Reed
Senior Licensing Associate

A significant operational milestone for the office was the migration to TradeSpace, a modern IP management platform designed to enhance transparency, efficiency, and data integration across all aspects of the technology transfer process. The transition began in FY2025 and will continue into FY2026 with the planned addition of financial modules to track patent costs, revenues, and cost recovery. These tools will support more data-driven decisions about portfolio management and provide a stronger foundation for evaluating the long-term value and sustainability of the intellectual property portfolio.

These efforts advance a balanced licensing strategy that accelerates UAMS innovations from idea to impact, strengthening Arkansas's biomedical innovation ecosystem.

BioVentures team members at the AUTM Annual Meeting, March 2025.

FY2025 FACT SHEET

BioVentures

Linking research minds to global markets

42
Patents Filed

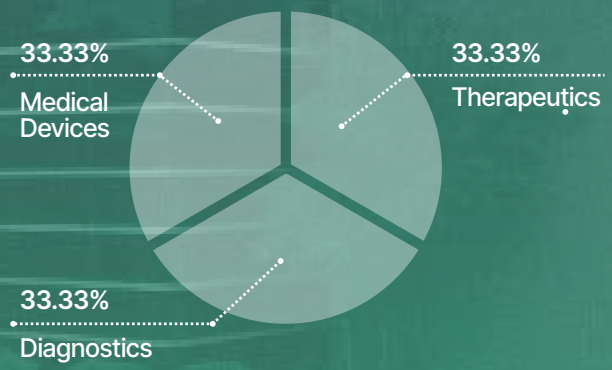
Provisional: 14 · PCT: 8
US National: 7 · Non-US National: 13

8
Patents Issued

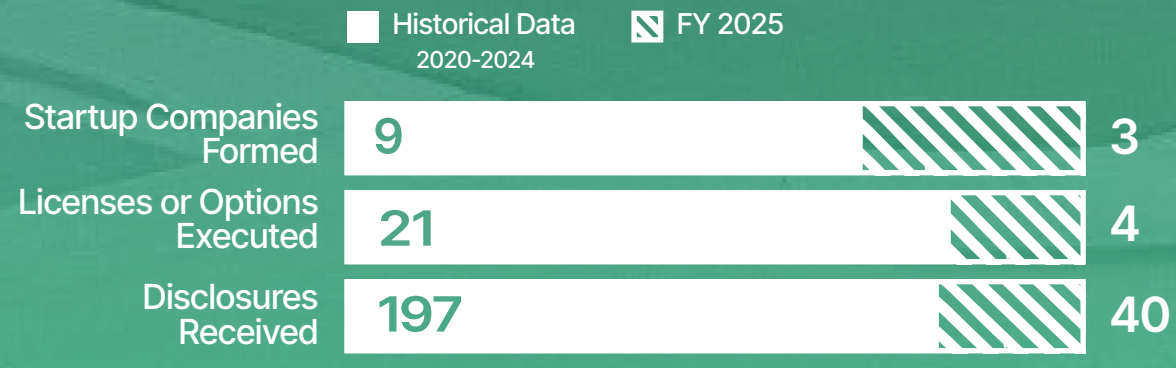
282
Total Active Patents

$1,18M
Total Licensing & Equity Revenue

Impact Area of Startup Companies



GROWTH THOURGH FY2025



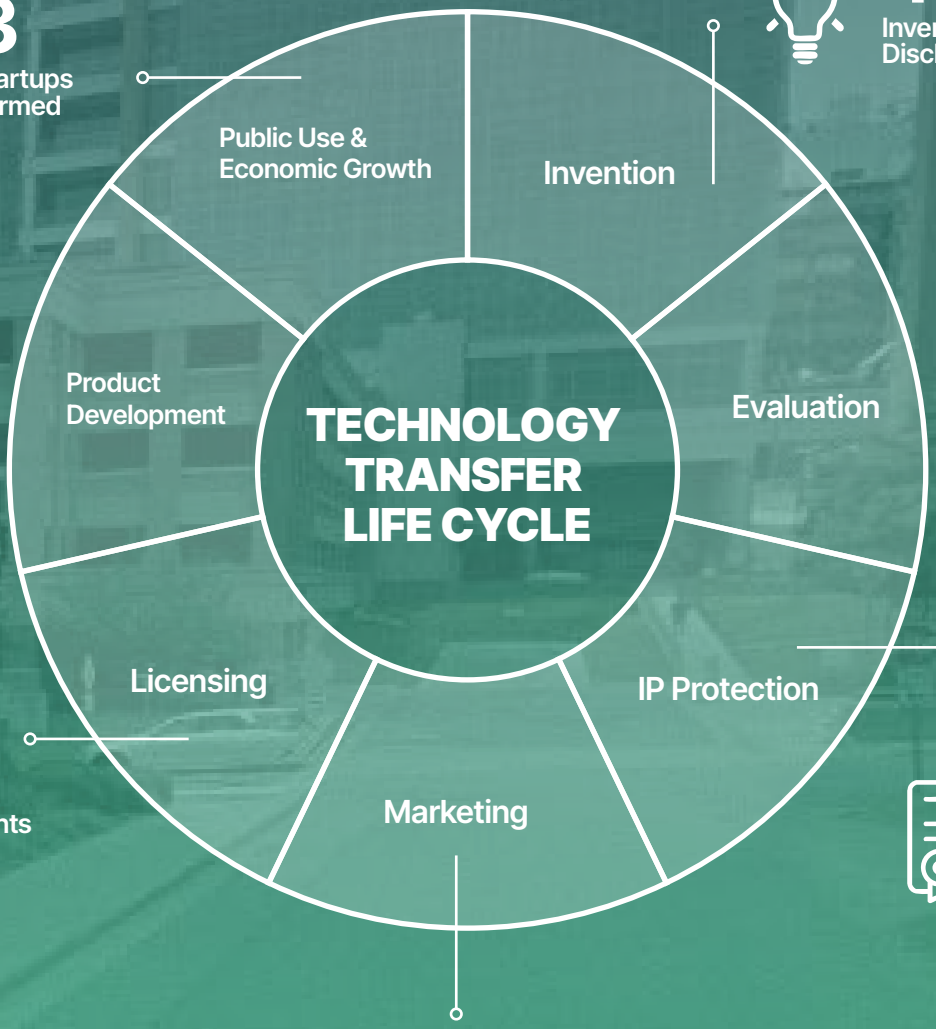
FY2025

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER LIFE CYCLE

BioVentures

3
Startups Formed

40
Invention Disclosures



42
Patents Filed

4
Option Agreements

8
Patents Issued

27
Total Technologies on the Website

Technology Spotlights

Each year, UAMS innovators bring forward new ideas that address critical healthcare challenges and open pathways to future treatments. The following highlights showcase technologies developed by our faculty and researchers, advances that reflect the creativity, dedication, and impact of the UAMS community.

BV 2025-014: Nasal Cannula Redesign

INVENTORS:

ALAINA **BAGGET**, UAMS College of Medicine / Medical Student
GRESHAM **RICHTER**, UAMS College of Medicine, Department of Department of Otolaryngology

This redesigned nasal cannula improves oxygen therapy by enhancing patient comfort, minimizing skin irritation, and reducing the risk of displacement during use. Its ergonomic structure provides a more secure fit, allowing patients to move freely without compromising airflow. By addressing persistent limitations in conventional cannulas, this innovation supports better adherence to therapy and improves outcomes across hospital and home care settings.

BV 2023-26: Assay with an IGFBP-1 Peptide or Protein to Predict Severe Acute Kidney Injury

INVENTORS:

JOHN **ARTHUR**, UAMS College of Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine
CHRISTIAN **HERZOG**, UAMS College of Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine
JOSEP **HOLTHOFF**, UAMS College of Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine

The invention features a novel diagnostic assay that predicts severe acute kidney injury (AKI) by measuring urine protease activity specific for IGFBP-1 cleavage sites, using either a lateral-flow format with dual-tagged peptides or a luminescent readout to distinguish intact from cleaved fragments. Unlike current tests that quantify static biomarker levels after injury, this method detects functional proteolysis upstream of clinical AKI onset, allowing for earlier detection.

BV 2023-36: **Anti-biofilm and anti-persister cells agents to prevent or treat chronic Staphylococcus aureus infections**

INVENTORS:

MOHAMED **ELASRI**, UAMS College of Medicine, Department of Microbiology and Immunology
NIRJAL **MAINALI**, UAMS College of Medicine/ Department of Geriatrics
MARK **SMELTZER**, UAMS College of Medicine, Department of Microbiology and Immunology
BRENDAN **FRETT**, UAMS College of Pharmacy / Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences
GYAN **SAHUKAHL**, UAMS College of Medicine, Department of Microbiology and Immunology
BALASUBRAMANIAM **MEENAKSHISUNDARAM**, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging

This technology introduces novel anti-biofilm and anti-persister agents to prevent and treat chronic Staphylococcus aureus infections. By specifically targeting bacterial communities resistant to standard antibiotics, these compounds disrupt biofilm formation and eradicate dormant persister cells. The approach addresses a critical unmet medical need, offering a pathway to reduce recurrence, improve treatment outcomes, and enhance patient recovery in chronic and device-associated infections.

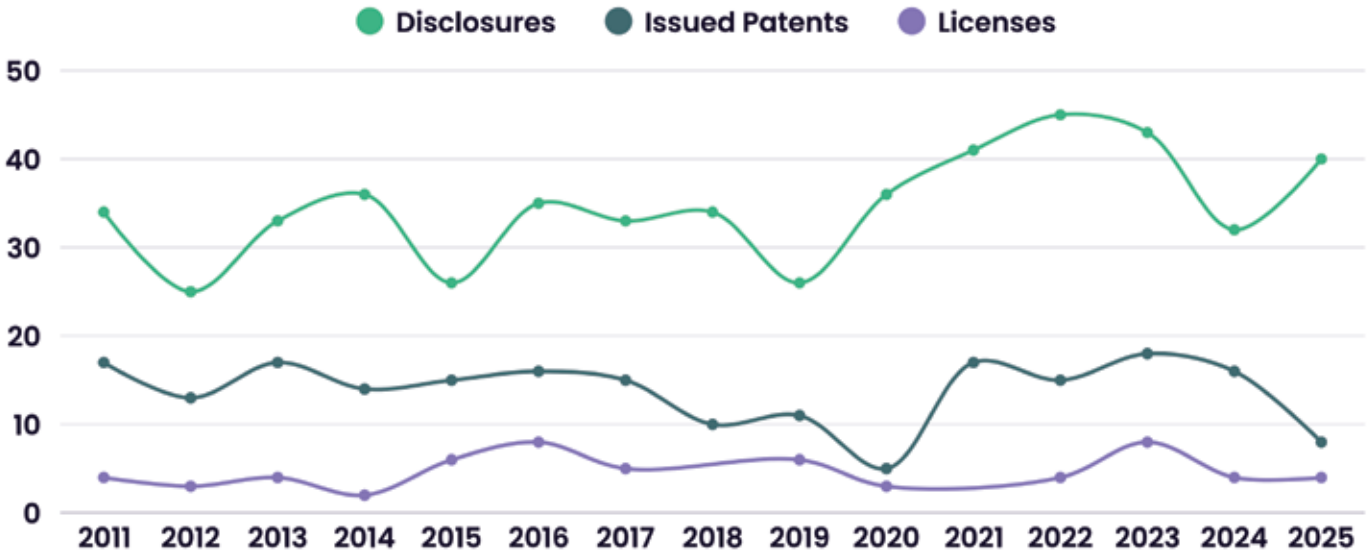
BV 2025-008: **Immune Cells With Enhanced 53 Bp1 And Engineered 53 Bp1 For Use In Methods Of Treating Cancer**

INVENTORS:

BRIAN **KOSS**, UAMS College of Medicine, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
MOUSUMI **PATRA**, UAMS College of Medicine / Department of Radiation Oncology
FEN **XIA**, UAMS College of Medicine, Department of Radiation Oncology
JESSICA **KELLIHER**, UAMS College of Medicine, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

This technology engineers immune cells with enhanced expression of 53BP1, a key DNA repair factor that improves genomic stability during cell therapy manufacturing. By strengthening resistance to DNA damage, the approach increases cell viability, potency, and persistence after infusion. These enhanced immune cells address a major limitation in adoptive cell therapies, enabling safer, more durable treatments for cancer.

Issued Patents



12,042,248 B2 - Device and method for in vivo photoaoustic diagnosis and photothermal purging of infected blood

Mark Smeltzer, Jing Chen, Jingyi Chen, Ekaterina Galanzha, Vladimir Zharov

7,529,566 - Use of amino acid supplementation for improved mucle protein sythesis

Robert Wolfe, Arny Ferrando

12,060,618 - GEP5 Model for Multiple Myeloma

Barthel Barlogie, Joshua Epstein, Pingping Qu, Christoph Heuck

12,084,423 - Piperlongumine analogues and uses thereof

Guangrong Zheng, Xuan Zhang, Daohong Zhou

12,128,099 - Myxoma virus compositions and methods of use

Jia Liu, Martin Cannon

12,150,735 - Device and method for in vivo flow cytometry using the detection of photoacoustic waves

Vladimir Zharov, Mark Smeltzer, Ekaterina Galanzha

12,213,730 - Device and method for in vivo detection of clots within circulatory vessels

Vladimir Zharov, Ekaterina Galanzha

3,079,518 - Use of amino acid supplementation for improved muscle protein synthesis

Robert Wolfe, Arny Ferrando

Startups

In FY2025, **three new** spinoff companies were formed based on intellectual property developed at UAMS. By the close of the fiscal year, a total of 54 spinoff companies had been established since 1996, reflecting the sustained growth and entrepreneurial impact of UAMS innovation.

Vanguard Biofilm

Pharmaceutical startup founded by Mohamed Elasri to develop anti-biofilm agents for chronic Staphylococcus aureus infections.

Nephsmart

Founded by John Arthur to develop a point-of-care test that predicts severe acute kidney injury using a novel urinary protein cleavage marker.

PulseArk

Startup developing VoluSense, a device that detects internal bleeding early through venous pressure analysis and proprietary algorithms.

BioVentures Incubator

We are pleased to support 8 Arkansas-based startup companies by providing office and laboratory spaces. Seven companies continued their leases in FY25. In addition, we are pleased to welcome a new tenant to the incubator facility: Pin Point Testing, LLC.

Tenant	Monthly Rental Income ($)
Acetaminophen Toxicity Diagnostics, LLC*	977.81
Datafy, LLC	250.00
Diolomics, LLC	2,502.00
InterveXion , LLC	1,700.00
Nephsmart, LLC	1,268.93
PinPoint Testing, LLC	6,391.83
SciStar, LLC	1,010.00
Tocol Pharmaceuticals, LLC	950.00
TZERMA, LLC	1,200.00
Total rental income received for FY 25	**$188,200.38**

INVENTOR SPOTLIGHT

Tracing the hidden signs of acetaminophen toxicity

How Laura James, Jack Hinson, and Dean Roberts transformed a scientific finding into clinical impact

Dr. Laura James, Professor of Pediatrics and Director of the Translational Research Institute at UAMS, never set out to become an entrepreneur. Her company, Acetaminophen Toxicity Diagnostics (ATD), emerged from a long-term collaboration with UAMS researchers Dr. Jack Hinson and Dr. Dean Roberts, and a moment of scientific serendipity. While studying how acetaminophen causes liver injury, the team developed a highly sensitive assay that detects acetaminophen-protein adducts in human blood, providing a clear indicator when liver damage results from acetaminophen overdose.

The innovation addressed a critical gap in clinical care. Many patients arrive with liver failure but no reliable history of overdose, often because they unknowingly consumed excessive acetaminophen in everyday medications. Traditional liver injury markers like ALT and AST confirm damage but not its cause. The ATD assay offers the missing link by distinguishing acetaminophen-related injury from other conditions, allowing faster diagnosis and timely treatment.

Encouraged by BioVentures and supported through NIH STTR grant funding, Dr. James and her collaborators established ATD to move the assay toward clinical use. These grants enabled her to continue her academic and clinical work while translating research into a tool with real-world potential. With NIH guidance, the team also recruited experienced CEO David Baker to lead business operations and regulatory development.

For Dr. James, the motivation behind ATD remains deeply human. Early in her career, she treated several children who died from accidental acetaminophen overdose, an experience that revealed how easily preventable tragedies can occur when diagnosis comes too late. That memory continues to drive her work. "If we can make tests that help clinicians recognize toxicity faster," she said, "we can save lives."

By transforming a research discovery into a diagnostic innovation, Dr. James and her team have created more than a test, they have built a bridge between science and patient safety, advancing the mission of UAMS and BioVentures to move discoveries from the laboratory to the lives they are meant to protect.

>> Interview via The BioVentures Podcast

Laura James, MD
Co-founder of Acetaminophen Toxicity Diagnostics

Amy Hester, Ph.D.
CEO of HD Nursing

INVENTOR SPOTLIGHT

Transforming nurse-led innovation into a national standard for patient safety

Dr. Amy Hester's journey from UAMS nurse to CEO of HD Nursing began with a simple yet urgent question: how can hospitals better prevent patient falls? While managing the neuro units at UAMS, she and colleague Dees Davis saw that many patients with neurological conditions faced high fall risk, often suffering injuries that prolonged recovery and added emotional and financial strain. Determined to act, they developed a fall risk prediction model to identify each patient's specific risk drivers and guide individualized care.

Initially designed for one unit, the model quickly proved transformative. After a sentinel event in 2009 revealed UAMS had one of the nation's highest fall injury rates, Hester's team expanded the program hospital-wide. Within a year, UAMS improved from the 98th to the 11th percentile in national benchmarks. Recognizing its impact, BioVentures helped Hester protect and commercialize the innovation, leading to the creation of HD Nursing in 2012, the first clinical program to emerge from BioVentures.

Today, HD Nursing supports more than 50,000 hospital beds nationwide, and its predictive model has been licensed by Epic Systems as the default fall risk assessment tool since 2014. Reflecting on her experience, Hester emphasizes that meaningful innovation doesn't have to be complex. "The simplest ideas often touch the most lives," she said. "You don't have to be a business expert, you just have to care enough to solve a real problem."

Through persistence, collaboration, and BioVentures' support, Dr. Hester turned a unit-level solution into a model of nurse-led entrepreneurship that continues to improve patient safety across the country.

>> Interview via The BioVentures Podcast

programs

Arkansas Collaborative for Technological and Innovative Venture Equality (ACTIVE)

Supporting Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Entrepreneurs

During FY25, BioVentures completed the implementation of the Arkansas Collaborative for Technological and Innovative Venture Equality (ACTIVE) program, funded by the Minority Business Development Agency's Capital Readiness Program.

Following the success of the inaugural 2024 cohort, which brought together 25 healthcare and health technology entrepreneurs from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds, the second cohort launched in January 2025 with 25 additional participants. From January to April, these entrepreneurs developed critical skills, built connections, and received guidance to navigate the challenges of the healthcare and health technology sectors.

Although the program concluded earlier than planned due to the closure of the Minority Business Development Agency, ACTIVE demonstrated the transformative potential of equitable access to entrepreneurial education and mentorship.

Developed in partnership with The Venture Center, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, and Philander Smith University, the program stands as a milestone in BioVentures' mission to strengthen Arkansas's innovation ecosystem and empower diverse founders shaping the future of healthcare.

Meet the members of the 2025 cohort:
https://bioventures.tech/active/active-2025-cohort/

Second ACTIVE cohort at the Kick-Off event at The Venture Center, January 30, 2025.

"Through ACTIVE, we've seen how access to mentorship, training, and community can change the trajectory of early-stage founders."

Stefanie Kennon-McGill
Senior Program Manager

ACTIVE

AR Health Ventures Therapeutic Accelarator

Supporting UAMS Innovators Advancing New Therapies

In its second year, the AR Health Ventures Accelerator (ARHVA) welcomed a new cohort of UAMS researchers working to advance early-stage therapeutics toward clinical and commercial potential. Following a competitive application cycle in late 2024, three applicants were selected for the 2025 cohort: John Arthur, M.D., Ph.D.; Marie Burdine, Ph.D.; and Zachary Waldrip, Ph.D. Each investigator received up to $50,000 in funding, along with tailored scientific, business, and regulatory support to accelerate development.

Dr. Arthur is developing a noninvasive urine-based diagnostic to predict the progression of acute kidney injury. Dr. Burdine is pursuing a pharmacological strategy aimed at preventing graft dysfunction following kidney transplantation. Dr. Waldrip is engineering a probiotic yeast therapy designed to neutralize bacterial toxins in the gut, offering a potential new approach for gastrointestinal disease.

“As this program grows, we continue to see strong interest from researchers ready to advance their discoveries,” said Dr. John Imig, Director of ARHVA. “This cohort highlights the depth of therapeutic innovation emerging at UAMS and its potential to improve health outcomes across Arkansas.”

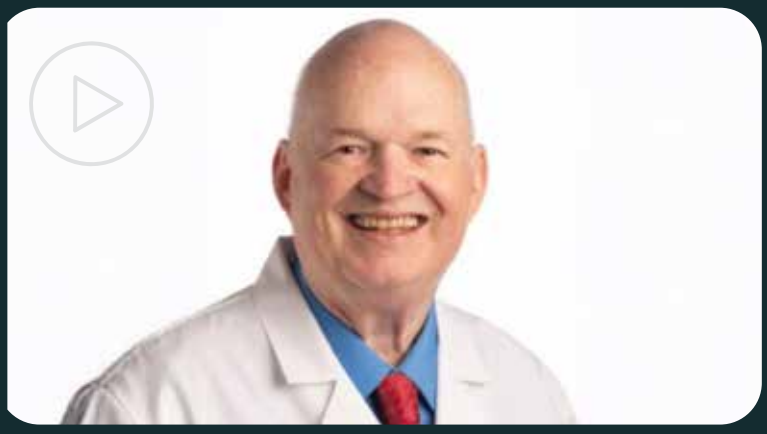
"ARHVA is transforming UAMS discoveries into real-world solutions, accelerating innovation to improve patient care and creating opportunities for groundbreaking research to reach its full potential."

Dr. John Imig
Director of the AR Health Ventures Accelerator and
Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences

ARHVA
AR Health Ventures Accelerator

Learn more about the three members of the second ARHVA cohort and their projects in their interviews on the BioVentures podcast, available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Amazon Music.

ARHVA Awardees



John Arthur,M.D., Ph.D.

> ***Listen Interview***

Zachary Waldrip, Ph.D.

> ***Listen Interview***

Marie Burdine, Ph.D.

> ***Listen Interview***

Innovation & Entrepreneurship Week 2025

From May 12 to 15, BioVentures hosted Innovation & Entrepreneurship Week 2025 at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), a four-day celebration of discovery, collaboration, and commercialization. The event brought together researchers, industry leaders, and investors to explore how UAMS innovations can advance patient care and strengthen Arkansas's innovation ecosystem.

Events included networking sessions, educational panels, and an Inventors Lunch & Awards Ceremony recognizing UAMS's top innovators, including Adrià Abella Villafranca, Joseph Sanford, M.D., Fenghuang "Frank" Zhan, M.D., Ph.D., Tristan Saunders, Mayumi Nakagawa, M.D., Ph.D., and Taufiek Rajab, M.D.

Throughout the week, attendees heard from experts such as Michael Geranen, BioVentures Technology Manager, on "Raising Capital for Your Startup Endeavors," and from Eric Peterson, Ph.D., BioVentures President, who outlined how university discoveries move from the lab to the marketplace. Thursday's sessions featured the keynote "Purpose with Power – How Sponsored Research Can Change Lives" by Justin Rerko, along with an Industry-Research Forum and panels featuring leaders from top pharmaceutical companies and UAMS faculty, moderated by Stefanie Kennon-McGill, Ph.D.


BioVentures
Innovation Week
UAMS


tradespace
How Sponsored Research Can Cha
Justin Rerko
IP Attorney | Legal Tech | Advocate for T2 Impact
tradespace
UAMS


FROM
TO
Intellectual Property Management
Funding and
Licensing &
entures


12-15 MAY 2025
UAMS MAIN CAMPUS, LITTLE ROCK
REGISTER NOW
INNOVATION WEEK
Where Discovery Meets Opportunity
Celebrate UAMS innovators, connect with industry, and explore pathways to commercialization.
BioVentures
UAMS

Partnership in Cancer Research (PCAR) Summer Program

In summer 2025, BioVentures supported first-year UAMS medical students participating in the Partnership in Cancer Research (PCAR) program, an eight-week initiative focused on developing innovative solutions in cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship.

Three BioVentures team members mentored student teams on defining problems, evaluating market opportunities, and building viable business models, while another served as a judge for the program's final pitch presentations.

Participants of the PCAR Summer Program, July 24, 2025.

Medical Innovation and Entrepreneurship Honors Track

Participants of the PCAR Summer Program, July 24, 2025.

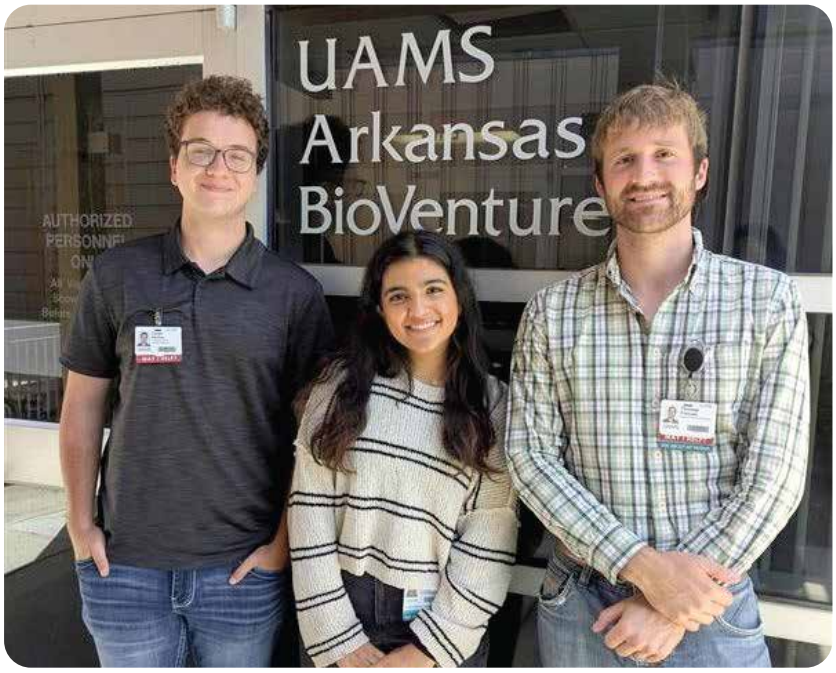
The Medical Innovation and Entrepreneurship Honors Track (MIEHT) has received an additional $5,000 from the Chancellor's Circle Grant Award, bolstering its mission to train UAMS medical students to be future leaders in innovation.

Established in 2023 with $10,000 in initial funding from the Chancellor's Circle and in-kind support from BioVentures, MIEHT provides progressively intensive training in innovation and entrepreneurship, complementing each year of med school.

BioVentures Internship Program

The BioVentures Internship Program completed its third year in 2025, welcoming two interns, Carter Horton and Nyera Ali. Throughout the summer, they helped modernize BioVentures' data systems while learning how UAMS innovations move from the lab to the marketplace.

Carter, a Biomedical Engineering student at the University of Arkansas, highlighted the value of seeing how science and business connect to improve lives. Nyera, a Pulaski Academy senior and Regeneron ISEF finalist, joined through the Summer Research Institute while continuing her research with Dr. Mitch McGill.



Carter Horton and Nyera Ali with Internship Coordinator Thomas Forcum on the final day of the program, August 1, 2025.

"Our interns work on real-world projects, gaining hands-on experience and insights into the biotech industry. With mentorship from BioVentures professionals, they grow both personally and professionally, enhancing their resumes and expanding their networks. We hope this program nurtures the next generation of leaders, bridging academic knowledge and industry expertise."

Thomas Forcum
Intership Coordinator

future outlook

Looking Ahead: Advancing Innovation in FY2026

Eric Peterson, PhD.
President of BioVentures

BioVentures enters FY2026 with a strong foundation and a clear vision for accelerating the translation of UAMS discoveries into meaningful health and economic impact. Building on the momentum of 2025, our focus in the coming year is to strengthen the systems, programs, and partnerships that enable innovation to thrive across the institution.

A major milestone ahead is the full implementation of the digital TTO office vision, which will modernize how we track patent expenses, revenue flows, and long-term asset performance. This improvement will allow for more transparent and data-driven decision-making and benefit researchers, administrators, and campus leadership alike.

We will also continue expanding support for UAMS-affiliated founders and emerging companies. In FY2026, BioVentures will pursue new state and federal funding opportunities aimed to enhance entrepreneurial training, strengthen therapeutic and digital health pipelines, and build commercialization capacity statewide.

Education and workforce development remain core to our mission. Next year, we will broaden innovation pathways for UAMS students and trainees through our new NIH/NCI CADET program, the Medical Innovation & Entrepreneurship Honors Track, expanded internship and mentorship experiences, and new **Founders** and **Innovation Ambassadors** programs designed to cultivate leadership in translational science and business strategy.

Finally, BioVentures will deepen its collaborations with campus and statewide partners to ensure that Arkansas continues to grow as a vibrant hub for biomedical innovation. By advancing infrastructure, strengthening partnerships, and investing in people, BioVentures is working to help make Arkansas a destination for discovery-driven entrepreneurship. Our goal is clear: to shorten the path from idea to impact, and to help ensure that UAMS innovations reach patients, industries, and communities across the region and beyond.

MBDA MED Week, October 2024.

Philander Smith Health and Wellness Fair, October 2024.

BioVentures Team Retreat, November 2024.

EDGE Summit, November 2024.

Interview on Delta Mother at Arkansas PBS, December 2024.

ESO Summit, February 2025.

AUTM Annual Meeting, March 2025.

Arkansas Governor's Cup Awards Luncheon, April 2025.

BioVentures

ANNUAL REPORT 2025