

PharmTox Fights COVID-19

Week of March 29-April 2, 2021

Dr. Nancy Rusch Formally Appointed Executive Associate Dean for Research



Congratulations to professor and chair, Nancy Rusch on her formal appointment as Executive Associate Dean for Research in the College of Medicine. Dr. Rusch has served as interim Executive Associate Dean since Dr. Richard Morrison's retirement at the end of 2020. Dr. Rusch will continue to lead the department as chair, a position she has held since 2005. Dr. Rusch's contributions to UAMS extend well beyond the department. She is a key leader in the Translational Research Institute, where she developed and co-leads TRI's Health Sciences Innovation and Entrepreneurship (HSIE) Postdoctoral Scholars Training Program and serves as TRI co-director of Translational Workforce Development. In her recent role as interim Executive Associate

Dean for Research, she oversaw the launch of "1-2-3 GO", a new grant program for research teams from multiple departments and colleges. She has served in numerous other leadership roles, including chair of the College of Medicine Council of Department Chairs, chair of the Basic Science Chairs and founder of the Cardiovascular Interest Group. Rusch has also contributed to numerous search committees for department chairs, UAMS chancellors and other leadership positions, including the next College of Medicine dean, Susan Smyth, M.D., Ph.D.

Dr. Sung Rhee and Dr. Alexei Basnakian Get the "1-2-3 Go"

Professors Sung Rhee and Alexei Basnakian were part of seven teams selected to receive grants in the new funding program "1-2-3 Go." This program, through the College of Medicine, provides \$75,000 in seed funding for interdisciplinary teams of three faculty members plus a student or trainee. Seven project teams were chosen at a random drawing of qualified applications on March 12.



Dr. Rhee is project lead for "Improving arterial bleeding cessation by modulating thrombus formation". This work represents a new collaboration of three faculty members with complementary expertise: Dr. Rhee (vascular pharmacology), professor Jerry Ware (platelet physiology) and assistant professor Avi Bhavraju (trauma surgery). Additionally it includes medical student Hunter Rose.

Dr. Basnakian is part of a team led by professor and chair Teresita Bellido (Physiology and Cell Biology) and includes professor Hong-yu Li (College of Pharmacy) and postdoctoral fellow, Amy Sato (Physiology and Cell Biology) Their project "Bone-targeted Pyk2 inhibitors for prevention of bone fragility" aims to develop a new drug for the therapy of osteoporosis resulting from glucocorticoid excess.

Have a Happy Easter!

