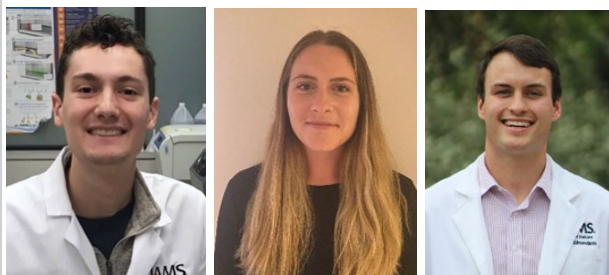


# PharmTox Weekly Buzz

(A publication of the UAMS Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology)

Week of August 2-6, 2021

## New SPaT Trainees for 2021 and Annual Symposium



Three graduate students were appointed on August 1<sup>st</sup> to the Systems Pharmacology and Toxicology (SPaT) T32 Training Program directed by professor Paul Prather. They include Luke Childress (mentor, Dr. Ryan Porter), Lucy Fry (mentor, Dr. Tiffany Weinkopf), and Jacob Edmondson (mentor, Dr. Alan Tackett). Luke and Lucy (pictured left and middle) are recipients of two-year appointments funded by NIGMS. Jacob (pictured right) received a one-year campus-funded match appointment as a MD/PhD student. They join second year NIGMS-funded recipients, Lance Benson (mentor, Dr. Shengyu Mu) and Kalee Holloway (mentor, Dr. Paul Drew)

The annual symposium for the SPaT Training Program will be held on Friday, August 13<sup>th</sup> as a hybrid event. The morning session will be held at 9am in the Smith Auditorium at the J. T. Stephens Spine and Neurosciences Institute and will feature presentations by SPaT trainees appointed in 2019 and 2020. The virtual afternoon session will feature keynote speaker, Christopher McCurdy, PhD. Dr. McCurdy is professor of medicinal chemistry in the University of Florida College of Pharmacy. He also directs the University of Florida Translational Drug Development Core. His presentation is titled "Can a controversial dietary supplement end the opioid crisis?" Contact Pam Kahler for details.



## Collaborative Effort Results in Manuscript



Assistant professor Mitch McGill and graduate student Joel Vazquez (pictured left), along with associate professor Eric Peterson and assistant professor Jeff Moran (pictured right, below) co-authored a manuscript recently accepted by *Hepatology Communications*. The paper, "Short-term safety of repeated acetaminophen use in patients with compensated cirrhosis" was a collaboration with chief of gastroenterology and hepatology, Jonathan Dranoff and vice

chancellor for translational research, Laura James. Pain is a common complaint among cirrhosis patients, but treating their pain is challenging. People with cirrhosis are uniquely susceptible to adverse effects of common analgesics. This leaves acetaminophen (APAP) as the final major option for pain management in chronic liver disease. However, APAP overdose is known to cause severe acute liver injury. As a result, most physicians either restrict or completely avoid APAP use in their cirrhosis patients out of concern that those patients are more susceptible to the liver injury, although there is no evidence to support this practice. In the clinical trial, McGill et al. used novel, high-sensitivity biomarkers of liver injury and oxidative APAP metabolism to evaluate APAP safety with high rigor in patients with cirrhosis. The results indicated that short-term treatment with a low APAP dose appears to be safe, but that higher doses or longer treatment durations may pose a modest risk of toxicity.



## Research Community Fundraiser for UAMS Frontline Workers

Please join the UAMS nonclinical/research departments in raising at least \$5,000 for a Rejuvenation Room to honor our COVID-19 frontline workers. This is a significant and positive impact that we can make together to "fight back" against the impact of COVID-19 on our campus. It will provide a place for frontline workers to relax before or after their shifts, or during breaks in patient care. Or even between shifts if they can't make it home.

Please use this link, [UAMS Auxiliary Donation](#), and click on the drop down arrow to find the UAMS Auxiliary Staff Rejuvenation Room. Be sure you open this link in Chrome and not Internet Explorer. Please write a note in the comment section to identify yourself as a researcher and your department. Donations are tax deductible and the Auxiliary will provide receipts for your tax records.