



**ArkansasResearchAlliance**

Coming together to move Arkansas forward.

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 11 a.m., July 7, 2010**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Mitchell Communications Group

Kebra Shelhamer, 479-443-4673, [kshelhamer@gmail.com](mailto:kshelhamer@gmail.com)

**Arkansas Research Alliance Announces Inaugural Scholars**  
*Scholars work in fields of research that fortify economic opportunities and commercialization*

**LITTLE ROCK, Ark., July 7, 2010** – With a vision for creating long-term economic opportunities through job-creating research, the Arkansas Research Alliance (ARA) introduced the first two Arkansas Research Alliance Scholars during a press conference held at the Capitol Building.

Leveraging the success of the Georgia Research Alliance (GRA), the ARA launched the Arkansas Research Alliance Scholars program in order to recruit esteemed and talented researchers in areas of core competencies. Arkansas Research Alliance Scholars are experts in their respective fields and are recognized as thought leaders with exceptional research credentials and entrepreneurial records. Scholars will add value to existing research programs through collaboration, innovation and commercialization.

“Our new scholars are a great addition to Arkansas’s research leadership and talent,” stated Jerry Adams, president and CEO of the ARA. “By recruiting our first two scholars, we are gaining momentum and we look forward to collaborating with all of our statewide research universities in bringing more and more Arkansas Research Alliance Scholars to our state in years ahead.”

Guided by the first independent study of university-based research competencies in Arkansas, the ARA required that potential scholars work in fields of research that relate to one of the nine strategic focus areas outlined in the study.

**Identified strategic focus areas:**

1. Enterprise Systems Computing
2. Distributed Energy Network Systems
3. Optics and Photonics
4. Nano-Related Materials and Applications
5. Sustainable Agriculture and Bioenergy Management
6. Food Processing and Safety
7. Personalized Health Research Sciences
8. Behavioral Research for Chronic Disease Management
9. Obesity and Nutrition

- more -

### **Ranil Wickramasinghe, Ph.D., Arkansas Research Alliance Scholar**

As an authority in the fields of sustainability bioenergy and purification of pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical products, Ranil Wickramasinghe, Ph.D., has joined the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, as a professor in the College of Engineering, Department of Chemical Engineering.

Prior to joining the University of Arkansas, Wickramasinghe was a professor at Colorado State University in the Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering. He also served as associate department head for graduate studies and was interim co-director of the School of Biomedical Engineering 2007-2008. From 2003 to present, Wickramasinghe has served as a distinguished guest professor at Qingdao University in China. He graduated with honors from the University of Melbourne, Australia, where he received a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering and a master's degree in chemical engineering science. He earned a doctorate in chemical engineering from the University of Minnesota.

“This is an exciting time for our flagship university,” stated UA Chancellor G. David Gearhart. “We are very pleased to welcome Dr. Wickramasinghe to our faculty. His expertise, leadership and academic research strengths will advance our programs in highly relevant fields: sustainable agriculture and bioenergy management.”

### **Daohong Zhou, M.D., Arkansas Research Alliance Scholar**

Daohong Zhou, M.D., an expert in the field of stem cell and cancer research, has joined the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) as a professor in the College of Pharmacy's Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences. He also is a member of the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute's research team. He will take a leading role in establishing a new research program of personalized health research sciences in the state of Arkansas.

Prior to joining UAMS, Zhou served as a professor of pathology at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and the director of the Hollings Cancer Center Flow Cytometry and Cell Sorting Shared Resource. He also served as an adjunct professor of radiation oncology. He is a graduate of Yunyang Medical College in Hubei, China, and completed his internship at the college's affiliated hospital and postdoctoral training at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

“Dr. Zhou will have an immediate impact on the research infrastructure within the state of Arkansas,” stated UAMS Chancellor Dan Rahn, M.D. “Dr. Zhou is an accomplished scientist with a strong international reputation in the field of radiation biology. We have high expectations for Dr. Zhou and his staff and anticipate that they will strengthen a developing research group focused on radiation-induced tissue injury.”

### **Arkansas Research Alliance Scholars Program**

“The scholars program is fundamental to the ARA because job-creating research is a cornerstone of our core value: Economic progress,” stated ARA Board Chair Hugh T. McDonald. Each scholar undergoes a rigorous vetting and review process conducted by an external advisory committee. The state of Arkansas provided funding to recruit and subsidize two Arkansas Research Alliance Scholars in 2010.

### **About UA**

The flagship campus of the University of Arkansas system, the University of Arkansas is both the major land-grant university for Arkansas and the state university. The university is in the top tier of 150 research universities among the nation's more than 4,000 post-secondary institutes. Nearly 20,000 students attend the University of Arkansas.

**About UAMS**

UAMS is the state's only comprehensive academic health center, with five colleges, a graduate school, a new 540,000-square-foot hospital, six centers of excellence and a statewide network of regional centers. UAMS has 2,775 students and 748 medical residents. Its centers of excellence include the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, the Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, the Myeloma Institute for Research and Therapy, the Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, the Psychiatric Research Institute and the Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 10,000 employees, including nearly 1,150 physicians who provide medical care to patients at UAMS, Arkansas Children's Hospital, the VA Medical Center and UAMS' Area Health Education Centers throughout the state. Visit [www.uams.edu](http://www.uams.edu) or [www.uamshealth.com](http://www.uamshealth.com).

**About the Arkansas Research Alliance**

The ARA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization governed by a board of trustees comprised of chancellors from Arkansas research universities and CEOs from across the state. In 2007, the Arkansas legislature approved the appropriation of start-up operational funding for the ARA from the state's general improvement fund. Funding was authorized through the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority. Operating as a public-private partnership, the ARA is committed to strengthening the economic competitiveness of Arkansas by maximizing university-based research and innovation in designated strategic focus areas. To learn more, visit: [www.aralliance.org](http://www.aralliance.org).

###