

# ARKANSAS

Medical researchers funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are working every day to improve health, discover cures and provide hope to people the world-over affected by disease. This work, however, has a secondary benefit: it supports employment and economic activity across the United States, including in Arkansas.



## ADDING TO ARKANSAS'S ECONOMY

In FY2017, 12 institutions in Arkansas received



**99** research awards



**totaling more than \$57 million**

While the bulk of the research awards went to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, many others supported a range of institutions and businesses around the state. This research funding, when cycled through the economy, generated **\$121 million in total sales** for Arkansas businesses:



Supporting **more than 870 jobs** in Arkansas; and



Generating approximately **\$12 million in tax and fee revenues** for state, county and municipal governments statewide.

## BOOSTING THE LABOR FORCE IN ARKANSAS

**Jobs in the scientific R&D sector in Arkansas pay on average 1.7 times more than those in other sectors.** In 2017, this was \$60,641 vs. \$35,800. And, for young workers (under 25), the difference was also significant — 1.5 times the average pay in other fields, \$19,800 vs. \$13,100 — a factor important to the state's future growth.



## REDUCING PUBLIC HEALTH COSTS

In Arkansas, **47% of the population** is enrolled in Medicare and Medicaid<sup>i</sup>, far exceeding the national average of 35%, and spending on these programs amounts to **9% of Arkansas's total GDP**, also above the national average of 6%. The prevalence of chronic disease in Arkansas is much higher than in other states.<sup>ii</sup>

### COMPARED TO OTHER STATES, ARKANSAS RANKS:

**4th** for rate of **cardiovascular disease**

**4th** for rate of deaths from **Alzheimer's disease**

**6th** for rate of deaths from **cancer**

**7th** for rate of **obesity**

**9th** for rate of **diabetes**





## MEDICAL RESEARCH AT WORK IN ARKANSAS

Sunni, an Arkansas resident, was born with a heart defect known as Tetralogy of Fallot. This condition, affecting about 1,660 babies each year in the United States, is a complex condition involving four different heart problems, including a hole in the wall between the heart's main pumping chambers. Those born with Tetralogy of Fallot require surgery to repair their heart when they are very young and often endure additional complications and medical procedures throughout their life.

In Sunni's case, she had her first surgery at four months to repair the hole in her heart, followed by ablation, or scarring of her heart tissue, to treat dangerous heart arrhythmias at age 11 and another open-heart surgery at age 12 to replace her right pulmonary valve with a pig valve. Unfortunately, replacement valves don't last a lifetime and by 2014, at the age of 28, Sunni's implanted valve was only functioning at 20 percent.

This time, however, replacement of her pulmonary valve did not require open heart surgery. In the intervening 16 years, medical research and technological innovation had produced an alternative, less invasive method — the Melody Transcatheter Pulmonary Valve. It consists of a specially designed heart valve inserted into a catheter that is guided intravenously to the heart. For Sunni, this was a prayer answered. "I knew I didn't want to have open heart surgery again and always prayed that technology would advance somehow so that my valve could be replaced another way."

Today, four years later, Sunni is still feeling great and able to do things she hadn't done in years. She has even had a child — something she thought she'd never be able to do because of her heart condition.

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United for Medical Research is a coalition of leading scientific research institutions and industries, and patient and health advocates that have joined together to seek steady increases in funding for the National Institutes of Health. Learn more at [www.unitedformedicalresearch.com](http://www.unitedformedicalresearch.com). For examples of the amazing things that NIH research is making possible, visit [www.amazingthingspodcast.com](http://www.amazingthingspodcast.com).

<sup>1</sup> According to the most recent statistics available from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

<sup>2</sup> [Diabetes and Obesity: "The State of Obesity: Better Policies for a Healthier America 2018"](#)

[Cardiovascular Disease: Kaiser J Family Foundation State Health Facts](#)

[Cancer Deaths: National Cancer Institute State Cancer Profiles](#)

[Alzheimer's Disease Deaths: Alzheimer's Association "2018 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures"](#)