

On Rounds

The University of Alabama
College of Community Health Sciences

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Summer, 1997



Family Practice Residents Graduate in June

Class of 1997 Is 22nd to Complete Program

Members of the 1997 graduating class of the Family Practice Residency program were honored at an awards dinner hosted by DCH Healthcare Authority and DCH Regional Medical Center at the University Club on June 19. This is the twenty-second graduating class to complete the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency program at CCHS. Ten 1997 graduates join 223 previous graduates of the program in practice across the state, the South, and the nation.

Graduates were joined by their families, CCHS faculty, and DCH officials as departmental honors and special awards were presented. **Marc Armstrong, M.D.**, Director of the Residency program, presided. He was one of the first residents in the program when it was initiated in the early 70's.

Chief Resident **Martin Harvey, M.D.**, received top departmental honors in Internal Medicine and OB/GYN. He was also selected by medical students to receive the Society of Family Medicine Resident Teaching Award. Chief Resident **Stuart Hendon, M.D.**, received the Pediatrics departmental award. Drs. Harvey and Hendon also received University of Alabama captain's chairs in appreciation for their leadership as chief residents.

Zohra Khambatti, M.D., and **Brent McLarty, M.D.**, shared the Psychiatry departmental Award, which recognizes their skill in the practice of medicine and their ability to use the information they have learned wisely and compassionately, and **Paul Sain, M.D.**, was cited for excellence in family medicine with the *William F. DeShazo III* Family Practice Award.

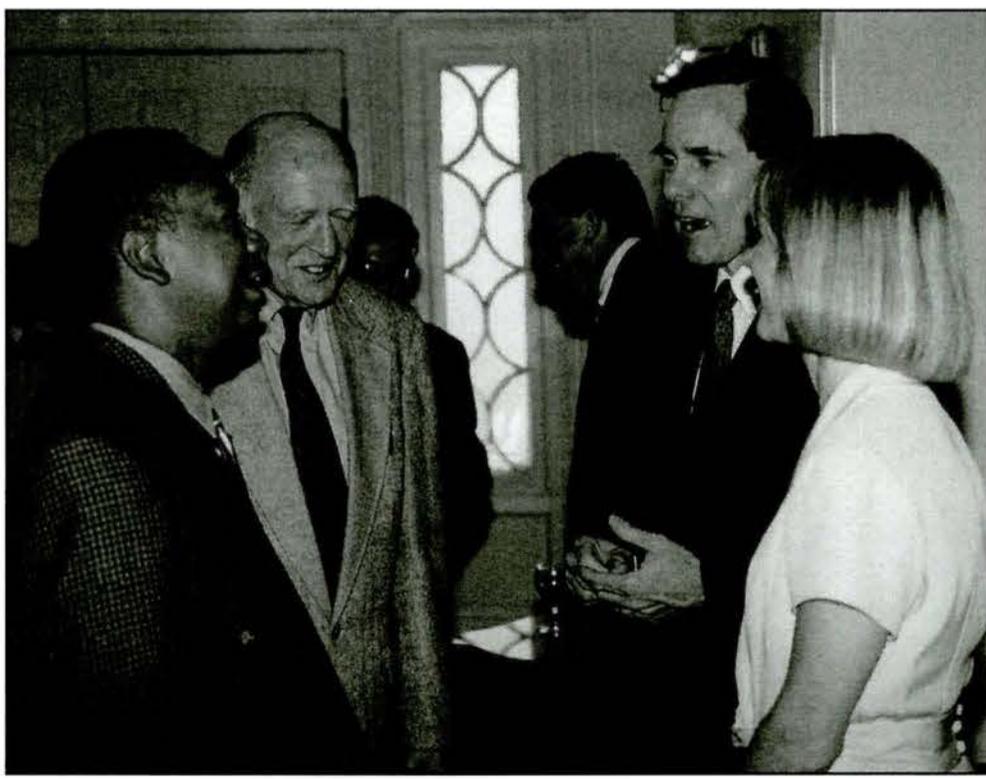
Beau Freeman, M.D., received the *William R. Willard Award*. This Dean's Award - named for the late William R. Willard, M.D., founding dean of the College - gives special recognition to a first year resident who epitomizes the goals and mission of CCHS to train physicians in the art and practice of family medicine. **Lisa Sward, M.D.**, received the V.A. Award, presented annually to a second year resident for outstanding work at the V.A. Medical Center in Tuscaloosa.

Dr. Zohra Khambatti (left) and Dr. Brent McLarty (right) shared the Psychiatry Award presented at graduation by Assistant Professor Pam Parker, M.D., who entered full-time private practice in Birmingham in July. Dr. Khambatti plans to stay in Tuscaloosa, and Dr. McLarty will go into practice in nearby rural Pickens County.

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Beau Freeman, M.D., left, received the *Willard Award*, named for the late William R. Willard, MD, founding dean of CCHS. This "Dean's Award" annually recognizes a first year resident who epitomizes the mission of CCHS to train physicians in the art and practice of family medicine. *The Willard Award* was presented by Dr. Robert Ireland (right), Assistant Professor of Family Medicine. See p.2 for more pictures from the awards dinner of recipients and the graduating class.

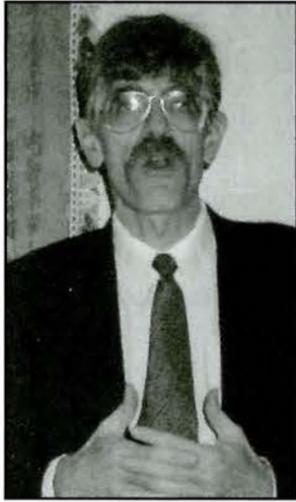


Dr. Bill Curry and his wife Glenda (right) greet guests at a welcome reception for Curry held at the University Club in July. Dr. Albert White (left), Director of the regional office of the Alabama Department of Public Health, and Dr. Bill Winternitz (left center), Professor of Internal Medicine, were two of the many members of the medical and university communities who attended the event marking Curry's appointment as Internal Medicine Chair, CCHS Associate Dean, and UASOM Assistant Dean for Rural Medicine. Dr. Curry credits Dr. Winternitz for initially bringing him to the CCHS faculty almost twenty years ago. (See interview with Dr. Curry on page 7.)

Residency Graduation

(from page 1)

Dr. Alan Blum, Associate Professor of Family Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine and founder/Chairman of DOC (Doctors Ought to Care), was the speaker. Dr. Blum's message to class members was the importance of listening and communicating with patients--a lesson learned from his physician father, whose



waiting room was their living room during Dr. Blum's boyhood years. Dr. Blum gave many examples from his own experience, and he shared his sketches of his patients (projected on screen) that he had made. Along with his portraits, he told the stories he learned from careful listening of their fears, concerns, and wisdom.

An English major at Amherst before he became a physician, he said he saw his patients as poetry. He learned to sketch in a studio art class which he decided to take after dropping a college Logic class, drawing laughter from his audience about the difficulty of choosing between learning to draw beautiful live models and continuing a course in which he had made a 5 on the first test.

He showed his sketch of an 84-year-old man who had to give up driving. Dr. Blum said that after lengthy discussion with the gentleman, he learned that the man was worried about how he was going to continue seeing his two girlfriends.

Another sketch was of a woman with "migraines that didn't stop until she got rid of her first husband." He also shared the joy of talking to his patients -- one who said his seizures were the only exercise he got, and a woman with Alzheimer's whom he asked what day it was: "Saturday?" she replied. "No, it's Monday." "Well, I was close!" In reply to "Do you know where you are?" she replied, "Right here, doctor!"

Dr. Blum exhorted the graduates to remember they are physicians, not the impersonal "health care practitioners" referred to in today's medical lingo. He also cautioned them to avoid jargon and acronyms, which he said "dehumanize patients," and described "no jargon" days he had instituted in his own teaching with jellybean penalties for any medical jargon used during rounds.

His other advice to the new family physicians was to keep a sense of humor, "don't be a doctor at home," and "learn something new everyday." He commended the new family physicians, saying that of all the residencies and specialties there are today, "the country needs you..."



1997 graduates of the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency Program, the 22nd graduating class, were photographed in the parlor of the University Club prior to the awards dinner: (seated) Stuart Hendon, Zohra Khambatti, Kay Vetter, and Tommy Blackledge; (standing) Paul Sain, Will Jones, Robert Eaton, Martin Harvey, Alan Henley, and Brent McLarty.



Chief Resident Stuart Hendon, right, receives the Pediatrics departmental award from Assistant Professor Ashley Evans. He and Dr. Harvey also received chairs with a University seal from CCHS in appreciation for their service as chief residents.



Chief Resident Martin Harvey, left, receives the Internal Medicine departmental award from Dr. Bill Curry, Chair of Internal Medicine. Dr. Harvey also won the departmental award in OB/GYN and the Resident Teaching award, chosen each year by med students.



Dr. Angela Powell, left, last year's OB/GYN award recipient, receives recognition for completing the OB fellowship from Dr. Paul Mozly, Chair of OB/GYN. She graduated from the family practice residency program last year.



Graduate Paul Sain, MD, left, receives the DeShazo Award for excellence in family medicine from Family Medicine Chair Jerry McKnight, MD. The award is named for Dr. Bill DeShazo, Professor Emeritus of Family Medicine.



Second year resident Lisa Sward, MD, receives the V.A. Medical Center award from Dr. Patrick McCue, CCHS Clinical Professor of Internal Medicine who is also on the V.A. medical staff.

Faculty News



OSCE Will Be Held at DCH

Tests Clinical Skills of 3rd Years

The Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) will be held this year August 5-14 at the former rehab facility at DCH. All third year medical students must pass the OSCE, and more than 80 students from all three UA School of Medicine campuses (Birmingham, Huntsville, and Tuscaloosa) will rotate through nine 15-minute "stations" which present them with clinical situations.

Campus and community volunteers are trained as standardized patients (using the standard carefully structured script for symptoms and medical history for each case) for each station, and both medical students and patients evaluate the simulated clinical encounter to improve future OSCE testing. The OSCE at CCHS has served as a national field test site for this method of clinical evaluation, which has been adopted by the National Board of Medical Examiners as part of the licensing process.

Elizabeth Philp, M.D., Associate Professor of Family Medicine at CCHS, chairs the UASOM planning committee for OSCE. For more information, contact Dr. Philp or **Pat Norton**, Medical Education Project Coordinator, at 348-2880.

Dr. Wheat Is Visiting Scholar at Rural Education Centre During Sabbatical in Australia

John R. Wheat, M.D., M.P.H., Associate Professor of Behavioral and Community Medicine and Internal Medicine, is on sabbatical leave from July 1, 1997 to November 15, 1997. He will be using this time to pursue his rural health interests. He has been accepted into the doctoral program of James Cook University of North Queensland, Australia and is satisfying the residency requirement



John Wheat, M.D.

there during July and August. During this time he is a Visiting Scholar in the teaching, research and development activities of the Rural Education Research and Development Centre. Upon his return to the U.S., he will work with John E. Shelton, Ph.D., Director, Program for Rural Services and Research at the University of Alabama, who will supervise his dissertation. He will complete a study of the effectiveness of the Rural Health Scholars Program (which he founded). This Program is designed to assist rural school children to decide on and pursue educational pathways that lead toward health professional careers.

During his sabbatical, Dr. Wheat will continue to perform outpatient clinical work in Occupational Medicine. In September, he will attend the XIII Congress of the International Association of Agricultural Medicine and Rural Health in Iowa City, Iowa.

Leeper To Attend APHA This Fall

Dr. James Leeper, a member of the Board of Directors for the American Public Health Association, will be attending the APHA annual meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, Nov. 6-12.



Dr. Sandral Hullett (left), a graduate of the CCHS family practice residency and a UA trustee, congratulates Dr. Robert Pieroni, Professor of Internal Medicine, for the Alabama Academy of Science Noteworthy Achievement Award he won earlier this year. Dr. Hullett, Director of West Alabama Health Services in Eutaw, Alabama, spends a great deal of time in Washington consulting on health services and the federal budget, but she chatted with Dr. Pieroni at the welcome reception for Dr. Curry.



Aimee Chism, left, a senior nutrition/dietetics major at UA, is a standardized patient trained for the OSCE. CCHS senior medical student Denise Stripling, right, takes a history and counsels the patient as part of her exam on clinical skills. Each OSCE station was videotaped for training purposes and monitored by observers who recorded data on checklists for students rotating through the station.

Charles Taylor, Pharm D., Joins Internal Medicine Faculty

Dr. Charles Taylor, a Northwest Alabama native, has been appointed Clinical Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine, a joint appointment with the Auburn University School of Pharmacy where he has teaching and preceptorship responsibilities. An outstanding scholar, Dr. Taylor graduated *summa cum laude* from Auburn University in 1995 with a B.S. degree in pharmacy and earned his doctorate in pharmacy at Auburn University in 1996, again graduating *summa cum laude*. He had previously completed an associate of science degree in pre-pharmacy with highest academic honors at Northwest-Shoals Community College in his hometown of Phil Campbell, Alabama.

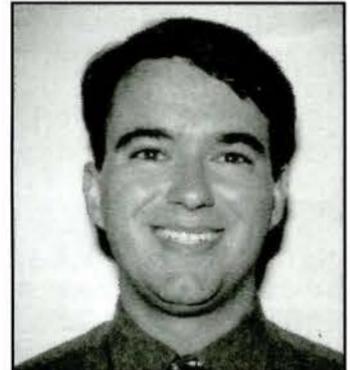
Dr. Taylor completed his residency in pharmacy practice in 1997 at Duke University Medical Center. He was preceptor to 12 pharmacy graduate students on a daily basis and provided consultation on patient care. He had pharmacy intern experience at Columbus Regional Medical Center in Columbus, Georgia, West Alabama Health Services in Eutaw, Alabama, DCH Regional Medical Center in Tuscaloosa, and Big B Drugs in Haleyville, Alabama.

His residency training included Advanced Internal Medicine, Adult Internal Medicine, Medicine Adult Intensive Care, and Infectious Disease Consult Service. He has additional training in Ambulatory Care and Advanced Cardiac Life Support. His research topic at Duke was "Optimal Heparin Monitoring: Establishing a Therapeutic APTT range Based on Ex Vivo Heparin Concentrations." The chair of the residency research project at Duke, William P. Petros, wrote that Taylor's research project was "feasible, scientifically interesting, and had clinical relevance to our institution." Duke's pharmacy residency director, Byron May, added that projects the scope of Taylor's that require IRB (Institutional Review Board) approval and patient recruitment are often not approved by the residency research committee due to time constraints, but that Taylor's work had been significant and impressive.

Taylor has made numerous presentations on his research and other pharmacology and drug therapy topics at Grand Rounds lectures, continuing education conferences, and regional and national professional society meetings. Recent lectures he has given addressed smoking cessation and the role of nicotine replacement therapy and the importance of drug information in a disaster relief effort. For the latter topic, he drew on his experience from the Duke pharmacy department response during North Carolina's Hurricane Fran emergency.

Dan Rodman, PharmD, a former faculty member in family medicine at CCHS, was Taylor's preceptor during his pharmacy work at Auburn and "a great friend," says Dr. Taylor. He played a large role in bringing Taylor to CCHS with his praise of the people and the program here. Dr. Taylor says he looks forward to patient care and rounds with CCHS physicians and students. He also enjoys teaching and the mentoring role with medical and pharmacy students, and he has developed an interest in research since undertaking his residency research project at Duke.

Dr. Taylor and his wife Kelly, a pharmacist at DCH, moved to Tuscaloosa in July.

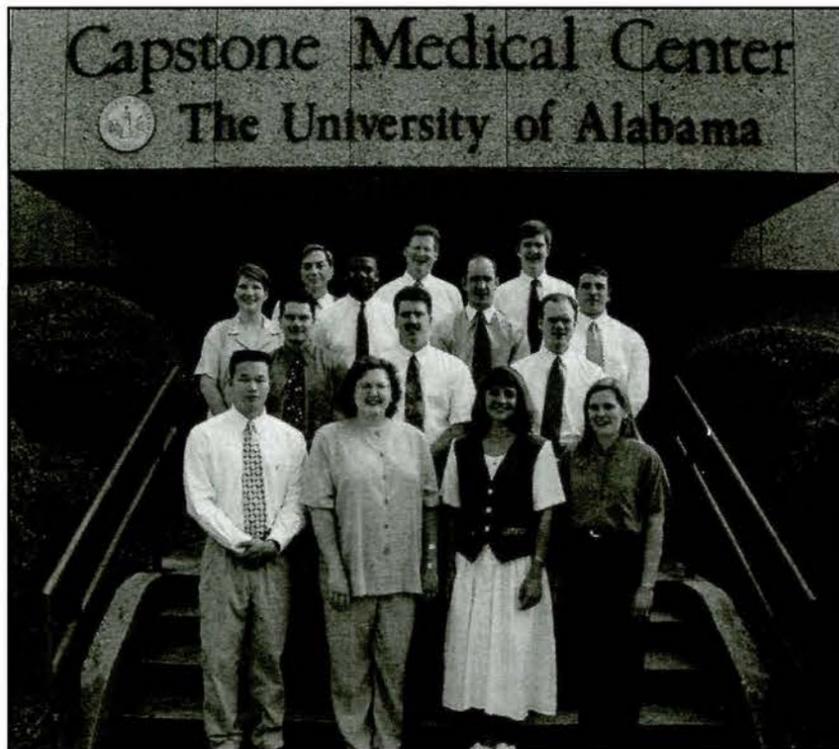


Charles Taylor, Pharm D.

New Residents Start Work This Summer

Lamenda Blakeney - hails from Mobile, AL. She completed her undergraduate work at Louisiana College. Lamenda (she prefers to be called Mendy) earned her MD from Louisiana State University Medical Center in New Orleans. She hopes to practice in a medium to small-sized town when she graduates. In her spare time, she enjoys playing piano, reading, and singing-with her family and in her church choir.

Audra Busenlehner - was born in Birmingham and raised in Hueytown. Audra did her undergraduate work at UAB. She is one of six graduates from the University of South Alabama entering the program this summer. Audra envisions her role after graduation similar to that of the "old-fashioned doc"! She enjoys reading, theater, hiking, softball and travel.



Incoming residents at Orientation in July, 1997, posed with Residency Director Marc Armstrong, MD, in front of the Capstone Medical Center, where they will spend many hours over the next three years of their family practice residency. **Front:** Vincent Law, Mendy Blakeney, Laura Riley, and Robyn Germany. **Second row:** Greg Stidham, Michael Elliott, and Chris Germany. **Third row:** Audra Busenlehner, Melvin Williams, Jeff Laubenthal, and Woody Herring. **Back row:** Marc Armstrong, who is also Capstone's Medical Director, Erik Richardson, and Jay Parker.

Michael Elliott - was born in Arkansas but grew up in Illinois. He completed his undergraduate work at Indiana State University in Terre Haute. His MD is from the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Peoria. Michael's father, a family practitioner for over 20 years, has certainly influenced Michael's decision to become a family physician. He and his wife, Angie, and their 15-month-old son, Michael plan to return to Illinois at the end of his residency to fulfill a scholarship agreement to practice in a medically underserved area.

Robyn and Chris Germany - came to us through the Couple's Match. Robyn hails from Ft. Polk, LA and Chris from Ft. McClellan, AL. They both did their undergraduate work at LSU, Baton Rouge, and received their MD's in June from LSU, Shreveport. Robyn and Chris have had the opportunity to travel extensively in the United States for the past four years. They love being outdoors and frequently go camping and floating in inflatable kayaks. They probably will return to a small town to practice after graduation; Chris intends to be involved in the education of students and residents in his practice.

Woodrow Herring - is better known as Woody. Born in Atlanta, he was raised in Alabama. He completed his undergraduate work at Huntingdon College in Montgomery and received his MD in June from the University of South Alabama. He enjoys weight lifting, watching college football, and fishing. Woody and his new bride, Cindy, will probably want to return to a small town after Woody graduates.

Jeff Laubenthal - was born and raised in Birmingham. He completed his undergraduate work here in Tuscaloosa and received his MD from UAB. His mother's experience as a registered nurse influenced his decision to go into family medicine. A talented baseball player, Jeff won the SEC Scholar Athlete of the Year award in 1992 and the Paul 'Bear' Bryant Student Athlete of the Year award in 1993. When he is not on the baseball field, his wife Katherine can find him in his creative mode - writing and drawing. He also enjoys collecting comic books. Jeff and Katherine plan to move to a medium-sized city when Jeff graduates.

Vincent Law - was born in Memphis and grew up in Birmingham. Vince completed his undergraduate work at Vanderbilt; and, yes, add his name to those from the University of South Alabama earning his MD in June! Vince enjoys the martial arts, working out, mountain biking and reading. He credits his family for instilling in him the value of giving of himself to others. To that end, he is desirous of establishing himself as a part-time missionary upon graduation from residency.

Jay Parker - is the only true Tuscaloosa native. While he was born here, he grew up in Aliceville. Jay, an Auburn graduate, bounced back from that experience to earn his MD in June from University of Alabama School of Medicine/ Birmingham and Tuscaloosa campuses. He enjoys bowhunting, waterskiing and golf in his spare time - that is, when he isn't enjoying being a new bridegroom to his bride, Sheri.

Erik Richardson - was born and raised in Union, MS. Erik did his undergraduate work at the University of Mississippi and spent his entire junior year at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland. He earned his MD from the University of Mississippi School of Medicine in May. Erik credits the influence of small town doctors on his career choice and plans to be one himself. When relaxing, he enjoys hiking, camping, canoeing, dendrology (the study of trees), golfing, birdwatching and playing intramural sports! ("Residency softball team - take note!" says Dr. Davis Woodward, last season's softball team coach.)

Laura Riley - was born and raised in Birmingham. She did her undergraduate work at Samford University; and she, too, earned her MD from the University of South Alabama in June. Laura has participated in medical missionary work in Central and South American countries. She enjoys running, playing softball, and craftwork. Laura credits her close relationship to her family with her desire and to make a contribution in the medical field. "To whom much is given, much is expected."

Greg Stidham - from Russellville, AL, was raised in Hodges. He graduated from UAB, and he received his MD in June from the University of South Alabama. Greg and his wife, Dana, have just become proud parents. When not attending to baby - Gabe, who was born in April - Greg enjoys weightlifting, playing tennis, reading, and jogging. He intends to return to rural Alabama to practice after completing residency.

Melvin Williams - was born and raised in Birmingham. He completed his undergraduate work at Talladega College. He is another of the University of South Alabama MD's in this class. Very community-minded, Melvin spends spare time participating in scientific societies, tutoring high school and college students, and being an active member of the NAACP and the Boy Scouts of America. For fun, he enjoys collecting comic books, fishing, and playing basketball and football. After residency, Melvin may be interested in an office practice and/or medical academia, but something where he can continue his community involvement.

-Kay Hall

Please send alumni news to **OnRounds** to share with former classmates, other alums, and faculty. Be sure to include the date of your CCHS graduation from medical school or the family practice residency program and your current address and phone numbers. We are interested in where you are practicing and other personal or professional updates since you left the college (articles published, community service, local newspaper clippings about you, presentations or courses taught, honors, elected positions, career changes, etc.) Send pictures if possible.

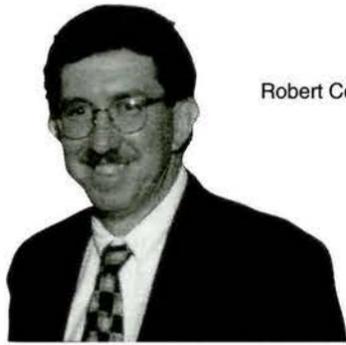
Notes from Alums



Dr. Sage Smith (Residency grad, '84) and his family live in Monroeville, Alabama, where he is in family practice. He is also a preceptor for USA medical students and serves on several committees for the hospital, nursing home, and home health. His wife Ree said in a note accompanying this picture that "Sage was born in the wrong time: he loves to ride horses, hunt (deer, turkey, and duck), and build log cabins." They are both busy with church work and the children's activities, including choir, dance, sports, and cheerleading. Ree, a former kindergarten teacher, helps with field trips and school events, and Sage has been cub scout leader.



Sage and Ree Smith with their children Marlee (13), Ben (9), and Sage, Jr. (11).



Robert Center, MD

Dean's Message

This year has been a momentous one for the College of Community Health Sciences of the University of Alabama. I have functioned in an interim dean's role this year, and this has been a gratifying experience for me and I hope for the College. The year has been a great success in many areas that I would like to highlight.

Due to the generosity of the President and Provost, we have bought computers for the entire faculty and staff. Thus, everyone has up-to-date computers and access to the network and the Internet. This will greatly facilitate communication amongst the faculty and hopefully lead to more productive research in the future.

As noted elsewhere in this issue, we are fortunate enough to have **Bill Curry, M.D.**, join us as Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and to join the overall School of Medicine as Assistant Dean for Rural Medicine. I believe that Bill's future in academic medicine is very bright. His strong practice background and his excellent education will give him great value to the overall School of Medicine. Particularly, in his role as Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, he will work diligently to expand our clinical mission and to preserve our clinical presence during these times of change in the health care system.

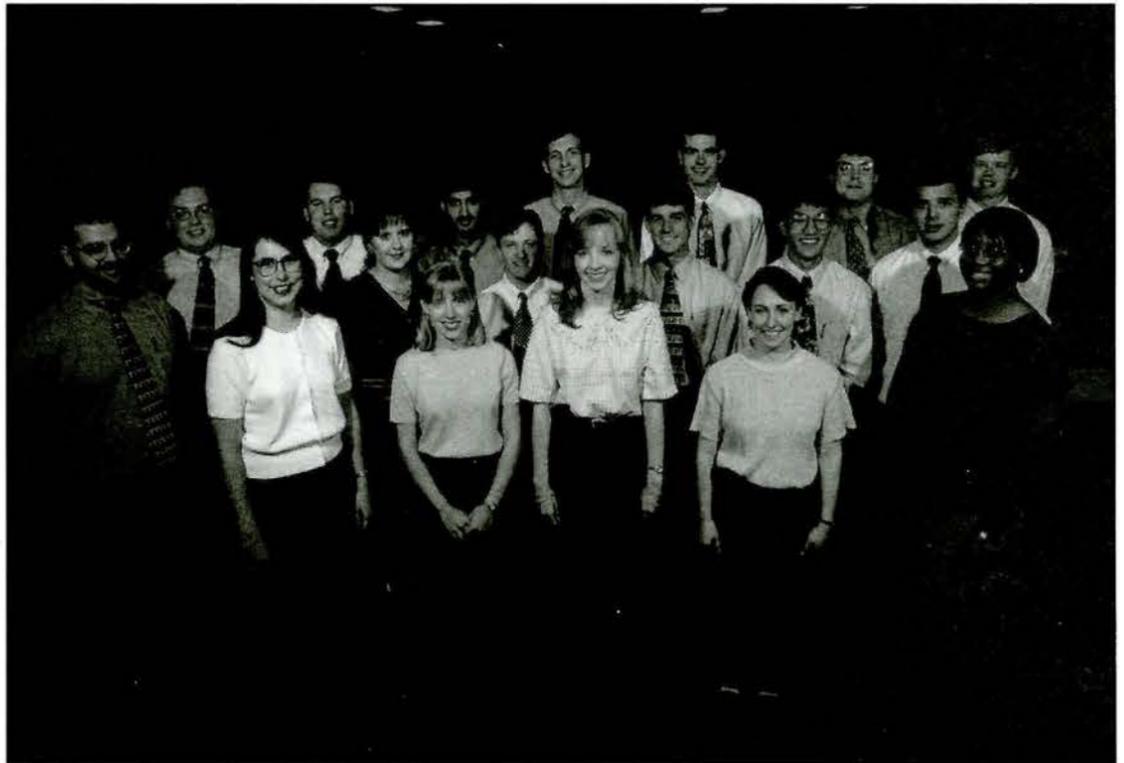
With Dr. Curry's appointment as Associate Dean, **Marc Armstrong** can focus on his duties as Medical Director of the Capstone Medical Center and Program Director of the Family Practice Residency. This arrangement where we split the duties of the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs from the Medical Director of the clinic makes sense in the current climate of health care. Both of these are important jobs, which I believe will require great strides over the next several years.

The College is on the verge of welcoming a new dean. By the time you receive this newsletter, President **Sorensen** and Interim Dean **Deal** will probably have named the new dean. The candidates are outstanding, and I feel comfortable that the future of the College will proceed under the leadership under any of the candidates who have been selected.

The **Rural Medical Scholars Program**, now two years old, is adding greatly to the future of medicine in Tuscaloosa. I am excited about this program and look forward to 1999 when the first matriculates return to Tuscaloosa for their clinical activities.

I would like to formally thank the entire faculty and staff who have made my interim deanship such a pleasure. I feel very proud of the hard work that the faculty and staff have done this year and am proud to be associated with those great successes.

-Robert Centor, M.D.



Pictured at Orientation for CCHS incoming third year medical students in July are (l-r): **First row:** Sara LeSturgeon, Cheryl Hill, Tammy Watkins, Jennifer Burdette, and Chandra McCall. **Second row:** Kristopher Jones, Tonya Bradley, Grant Eudy, Tyler Kirby, Peter Chang, Peter Nagi. **Third row:** Chad Klauser, Chad Hamner, Mukul Mehra, Robert Keith Hill, Ben Roberts, Phillip Lackey, and Paul Roberts. Not pictured: Aleksandra Frye.

New Medical Students Begin CCHS Clinical Years

Eighteen medical students began their clinical rotations in Tuscaloosa in July, 1997.

Tonya E. Bradley of Tallassee, Alabama, earned her BS in Biomedical Sciences from Auburn University.

Jennifer Burdette of Wetumpka, Alabama graduated from The University of Alabama with a BS degree in Chemistry.

Peter T. Chang is from Birmingham, Alabama. He received his BS degree in Biology from Birmingham Southern College.

Grant E. Eudy is from Guatemala City, Guatemala, and received his B.S. in Biomedical Sciences from Auburn University.

Aleksandra Petrovic Frye from Shelbyville, Tennessee, received her BS in Chemistry and Biology from Judson College.

Chad Hamner of Tuscaloosa received his B.A. in English from UA (The University of Alabama).

R. Keith Hill is from Montgomery, Alabama, and received his BS in Zoology from Auburn University.

Kristopher N. Jones from Florence, Alabama, has two degrees from Freed-Hardeman University: a BA in Bible, and a BS in Social & Behavioral Sciences.

Tyler O. Kirby of Tuscaloosa received a BS in Interdisciplinary Studies at UA.

Chad K. Klauser is from Tupelo, Mississippi. He received his BS in Biology from Samford University in Birmingham.

Phillip L. Lackey of Muscle Shoals, received a BS in Electrical Engineering and a BS in Biomedical Sciences from UA.

Sara M. LeSturgeon of Lacey's Spring, Alabama received her BS in Mathematics from The University of Alabama.

Chandra M. McCall is from Arlington, Alabama and received her BS in Biology from the University of Alabama.

Mukul Mehra of Helena, Alabama, received a BS degree in Physics from Emory University and Birmingham Southern.

Peter A. Nagi of Tuscaloosa received his BS in Pre-Med from The University of Alabama.

Benjamin W. Roberts of Andalusia, Alabama, graduated from Birmingham Southern College with a BS in Biology.

Paul A. Roberts of Midfield, Alabama, also received his BS in Biology from Birmingham Southern College.

Tammy R. Watkins is from Fayette, Alabama, and received her BS from Capstone College of Nursing at The University of Alabama.



Dr. Bill Curry, right, listens as Dr. Robert Centor, interim CCHS Dean, officially introduces him at a reception to welcome Curry to CCHS. Dr. Centor said Curry's rural practice experience would be especially valuable in his new roles as CCHS Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and UASOM Assistant Dean for Rural Medicine.

Dr. Sorensen's CCHS Teaching Role Gives Him Insight into Administrative and Presidential Responsibilities

by Pat Norton

Dr. Andrew Sorensen came to UA from the University of Florida. He taught one semester during his six years there. He had not taught regularly since he left Johns Hopkins in the summer of 1990. As a faculty member at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, he taught graduate students who had almost all earned their MDs first. He enjoyed teaching his first class as a CCHS faculty member and told Pat Norton that he "absolutely will continue to teach epidemiology every spring."

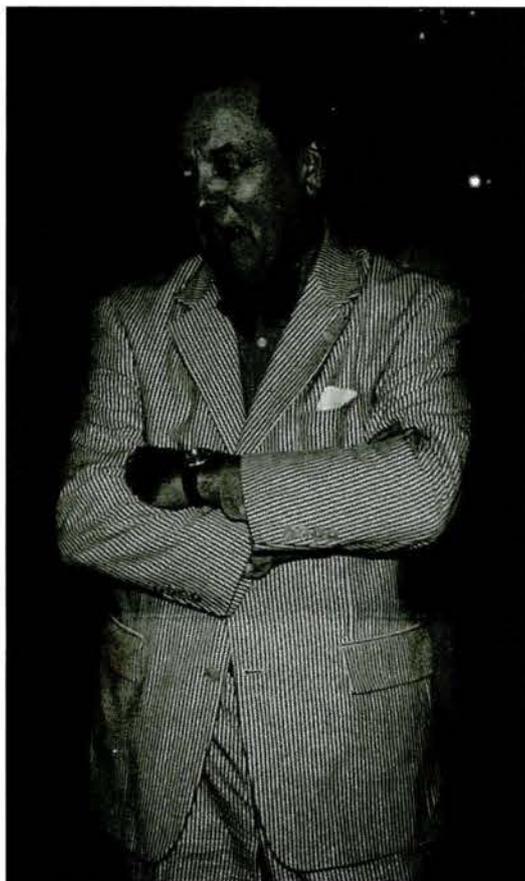
Depending on what's happening at the time in the legislative session, it's possible for him to be so consumed with concerns about state funding that he spends a huge amount of time working with state legislators and leaders at other institutions and focusing almost exclusively on budget concerns that he forgets the reason he's going to the legislature--to talk about money for the students.

While university presidents do traditionally have faculty appointments, most do not actually spend time in the classroom. Dr. Andrew A. Sorensen, whose faculty appointment is in CCHS, is an exception to this tradition and last semester taught a basic epidemiology to a class of 17 graduate and undergraduate students.

Dr. Sorensen, who has not taught on a regular basis since leaving Johns Hopkins in 1990, is quite obviously excited to return to the classroom. During most of his career he has taught graduate and/or medical students, but says he really enjoys teaching undergraduate students and a mixture of class levels - such as he had this spring - is probably what he likes best. Even though the initial organization of the syllabus and selection of texts and readings was time-consuming, he looks forward to teaching this class each spring.

One of the benefits Dr. Sorensen finds in teaching is that it allows him to stay in touch with student concerns and interests, reminding him in a very vivid way why we are all here. He notes, "It's possible to stay in an office like mine and not use the word 'student' in an entire day." Often, in the push to meet with legislators to promote the University, he finds himself so consumed with concerns about funding and forging alliances with presidents from other schools, he forgets that his real focus in asking for the money is to provide better educational opportunities for our students. Teaching helps keep him focused on student needs, he says.

When asked about his vision for CCHS, Dr. Sorensen says he wants the College to develop in two respects. First, he would like to see CCHS "work diligently to create a niche that will distinguish it from any other medical school in the United States." An emphasis on primary care in rural areas is a logical one, but he feels strongly that this is a decision that must be made by the faculty and Dean. His major point is that whatever the focus, it needs to be absolutely distinguished.



Dr. Andrew Sorensen, UA President and Professor of Behavioral and Community Medicine, CCHS

With a commitment from the faculty and a burning desire for national eminence, Sorensen believes that the program we choose and create at CCHS will draw people from across the country who will come here because we are the best at what we do.

Secondly, Dr. Sorensen would like to see the College make a commitment to interdisciplinary research and interdisciplinary teaching. One of the strengths of his epidemiology class was that there were undergraduate nursing students, doctoral students in education, premed students, social work graduate students, to name a few, all looking at the same subject and seeing how it applied to their disciplines and what their disciplines could contribute to epidemiological studies. He believes this type of exchange would benefit all courses offered through CCHS and that medical education, in particular, would benefit from collaboration with students and faculty in other disciplines.

He would like to see classes in which social workers and psychologists and epidemiologists and pediatricians and nurses are actually in class together studying the same subject matter, especially as it regards delivery of primary care services (if that is what the college chooses as its mission). The Epidemiology course last semester did have different class levels, different disciplines (nursing students, premed students, education doctoral students, and social work students) and focused on the way that each discipline could benefit from or contribute to epidemiology studies, but it did not incorporate how the disciplines played into the delivery of primary health care in rural areas. He would like to see more pedagogy organized around that and involving faculty and students from multiple disciplines. He feels this is something that can be addressed here, without waiting for directives from the main campus of the UA medical school in Birmingham.

He plans to modify his own teaching methods, trying new things such as videos, with people in the tapes available for teleconferencing afterward. He wants to compare the learning that takes place using just the video, just a lecture format, and a combination of video with teleconference discussion. His hypothesis is that learning would be greater the third way, but he doesn't know and would like to measure it. If this is the case, perhaps these teaching methods can be used in a variety of courses.

Dr. Andrew Sorensen, above, is usually seen on and off campus in his presidential role, but every spring a number of students will come to know him as a teacher, his first and favorite identity in medical education.

Pat Norton, who is Medical Education Project Director in the Department of Family Medicine at CCHS and a doctoral candidate, was a student in Dr. Sorensen's epidemiology class last spring.

Care for Alzheimer Patients in Rural Areas Is Conference Topic

The fourth annual "Care for Alzheimer Patients in Rural Communities" will be held Sept. 11-12, 1997, at the Bryant Conference Center in Tuscaloosa.

Keynote speakers include **Jeanne C. Fox**, PhD, RN, FAAN, who is Professor of Nursing, Psychiatric Medicine, and Health Evaluation Services at the Southeast Rural Mental Health Research Center at the University of Virginia, novelist and columnist **Vickie Covington**, and UAB Neurology Professor **Lindy Harrell**, MD, PhD, Director of UAB Alzheimer Disease Center.

Over 500 caregivers, support group leaders, case managers, clergy, dietitians, home health workers and administrators, therapists, pharmacists, social workers, physicians, nurses, and other health professionals are expected to attend. The UA School of Medicine is co-hosting the conference and offering CME credit. The conference meets requirements for professional development credit for other disciplines as well.

Topics include: non-Alzheimer dementias, healthcare for dementia patients, psychopharmacological management of disruptive/agitated behaviors, architectural/environmental design for dementia patients, long-term dementia care, rural dementia care, "Understanding the Patient," basic assessment of dementia, Setting up a Sitter Respite/Day Care Program in Your Community, dietary management, comprehensive dementia management for the social work professional, "Understanding the Caregiver," home care services, legal issues, and recreational/occupational therapy for the demented patient.

For more information, contact Registration Services at UA College of Continuing Studies, (205) 348-3000.

CME Fall Schedule Being Finalized

Gene Marsh, MD, neurologist in private practice and CCHS faculty member in the Department of Psychiatry and Neurology, will present information on stroke at *Grand Rounds* this fall. The continuing medical education (CME) series will also feature three physicians from Emory: **David Robertson**, MD, will speak on Obesity; **Dan Smith**, MD, is scheduled to discuss Laparoscopic Surgery; and **Suzanne Gebhart**, MD, will give an update on Type II Diabetes.

Al Oberman, MD, and **Michael Kilby**, MD, both from UAB, are confirmed to speak. Oberman's topic is treatment of hypolipidemia; and Kilby's subject is acute primary HIV. Another Birmingham speaker, **Lee Hilliard**, MD, of Children's Hospital, will speak on Sickle Cell disease.

CME Grand Rounds lectures are held on Fridays at noon in the Willard Auditorium on the first floor of the UA Educational Tower at DCH Regional Medical Center.

For more information or to request a schedule, contact:

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Dean's Office, College of Community Health Sciences
University of Alabama Box 870326
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0326
Phone: (205) 348-0093 FAX: (205) 348-9417

Curry's Delayed Career in Medical Education Benefits CCHS

Brings Love for Teaching, Negotiation Skills, and Rural Practice Experience to New Role

William A. Curry, M.D., had planned a career in academic medicine when he finished his residency in Internal Medicine at Vanderbilt. He had discovered he loved teaching and he had accepted the chief residency of Internal Medicine at Vandy as soon as he completed a two-year service commitment to the National Health Service.

That was before he practiced medicine in his hometown and found how satisfying a rural practice could be. He is now (almost 20 years later) assuming a full-time role in medical education at last. Dr. Curry, who just became Chairman of Internal Medicine and Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs at CCHS and Assistant Dean for Rural Medicine for the University of Alabama School of Medicine, did not join the Vanderbilt faculty. After fulfilling a two-year obligation to the National Health Service Corps by practicing in rural Pickens County, he returned to Vandy only to serve his term as Chief Resident of Internal Medicine and complete an infectious disease fellowship he had already set up. But he and his family decided that small town life suited them better, so they settled in Dr. Curry's hometown of Carrollton in Pickens County. He managed to combine teaching with his private practice by serving as part-time faculty member and preceptor at CCHS for the past fifteen years. Dr. Curry just concluded a total of 17 years in private practice in Pickens County, and he is now launching a full-time academic career which combines his interests and experience in primary care practice, medical education, and administration.

Dr. Bill Curry brings valuable skills and experience to his new roles at CCHS and UASOM. His strengths in building relationships and "pulling together a team," as he puts it, have been evident in his leadership as president of the Alabama Internal Medicine Association (1989-90), chair of the state medical association ad hoc committee on rural medicine and physician supply to rural areas, organization of the Rural Alabama Health Alliance (RAHA), and currently as president of the Medical Association of the State of Alabama (MASA).

His ad hoc committee for MASA recommended the Medical Scholarship Act of 1994 to help recruit and reward physicians who practice in rural areas and also initiated collaboration to clarify the role of nurse practitioners and physician assistants in meeting the health care needs of rural underserved areas. This collaboration resulted in clarification of the legal status for physician assistants and nurse practitioners: the Physician Assistant Act of 1994 and the Nurse Practitioner Act of 1995, legislation which established joint regulation of P.A. and N.P. practices and opens the door for support to curb burnout for physicians in solo practice in rural areas.

This college can be proud of its strong historic commitment to primary care and to rural Alabama. As we fulfill that mission, I want every medical student, resident, and practicing physician we serve to see their continuing relationship with us as invaluable to their careers.

-Dr. Bill Curry

In his role as president of MASA, he will be bringing together representatives of business, the insurance industry, and HMO's to discuss how best to protect the rights of patients in managed care.

"We have to look for the common purposes," he said. "Where purposes are divergent, we must respect the differences and accommodate each other so we can accomplish mutual goals." This attitude is probably what prompted a Birmingham reporter to describe Curry as "a master negotiator," a description he takes as a special compliment.

In looking back at his choice to enter private practice instead of join the Vanderbilt faculty, Curry said he is especially grateful to Dr. **Bill Winternitz**, then Chairman of Internal Medicine at CCHS, for offering him a part-time faculty position at CCHS so he did not have to sacrifice teaching when he decided on a rural practice. He especially enjoys third year medical students: "They are at such a critical point in their medical careers," he says, "and they are at a wonderful teachable moment then."

Dr. Winternitz asked him to become an adjunct clinical assistant professor and as such Dr. Curry has mentored countless medical students and residents during their rural rotations and hospital service (both at DCH when he is on call in Tuscaloosa and at Pickens County Medical Center, the smaller, rural hospital for which he has served as chairman of the board, chief medical officer, and leader of community support for the past decade and a half).

Dr. Curry particularly credits his partner, Dr. **Robert Sheppard**, with giving him the opportunity and time away from their patient care to teach. He reciprocated by giving Dr. Sheppard time off to hunt. Curry also enjoyed raising his daughter (now a

sophomore at Tulane) in a small town setting. He appreciated the chance to become a colleague of **William E. Hill, MD**, Curry's family doctor and "role model" when he was growing up.

Dr. Curry says that he found the challenge of a small rural practice and the impact he was able to make on community life to be very satisfying.

"People told me I would be wasting what I had learned," he said, "but I found the opposite to be true." He says he used everything he had been taught and was constantly expanding his knowledge to keep pace with his patients' needs and a growing demand for local hospital care.

There were six doctors working in the small Pickens County hospital when Dr. Curry came back to Carrollton. He was on call every night and every other weekend, he said. Now there are eighteen physicians, and the financial and public support for the hospital is more secure than it has ever been. Helping to put the hospital in stable financial order (he and other physicians began operating the hospital in 1986 when it faced financial collapse) was one factor which stimulated his interest in administration. His efforts, combined with

those of other physicians and the Pickens County medical community, helped turn a failing hospital into a "vibrant asset to the community."

Dr. Curry knows he will miss his patients and practice in Carrollton, but he anticipates turning more of his energy to medical education and administrative projects that can contribute to the overall goals of CCHS to improve rural medical services.

Dr. Curry sees many positive factors at CCHS and says he looks forward to working with faculty, colleagues, alumni, and supporters to make medical education here the best it can be.

Specifically, he said, he is encouraged by "the diligence of the faculty in turning around the clinical practice at Capstone Medical Center, preserving our mission as clinical teachers." He also values the college's work with colleagues in the region -- alumni, preceptors, county hospitals, West Alabama Health Services, etc. -- to improve medical education and health services to rural areas.

"This college can be proud of its strong historic commitment to primary care and to rural Alabama," says Curry. "As we fulfill that mission, I want every medical student, resident, and practicing physician we serve to see their continuing relationship with us as invaluable to their careers."

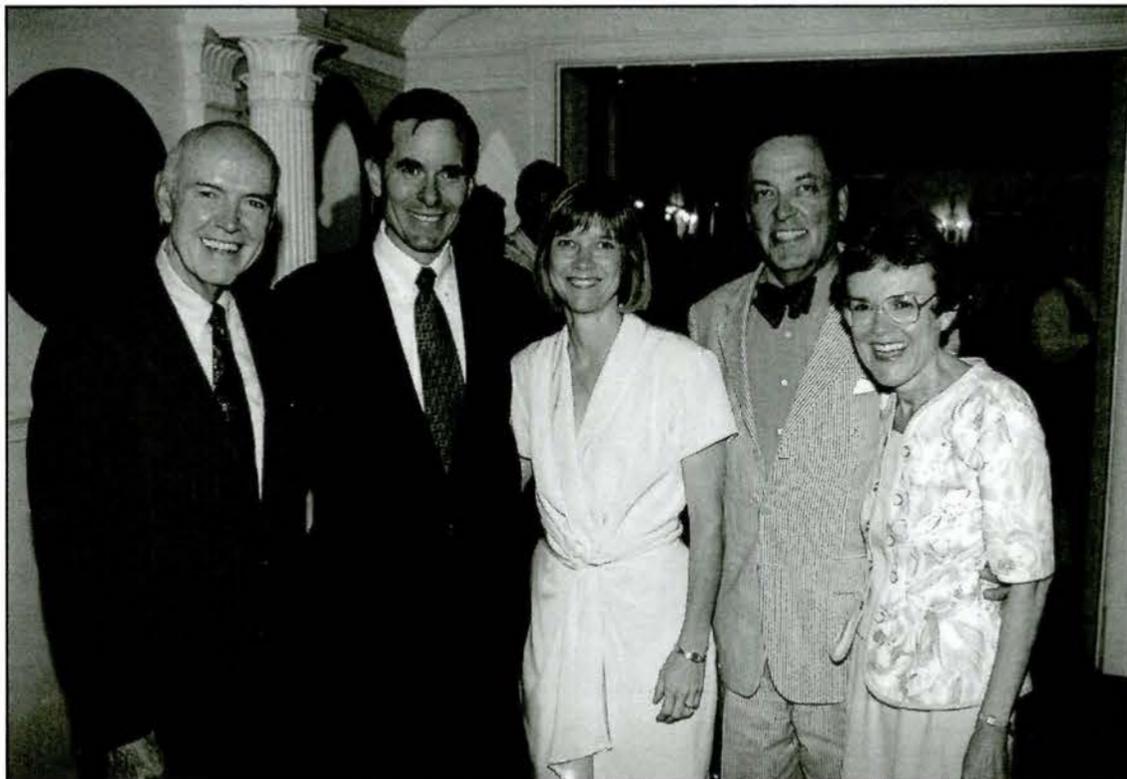
Another strength Dr. Curry points out is the intense interest in collaborative work among UA's health professional education disciplines -- Nursing, Social Work, Human Environmental Sciences, and other programs associated with The University.

"In a time of diminishing resources," says Curry, "it is crucial to pool our efforts in research and educational programs."

"A third encouraging sign for progress at CCHS," said Curry, returning to his enumeration of positive aspects he sees here, "is the commitment of The University to this college, specifically that of the president and the provost." Evidence of support from **President Sorensen** and **Provost Nancy Barrett** can be seen in the planning process for a new building that could potentially house all of CCHS and other health-related programs together, new computers to facilitate collaborative research, and a green light to recruit a top rural research expert to our faculty, said Curry.

Dr. Curry also thinks that CCHS is "on the right track" in the larger environment of medical education and funding for it since the trend to decentralization into communities is something CCHS has already initiated. If communities in West Alabama choose to do it, the formation of an Area Health Education Center (AHEC) in this region could help "extend the pipeline" already begun at CCHS to identify and encourage talented high school students, introduce them to health-related careers (Rural Health Scholars program), recruit and retain medical students interested in rural practice (Rural Medical Scholars program), and place and support primary care physicians in small towns.

Initially Dr. Curry's priority is listening to faculty about what has made the college strong and effective to this point. He said that the instinct and experience of faculty members is what he needs to tap into as he takes on his new roles and responsibilities. "My most important conversations with faculty will be about developing clinical practice and building relationships necessary to support the medical education and service missions of CCHS."



Dr. Bill Curry and his wife, Dr. Glenda Curry (center), president of Troy State University at Montgomery, posed with top UA officials at a welcome reception held for Dr. Curry at the University Club in July. (L-R) Arts and Sciences Dean James Yarbrough, Dr. and Mrs. Curry, President Andrew Sorensen, and Provost Nancy Barrett. Curry said he is especially gratified by the support CCHS receives from UA leaders.

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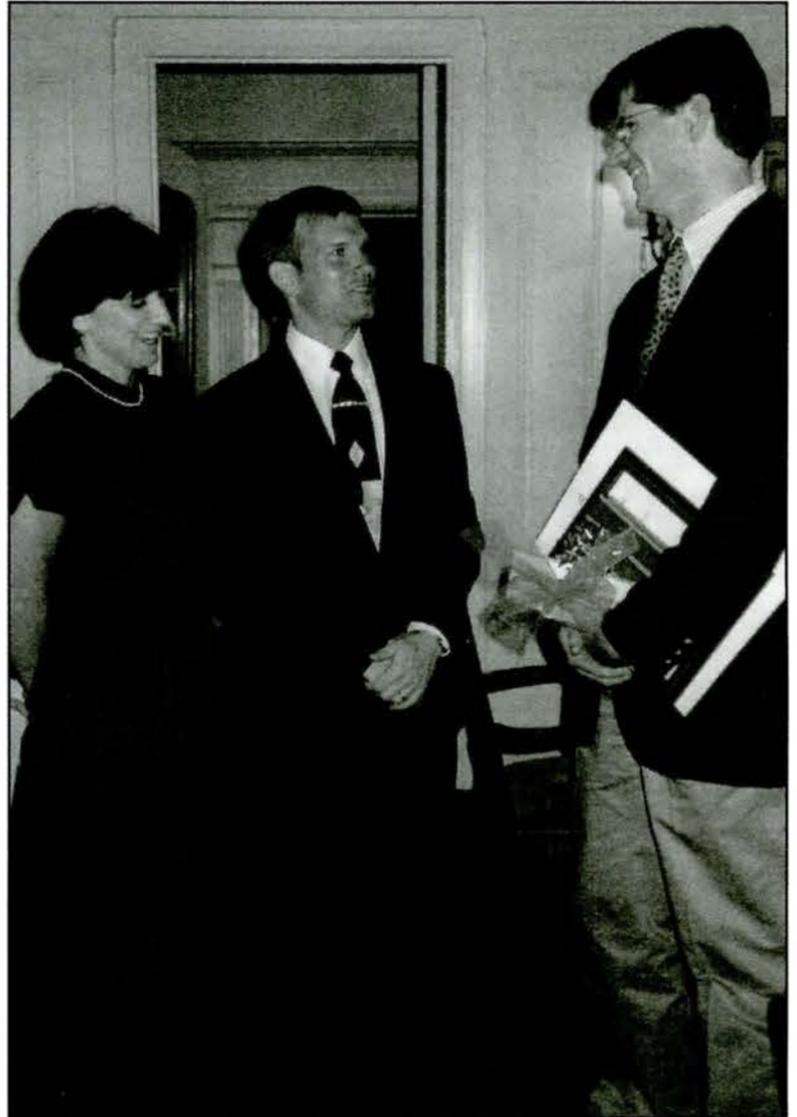
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Return to: Vicki Johnson • CCHS • UA Box 870326
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Dr. Blane Schilling (center) and his wife, Elizabeth, of Carrollton, visit with Dr. Brent McLarty after his graduation from the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency in June. Dr. McLarty entered family practice in Pickens County following graduation. Most of this year's residency graduates planned to return to their hometowns to practice or are relocating to small to medium-sized towns. Dr. Schilling and his partner Dr. David Tuten, also CCHS alums, are pleased to have Dr. McLarty join their local medical community.

OnRounds

The University of Alabama
College of Community Health Sciences

OnRounds is published with the assistance of the *Lister Hill Society*. The Lister Hill Society, named in honor of the late U.S. Senator from Alabama known for his work to improve health care for all citizens, is the voluntary support group for the College of Community Health Sciences.

The focus of this branch of the University of Alabama School of Medicine is community medicine and primary care, with emphasis on the preparation of family physicians to care for patients in underserved rural areas.

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The Annual Resident In-Training Exam Friday, November 7, 1997

Willard Auditorium, UA Educational Tower

The Resident Exam is given to residents at all three levels by the American Board of Family Practice. It monitors the progress of residents' training in programs nationwide and provides individual programs with a measure of the level of competence in each discipline (i.e., peds, OB/GYN) at each year of residency. For more information, contact Kay Hall, Coordinator of Graduate and Undergraduate Medical Education, (205) 348-1373.

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Lister Hill Board members (l-r) Bill Wintemitz, MD, Julie Sittason, Director of West Alabama Hospice, and Will Coggins, MD, who attended a recent CCHS reception, are working with other board members to increase support for medical education at the College of Community Health Sciences, which was founded 25 years ago this year. Please return the form above with your 25th anniversary contribution, so your gift can be properly acknowledged.