

OnRounds

The University of Alabama
College of Community Health Sciences

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Plans Underway for New Building Approved by Board of Trustees

The College of Community Health Sciences and its Capstone Medical Center will move into a new building on the corner of 5th Avenue and University Boulevard in two years, according to the timeline CCHS Dean **William Curry**, MD, announced to college faculty and staff in September. The site is at the east entrance to The University campus. "Since it is so visible, the building will be a visitor's first impression of The University," said Dr. Curry, "an attractive location for donors who will have naming opportunities for the new building and rooms or furnishings within it." Groundbreaking is scheduled for summer, 2001.

Financing for the project will come from University funds, private donors, and a UA bond issue, said Dr. Curry. The pending sale of the UA Educational Tower at the hospital to DCH and approval by the UA Board of Trustees of architects for the project cleared the way for detailed planning for building. Associate Dean **Marc Armstrong**, MD,

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Elizabeth Cockrum, MD
Recognized for
Outstanding Commitment
to Teaching



CCHS Pediatrician Wins UA's Top Teaching Award

by Lance M. Skelly
UA Office of Media Relations

Dr. Elizabeth L. Cockrum, associate professor of pediatrics in The University of Alabama's College of Community Health Sciences, is one of four recipients of this year's Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award (OCTA) at UA.

Established in 1976, OCTA recognizes dedication to the teaching profession and the positive impact professors have on their students. Given by UA's National Alumni Association, the award is the University's highest honor for excellence in teaching. Previous OCTA recipients from

the CCHS faculty are: **James Leeper**, PhD, Professor and Chairman, Dept. of Community & Rural Medicine; **William Winternitz**, MD, Professor, Internal Medicine; and former Community Medicine professor and UA Vice President, **Harry Knopke**, PhD.

Dr. Cockrum joined the CCHS faculty in 1989. She was promoted to associate professor of clinical pediatrics in 1995. Cockrum has served as director of the pediatric clerkship for third-year medical students since 1991, and she also served as chair of the pediatric department at DCH Regional Medical Center from 1996-1998.

"Dr. Cockrum has the best knowledge base for care of pediatric patients I have ever encountered," said a colleague in a letter recommending her for the OCTA award. "This knowledge is accompanied by an extremely keen clinical acumen. Together, these qualities make her an outstanding pediatrician, enabling her to provide students with the best learning experiences possible."

Cockrum graduated from UA and went on to earn her MD from the UA School of Medicine. She did her pediatric residency at The Children's Hospital of Alabama in Birmingham. She instructs third- and fourth-year medical students at CCHS, a branch of the University of Alabama School of Medicine, in routine well child and sick care in the pediatrics outpatient clinic at the Capstone Medical Clinic and teaches pediatric emergency, in-patient and newborn nursery care at DCH.

This year's other OCTA recipients were Pam Bucy, Professor of Law; Dr. Melondie Carter, assistant professor of Nursing; and Dr. Nick Stinnett, professor of human development and family studies.



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Dr. John Burnum, CCHS Professor of Internal Medicine, presents the 2000 Internal Medicine Award to graduating Chief Resident Dr. Jeff Laubenthal. More awards and photos, page 3.



UA Rural Scholars in the CCHS Department of Community and Rural Medicine visit Dr. Paul Hubbert, Executive Secretary of the Alabama Education Association, in Montgomery. Dr. Hubbert is the guest speaker for the Fifth Annual Convocation of the Rural Medical Scholars Program on December 7 in Tuscaloosa. Front: Kelli Harris-Tapley, 2000 Rural Medical Scholar (RMS), Tallapoosa County; Sherea Bowden, 1993 Rural Health Scholar (RHS), Choctaw County, UA graduate student and rural research assistant; Stephanie Morgan, 1996 RMS and senior medical student, Cherokee County; Tara Goodson, 2000 RMS and UA senior, Covington County. Back: Susan Guin, CRNP, Assistant Director of Rural Scholars programs; Joseph Walker, 1997 RHS, Marion County, undergraduate honor student at UA; Dr. Hubbert; and Pickens County family physician John Brandon, MD, who is Medical Director of UA Rural Scholars programs and Chairman of the Board of the Rural Alabama Health Alliance (RAHA), which helped initiate the UA Rural Health Scholars Program in 1993 and the UA Rural Medical Scholars Program in 1996. There are now 226 Rural Health Scholars from 54 counties, and 51 Rural Medical Scholars from 29 counties. For information or applications: (205) 348-5892.

REFLECTIONS

by William Curry, MD, Dean

Predictions for Rural Health

Recently, I was asked where I thought rural health care is headed.* The short answer is that I think it is going to improve. The longer answer includes the painful fact that some communities will lag far behind others, and in some of them things are likely to get worse before they get better. Here is part of that longer answer.



Dr. Curry

American health care in the past fifty years has been marked by improved access and rapidly expanding technology. Many of these advantages have extended to rural communities. At the same time, better access to physicians and hospitals has reduced death from heart attack, stroke, and some cancers. But wide gaps remain.

These "disparate outcomes" are rural health's major theme today. In the U.S., African-American men are 3.2 times more likely to die from prostate cancer. In rural South Alabama, men of all races are 40% more likely to die from this disease than the national average. In the same area of the state, deaths for women from cancer of the cervix are 56% higher than women nationally, and across the U.S., African-American women present with this disease at a more advanced stage. While breast cancer affects these women less often, their death rates from it are higher.

What about the future? **Will these disparities improve?** Yes and no. The answer lies in the different paths that rural communities seem to be taking. Because economic development and educational opportunities vary so much within rural America and rural Alabama, we will begin to see wider gaps between a healthier rural America and a sicker one. The disparities between these depressed rural communities and the rest of the nation will grow larger and even more distressing.

There is more to healthy communities than health care, and even more than economic development, education and transportation can bring. Already we are seeing an unraveling of the fabric of many rural communities. A Columbia University study this year showed alarmingly higher rates of drug use in rural America's eighth graders than those of their peers in urban areas: 104% higher use of amphetamines, 50% higher for cocaine, 34% higher for marijuana, 83% higher for crack cocaine, and 29% higher for alcohol. The "entry level" drug for most youth is usually tobacco; in rural youth the rates are more than twice as high for cigarettes and nearly five times higher for smokeless tobacco. *In such communities, our image of a stress-free, crime-free, idyllic rural childhood is gone.*

What will be the responses to such a dual track in rural communities, some getting better and others even worse?

1. Effective health care strategies will be replicated across the country. Programs which identify and mentor rural students into and through training and culminate in rural practice will be national models. There are several of these, including our own Rural Scholars Programs.

2. Some promising strategies will not succeed. One of these is telemedicine. Despite the attraction of high tech access through beaming video images to remote experts, most patients need more personal care. Telemedicine will succeed in sending radiology and pathology images, as it does already. Videosurgery may find limited use, but most of rural America is rural, not frontier, and the successes of the military in this field are unlikely to spread anytime soon.

3. Targeted public health measures will gain support. These will involve partnerships between governmental and private sectors. Contracting and collaboration will blur the lines, especially in rural areas. Physicians, nurses, and other professionals will need to understand population-based strategies and how to work as a team.

4. Interdisciplinary approaches will catch on, as a way to share talent and scarce budgets. Here at The University, the UA Annual Conference on Rural Health will be a focal point for publicizing and better understanding rural issues, bringing together community leaders, state and federal agency leaders, health providers, health professions educators and researchers in an ongoing collaboration. Another area of expansion will be the Area Health Education Center model for linking communities and health professions schools. In Alabama, through a cooperative venture between the University of South Alabama and The University of Alabama, we have begun what I believe will become a statewide network within the next five years. Working with other UA colleges, we will establish an institute for rural health research. Finally - and not a moment too soon - rural America will lead in developing better health care through a team approach, involving physicians, nurses, social workers, and managers.

In all of this CCHS has the opportunity to play a central role, for the benefit of our state, and even for the nation. We do this every day as we educate and train medical students and family practice residents, and as we reach across the campus and around the state to address Alabama's rural health issues through research and outreach. This is an exciting place, and it's only going to get better.

* Dean Curry was asked by The University of Alabama News Bureau for health predictions to include in its new year media release, "Educated Guesses."

New Building Planned for CCHS

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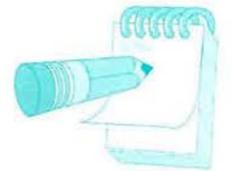
who is overseeing the college's planning for the new facility, said he is consulting with faculty and staff in all CCHS departments and divisions to make sure the new building meets the varied needs of the college's multi-faceted role at The University--an academic unit of UA equivalent to other colleges, a medical practice site, and a teaching center for UASOM medical students and family practice residents. "In fact, it was the need to improve the clinical teaching facilities of our family practice center that necessitated the drive to build," said Dr. Armstrong.

"The new two-story building will be uniquely suited to the blend of private and academic medical practice, clinical teaching space, patient convenience, and faculty/staff offices that CCHS must accommodate," said Armstrong. He is working on architectural plans with Sherlock, Smith, and Adams in Montgomery and expects to get final drawings before the end of the year. This architecture firm has experience in designing clinic space for both private and academic medical practices and university building projects across the country, he added.



Faculty Notes

Send faculty news items to Linda Jackson, Editor
ljackson@cchs.ua.edu 348-1302 Fax 348-9417



Rubin Is State President

Associate Professor of Psychiatry **Nancy Rubin, PsyD**, becomes President of the Alabama Psychological Association (aPA) on January 1, 2001. A native of New Hampshire, she earned her doctorate in psychology at the University of Denver



Dr. Nancy Rubin
APA President

and completed her clinical psychology internship at West Virginia University's medical school. Dr. Rubin has been active in the aPA since 1991 shortly after she joined the faculty of CCHS. Dr. Rubin has chaired the aPA Scientific and Academic Affairs Committee, Awards Committee, and Convention Committee and served on the aPA Committees for Ethics, Membership, and Finance. She was secretary of the organization from 1998 through 1999 and is currently president-elect. She represented Alabama at the American Psychological Association (APA) State Leadership Conference on "Partnerships for Power" in March, 2000. The Alabama Psychological

Association (aPA) was founded in 1950 for the advancement of psychology as a science, as a profession, and as a means of promoting human welfare. Members of aPA work to promote research in psychology, the highest standards of quality and usefulness of applied psychology, and dissemination of psychology in the interest of human welfare. The association sponsors annual conventions, workshops, continuing education opportunities, community activities, and student research awards. Dr. Rubin will preside over the aPA annual conference June 21-24, 2001 in Fort Walton, Florida.

Psychologist Harriet Myers Retires

Dr. **Harriet Myers**, a Tuscaloosa psychologist who has served on the Psychiatry faculty in full-time or adjunct positions since 1983, retired in October. Dr. Myers will continue her private practice, but her duties at Capstone will be assumed by Dr. **Melissa Kuhajda**, a new part-time faculty member. Dr. **Elizabeth Rand**, Chair of Psychiatry, and her staff in the Dept. of Psychiatry and Neurology hosted a reception to honor Dr. Myers' service to the college on October 19 at the Capstone Medical Center. "We are extremely fortunate to have had such an outstanding psychologist to teach our students and residents over the years," said Dr. Rand.

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Harvey Fair, Woody Herring
OB/GYN Award



Ashley Evans, Robyn Germany
Pediatrics Award



Elizabeth Rand, Jeff Laubenthal
Psychiatry Award



Alan Blum, Erik Richardson
Research Award



Marc Armstrong, Chris Germany
STFM Teaching Award



Jerry McKnight, Michael Elliott
deShazo Family Medicine Award



Rick Strieffer, MD, a 1980 alumnus of the Family Practice Residency, was graduation speaker. Dr. Strieffer, an LSU medical graduate, is Board Certified in Family Medicine and has earned a Certificate of Added Qualifications in Geriatric Medicine. He is Professor and Chairman of the Department of Family and Community Medicine at Tulane Univ School of Medicine. He is heavily involved in medical community activities and is the author of numerous medical articles.



Family Practice Residents Receive Awards at Graduation

Internal Medicine	Jeff Laubenthal, MD
OB/GYN	Woody Herring, MD
Pediatrics	Robyn Germany, MD
Psychiatry	Jeff Laubenthal, MD
Research	Erik Richardson, MD
VA Medical Center	Bobby Jones, MD
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine	Chris Germany, MD
DeShazo Award (Family Medicine)	Michael Elliott, MD



Chief Residents Jeff Laubenthal and Mike Elliott with their University of Alabama captain's chairs

This class of 2000, the twenty-fifth to graduate from the CCHS family practice residency, brings the total number of family physicians trained here to 270. Laura Satcher, who is at CCHS completing additional training as an OB fellow, is included in this number. She is the eleventh recipient of the obstetrical fellowship, which was initiated at CCHS in 1988 with funding from the Alabama Family Practice Rural Health Board. Dr. Cindy Dedmon was the first OB Fellow.



Family Practice Residency graduates on June 30, 2000, and their post graduation practice sites: (Front Row, l-r) Vince Law, MD, Temple Medical Clinic, Alexander City; Laura Satcher, MD, OB Fellow at CCHS; Chris Germany and Robyn Germany, MDs, Family Health of Louisiana, Denham Springs, LA.; Mike Elliott, MD, practicing with his father in Robinson, IL.

(Back Row) Jay Parker, MD, in a partnership in Aliceville; Jeff Laubenthal, MD, sports medicine fellowship, Columbus, Ohio (planning to join Tuscaloosa practice of Robinson and Buettner); Woody Herring, MD, 1st Med of Dothan; Erik Richardson, MD, First Care, Tuscaloosa; Melvin Williams, MD, Premiere Medical Group, Newnan, GA.; Greg Stidham, MD, in practice with Dr. Garry Magouirk in Fayette; Audra Busenlehner, MD, Skyland Family Medical Center, Tuscaloosa.

Rural Medical Scholars Program Reviewed by National Panel

A national panel which recently evaluated the Rural Medical Scholars Program (RMSP) concluded that the RMSP has made an "excellent start" and "achieved success in a number of ways." The panel, co-chaired by Dr. **Harold Fallon**, Dean Emeritus, UASOM (University of Alabama School of Medicine), and Dr. **Joab Thomas**, President Emeritus of Penn State University and former UA president, worked in four independent subcommittees: 1) Administration/Organizational Commitment; 2) Recruitment, Selection, & Financial Aids; 3) Curriculum; and 4) Mission, Growth, & Evaluation. The subcommittees interviewed RMSP students, faculty, and UA and UASOM administrators and submitted their findings and recommendations.

The panel concurred that it is essential to secure permanent funding for the program in order for everyone to recognize it as a stable part of the institution.

The final report noted that Rural Medical Scholars are succeeding in medical school and having a positive impact on classmates at UASOM, as evidenced by their peers' choice of the Tuscaloosa campus for clinical training in the third and fourth years. The first class of Rural Medical Scholars graduates from medical school this year, and the fifth class has begun its prematriculation year at UA.

The panel also found that RMSP has encouraged, and perhaps caused, changes in the UASOM curriculum leading to greater inclusion of clinical and basic science information relating to rural medicine. Although there was some doubt that preparing

only ten rural physicians a year would be adequate to meet the need created by the retirement of current physicians, the panel recommended that the program be maintained at its current size for the present and emphasized that stable funding should be instituted.

"Additional data measuring the outcomes of residency choice and some assessment of eventual practice location may support an expansion of the program," concluded the report. For copies of the evaluation report, contact **John Wheat**, MD, MPH, Professor of Community and Rural Medicine, founder and director of the Rural Medical Scholars Program:

jwheat@cchs.ua.edu or (205) 348-1303



For information or an application: 205/348-5892, jwallace@cchs.ua.edu
On the web at: <http://bama.ua.edu/~ruralmed>

Burdette Wins Willard Award



Dr. Sam Gaskins (left) and Jennifer Burdette, MD

Jennifer Burdette, MD, former CCHS medical student and UASOM graduate, received the 2000 *Willard Award* at the awards banquet for graduating residents in June.

Residency Director **Sam Gaskins, MD**, made the presentation. The Willard Award is given annually to a first year resident who epitomizes CCHS's mission to train physicians in the art and practice of family medicine. Named for the late **William R. Willard, MD**, founding dean of the College, who is known as the "Father of Family Medicine," the prestigious award is one of the highest honors bestowed by CCHS.

Meet the Third Year Medical Students at CCHS...

Joseph Patrick Austin graduated from Scottsboro High School, then earned a BS degree in Biology from UAB. His honors include the UAB Scholars Award, Freshman Chemistry Achievement Award, and UAB Department of Biology Honors Research. He also achieved early acceptance to the University of Alabama School of Medicine.

Julia Lett Boothe, a Rural Medical Scholar from Northport, has known from an early age that she wanted to be a physician. She worked as a volunteer at Northport Hospital DCH during her teen years before earning her biology degree from The University of Alabama, where she was a member of several honor societies including Alpha Lambda, Alpha Epsilon Delta, Golden Key, and Phi Eta Sigma. She received her Master's Degree in Public Health from the UAB School of Public Health.

Tracy Lynn Brookings graduated from John Carroll High School in Birmingham and Birmingham-Southern College with a BS in Biology. She was in Alpha Epsilon Delta, Beta Beta Beta, and Omicron Delta Kappa. Tracy feels that a good physician must learn not only biology, chemistry, and physics, but also understand people and human nature.

Joseph Aristide Gassen, III, attended the first session of the Rural Health Scholars Seminar and Field Work in 1993. During his field work, Joey gained an appreciation for physicians' relationships with their patients. He graduated from Clements High School in Athens, and he received a BA degree from the University of Alabama with a double major in Biology and Philosophy. His honors include Alpha Lambda Delta, Blue Key, Golden Key, Cardinal Key, and Gamma Beta Phi.

Teresa Leigh Gottstine has worked as a volunteer for the Care Giver's Association and as an emergency room technician, where she witnessed the challenging, service-oriented aspects of medicine. Terri graduated from McGill-Toolen High School in Mobile, and she received a BS in Biology from Spring Hill College in Mobile. Her honors include Who's Who Among Students of American Colleges and Universities and Dean's List. She is also a Rural Medical Scholar (RMS) and earned her Master of Public Health degree from UAB in her first year as an RMS.



Third year medical students are pictured at CCHS orientation in the Willard Auditorium last summer. Front row: Beverly Jordan, Allison Paulk, Nada Memon, Danny Whitaker, Robby Vickers. Second row: Wendy Wasden, Terri Gottstine, Kris Cummings, Julia Boothe, Zanthia Wiley, Nikki Moore. Third row: Tracy Brookings, Meg Moore, Alex Nettles, Patrick Austin, Bradley Smith, Todd Sanford, Rob Watson, Mark Wall, Jeff Faggard. Fourth row: Ben Kerr, Rick Thomason, Tony Narducci, Joe Tubbs, Rick Jotani, Clifton Garris, Rob Thornton, Joey Gassen, Chris Hillman. Not Pictured with group: Heath Hale.

Kristopher Wayne Cummings was at CCHS in 1993 as a Rural Health Scholar from Chilton County High School (the summer after 11th grade). He earned his BS in Biology from the University of Alabama and was a founding member of the UA Rural Health Student Association. Kris was a Presidential Scholar at UA and graduated Phi Beta Kappa. He served as president of the Golden Key National Honor Society and was inducted into other top honoraries including Mortar Board, Omicron Delta Kappa, Blue Key National Honor Fraternity, and the premed honorary, Alpha Epsilon Delta. He won a Golden Key National Honor Society scholarship to study medicine (one of only ten awarded nationally each year). Kris maintained a 4.0 grade point average at UA, received the Distinguished Undergraduate Scholar Award in Arts and Sciences, and was named the outstanding graduating senior in Biological Sciences.

Jeffrey David Faggard has wanted to be a physician since he was twelve years old, and he looks forward to the role of physician as teacher and counselor. A graduate of McGill-Toolen in Mobile, he graduated *cum laude* from the University of Alabama with a BS in Biology. He was inducted into Gamma Beta Phi, Golden Key, and Alpha Epsilon Delta Honor Societies.

Clifton Earl Garris graduated from Leroy High School in Washington County and earned a BS in Biology from UA in 1991. He also completed a BS in Nursing from the University of South Alabama in 1995, graduating *cum laude*, before he entered the UA Rural Medical Scholars Program. He earned his Master's in Public Health specializing in occupational health and safety at UAB in his first year as a Rural Medical Scholar. His honors include Sigma Theta Tau (the national nursing honorary) and the Excellence in Nursing Practice Award. Clifton and his wife, Melissa, are proud new parents of Evan Michael born May 31, 2000.

Matthew Heath Hale grew up in a rural community in Bibb County where he was able to observe the practice of medicine by shadowing a family physician in office and hospital settings. He was also able to round with physicians at large inner-city hospitals. He graduated from Bibb County High School in Centreville and earned a BS in Biology from Samford University. His honors include Alpha Epsilon Delta, Beta Beta Beta, Who's Who Among American College Students, and Omicron Delta Kappa. A 1997 Rural Medical Scholar, Heath pursued a Master's in Public Health from UAB during his first year as an RMS.



Heath Hale works with children at a health fair staffed by Rural Medical Scholars in 1997.

Christopher Niles Hillman looks forward as a physician to having an impact on other peoples' lives. He feels that even though there will be times when despair is greater than good news, providing hope and healing to a patient makes this profession worthwhile. Chris is from Rankin County, Mississippi, and earned a BA in music from the University of Alabama. He was in Mortar Board, Student Health Advisory Council, Omicron Delta Kappa, and the Honors Program Student Association.

Beverly Flowers Jordan was the 1994 Valedictorian of Zion Chapel High School in Jack, Alabama, and graduated with honors from the University of Alabama in 1997 with a BS in Athletic Training. Her honors include Dean's List, several scholarships, and Gamma Beta Phi National Honor Society. Beverly is also a Rural Medical Scholar and serves on the Board of Directors of the Alabama Academy of Family Physicians and on the Executive Committee of the UASOM Family Medicine Interest Group. She and her husband Mickey have a four-year-old son, Dustin.

Rutwaj (Rick) Kishor Jotani, a 1997 Rural Medical Scholar from Talladega County, believes that the practice of medicine offers moral rewards and a sense of spiritual gratification that no other profession can. Rick graduated from Talladega High School, earned his BS in Biology from Birmingham-Southern College, and received his MPH from UAB. He was in the National Biology Honor Society, on the Dean's List, and was a Charles Vail Teaching and Research Fellow.

Paul Benjamin Kerr was active during his high school and college years working with his community, church, and schools, experiences that taught him much about relating to people. Ben has also been active in the AAFP and AMA medical student organizations. A graduate of Hamilton High School in Marion County, Ben graduated *magna cum laude* with a BS in Chemistry from Harding University. His honors include Phi Eta Sigma and Alpha Chi.

Nada Bashir Memon graduated from Central High School in Tuscaloosa and was a Presidential Scholar at The University of Alabama where she also received the Randall Undergraduate Research Award and a Phi Kappa Phi Creative Research Scholarship. She graduated *magna cum laude* with a BS degree in Biology.

Margaret Tait Moore volunteered at the East Alabama Medical Center in the transport and surgical departments and in the operating room, witnessing first hand the important role doctors play. Meg graduated from Wilcox Academy in Camden, and she earned her BS in Nutrition at Auburn University. Her honors include Phi Eta Sigma, Golden Key, and Alpha Epsilon Delta. She is married to Jason Moore.

Carl Anthony Narducci, from Homewood, originally planned to be a pharmacist and earned his BS degree in Pharmacy from Samford University and was inducted into the Rho Chi Pharmaceutical Honor Society. Tony completed a Master's degree in Genetics at the University of Alabama in Birmingham, and his growing interest in the human body, disease, and how drugs interact with both led him to medical school.

Frederick Alexander Nettles became interested in medicine at age sixteen when he volunteered at the local emergency room as part of qualifying for Eagle Scout. Alex subsequently became an ambulance driver and volunteered in hospitals. He served as a senior surgical technician at the Mobile Infirmary before being accepted to medical school. Alex graduated from Monroe Academy, and he earned his BS from the United States Military Academy at West Point. His military honors include the 5th Corps Distinguished Leader Award, two Army Achievement Medals, and an Army Commendation Medal.

Allison Lynn Paulk has been interested in medicine since she was a child, and she was able to work with and observe physicians with their patients because of her interest. She learned that a large part of practicing medicine is solving mysteries—putting the pieces of a puzzle together and then reaching a medical conclusion. Allison graduated from Northview High School in Dothan, and she received her BS degree in Biomedical Science from Auburn University. Her honors include Alpha Epsilon Delta, Alpha Lambda Delta, Cater Society, and Mortar Board. Allison is Tuscaloosa campus class representative, troubleshooting when there are problems and serving as liaison between her classmates and the administration (at CCHS and--as needed--in Birmingham).

Nikki Lee Price graduated from Thompson High School in Alabaster and earned her BS in Pharmacy from Samford University. Her honors include Dean's List and the Sterile Compounding Award. Nikki has a genuine compassion for people, a desire to treat disease, and a personal need to make a significant difference in the lives of others.

Michael Todd Sanford from Birmingham graduated from Wake Forest University with a BA degree in Business. Todd and his wife, Melinda, have three children, and he enjoys spending time with his family—especially teaching his three young sons how to fish, hit a baseball, play golf, and go camping. Todd attends the Hoover Church of Christ, and his long-term goals include medical mission work.

Bradley Thomas Smith, a 1997 Rural Medical Scholar, graduated from Fayette County High School and earned his BA degree in Music at the University of Alabama. He was in Alpha Epsilon Delta, Golden Key, Alpha Lambda Delta, and Gamma Beta Phi. Brad played trumpet in the University Symphony Orchestra and the Jazz Ensemble while attending UA. He believes that with discipline any goal can be achieved.

Richard Charles Thomason graduated from Central High School in Tuscaloosa and earned his BS in Biology from The University of Alabama. His honors include Gamma Beta Phi, Phi Eta Sigma, and Alpha Lambda Delta. Rick feels that a physician must have compassion for people and their needs, discipline in daily living, leadership combined with a willingness to be part of a team, and the determination to attain goals.

Robert Drummond Thornton graduated from Edgewood Academy in Elmore, Alabama, and he received his BS degree in Biomedical Science from Auburn University. Rob's dream has been to become a doctor, and he feels that great reward is found in helping people and then seeing firsthand the effects of that help.

Joseph Allen Tubbs graduated from Woodlawn High School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and earned his BS in Nursing at UA. As a Registered Nurse, he has worked in UAB's Heart Transplant ICU. Joe feels that medicine is a highly stimulating, fulfilling, and demanding profession that calls to people who have an internal desire for the job.

Robert Eugene Vickers graduated from M.G.Montgomery High School in Semmes, Alabama, and received his BS degree in Nursing from The University of Alabama. Robby began his undergraduate work in pre-law. However, he found his interests better suited to the medical field and changed his major to Nursing during his junior year. He was inducted into several honor societies including Phi Kappa Phi, Golden Key, and Sigma Theta Tau (the national nursing honorary). He entered the Rural Medical Scholars Program in 1997.

Mark Burnette Wall graduated from high school at the Alabama School of Math and Science in Mobile, and he received his BS degree in Biology from the United States Air Force Academy. Mark believes that the practice of medicine is an art that has the ability to inspire, encourage, and personally touch the life of someone else.

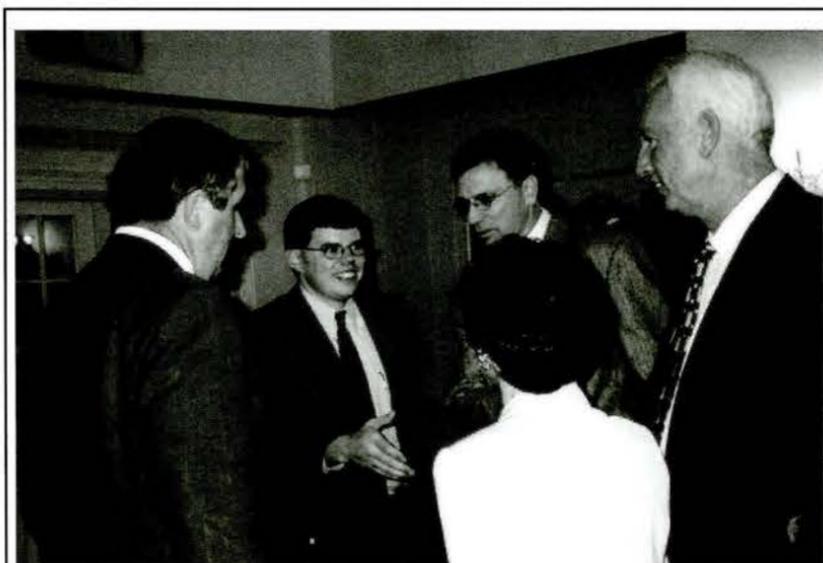
Wendy Deirdre Wasden graduated from Prattville High School and earned her BS in Biochemistry at David Lipscomb University in Nashville. Her honors include Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities, Red Cross Award of Excellence, and Resident Assistant of the Year.

Robert Dennis Watson is a graduate of McGill-Toolen High School in Mobile and earned a BS in Chemistry from Loyola University New Orleans where he was a member of Phi Eta Sigma and Alpha Sigma Nu national honor societies. Rob is eager to build upon and apply the knowledge he has gained in the past two years to help patients he cares for in the hospital and clinic.

Rodd Daniel Whitaker, a 1997 Rural Medical Scholar from Arley, enjoys working with people, especially children. Danny graduated from Walker High School in Jasper and received his BS in Biomedical Science at Auburn University. His honors include Mortar Board, Omicron Delta Kappa, Golden Key, and Beta Beta Beta. He and his wife Ashley, who is in law school at UA, have a two-year-old daughter, Caroline.

Zanthia Evon Wiley graduated from the Alabama School of Math and Science in Mobile, and she received her BS in Microbiology from The University of Alabama. Her honors include Alpha Epsilon Delta, Gamma Beta Phi, Alpha Lambda Delta, and the Academic Achievement Award. Zanthia feels that being a physician will provide her with a mentally challenging occupation and give her a feeling that others are benefiting from her work and advice.

—compiled by Nancy Bohannon
Office of Medical Student Affairs



Senior medical student Paul Tabereaux, center, a 1996 Rural Medical Scholar, greets Alabama Farm Federation representative Johnny Walker (right) and his wife Peggy after his presentation on rural mental health. Sam Wiggins (left) Pickens County Extension Coordinator, also attended Paul's presentation based on from his interviews during his community medicine rotation last year under the direction of Dr. John Wheat (behind Mrs. Walker).

Paul Tabereaux, a Rural Medical Scholar and senior medical student, discussed "Rural Mental Health of Alabama Farmers" at the Larry Mayes Society Meeting, September 25th, at the University Club. Depression, anxiety, and suicide were issues that kept coming up, he said, in interviews he did for his community medicine rotation. He reviewed the literature to supplement his own research—particularly relevant since the drought's severe impact on Alabama agriculture—and presented it to fellow students, medical faculty, and guests at the dinner meeting of the society named for a fourth year medical student who died of encephalitis and pneumonia during his Community Medicine rotation in Africa. Mayes was from Tuscaloosa and graduated from the University of Alabama. The Larry Mayes Society was established as a forum for scholarly presentations by CCHS medical students on and provides a social setting for interaction among faculty and students.

Lilly Funds Research by CCHS Medical Student

Elizabeth Smith, a senior medical student at CCHS, has received a research award from Eli Lilly Research Laboratories. The pharmaceutical company will fund Smith's research on a follow-up study of patients with PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) who participated in a clinical trial at Capstone Medical Center. Dr.



Elizabeth Smith

Elizabeth Rand was the Principal Investigator for the PTSD clinical trial and is serving as a mentor and advisor for Smith's research project. Other members of the research team include Dr. **Nancy Rubin**, a sub-investigator for the clinical trial, **Kay Fendley**, Study Coordinator, and **Tracy Acton**, a research assistant.

Personnel at Lilly will assist with graphics and other costs for poster preparation after the data analysis is completed and also will assist Elizabeth in submitting her research project to appropriate scientific journals, newsletters, etc. for publication.

Family Medicine Interest Group Wins AAFP Award Rural Medical Scholars Play Lead Roles

The University of Alabama School of Medicine's Family Medicine Interest Group was one of ten—from medical schools including Mayo, Yale, and Oklahoma—honored by the American Academy of Family Physicians at the AAFP conference in August. UASOM's group was recognized for stimulating interest in family practice among medical students. The Program of Excellence award is presented to groups which are exemplary in student involvement, promotion of family practice, community outreach, and patient advocacy.

UA Rural Medical Scholars and UASOM medical students Beverly Jordan and Stephanie Morgan were leaders in the award-winning group. **Beverly Jordan**, a 1997 Rural Medical Scholar from Coffee County (Jack, Alabama) served as president of UA's Family Medicine Interest Group last year and was the delegate for the state of Alabama to the National FMIG Congress of Delegates in Kansas City, Mo. Jordan is also the student member on the Board of Directors of the Alabama Academy of Family Physicians.



Beverly Jordan

Stephanie Morgan, a 1996 Rural Medical Scholar from Cedar Bluff, served as the Student Member on the National Commission for Membership and Member Services. She was also a participant in the Leadership Tract at the AAFP Congress of Delegates in 1999 and the NCFPR/NCSM Leadership Tract in 1998, and was the Family Medicine Interest Group Regional Coordinator for the Sun Coast Region in 1999.

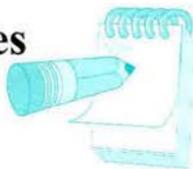


Stephanie Morgan

"We are proud to accept this award validating all of our efforts to promote family practice in Alabama," said Jordan in accepting the award for UASOM. "We hope that this award will highlight the need for primary care physicians in Alabama and encourage others to become involved in family practice."

Some of the group's activities included the Tar Wars anti-smoking campaign, Primary Care Week, a suturing clinic, *Have a Heart* Food Drive, a residency panel discussion, and monthly luncheons featuring family practitioners. Beverly and Stephanie are medical students at CCHS this year completing clinical training in medicine.

Faculty Notes



Leeper on National Board

(from page 2)

James D. Leeper, PhD, Professor and Chair of Community and Rural Medicine, has been reappointed to the Education Board of the American Public Health Association. Dr. Leeper and CCHS graduate research assistant **Lei Wang** presented a paper, "Weighted Average Measure of Inter-rater Agreement for Multinomial Response," at the APHA Joint Statistical Meetings in August in Indianapolis. Dr. Leeper was co-author of "Predictors of Physician Utilization Among Adolescents Receiving Preparticipation Physical Evaluations," a paper presented to the National Athletic Trainer Association last June, and "Carpal Tunnel Syndrome in Women Undergoing Reduction Mammoplasty," in *Plastic Reconstruction Surgery* (April, 2000).

Spring CME Series Includes Local and National Experts

The CME Grand Rounds lectures for the spring semester include both local and national medical experts, and a week on wellness is planned for May. Dr. **John Mantle** from Tuscaloosa will address congestive heart failure, and UAB's **Anthony Saway**, MD, will discuss osteoporosis. Dr. **Thomas Meredith**, UA System Chancellor, and Dr. **John Burnum**, Professor of Internal Medicine, will be First Friday speakers.

Robert G. Lahita, MD, widely recognized in the rheumatology field, will discuss Lupus. A Professor at New York Medical College and Rheumatology Chief at St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City, Lahita has received numerous honors and serves on many advisory boards and editorial boards. He has written extensively on topics in his medical field: 122 publications, in addition to eight books on lupus, autoimmune disease, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Byron Cryer, MD, a graduate of Harvard University and Baylor medical school, with subspecialty training in Gastroenterology from Texas Southwestern Medical School, will give a talk about GI bleeds.

Burnum Cited in NY Times

An article by Dr. **John Burnum**, Professor of Internal Medicine, was cited by columnist John O'Neil in *The New York Times* on August 29, 2000. O'Neil quoted from Dr. Burnum's letter published in the August *Annals of Internal Medicine*: "I have recently come to appreciate that the separation of hospitalized patients from their pets can make both parties ill..." O'Neil's article, which was subtitled "A Healthful Gain When Toto Calls," was illustrated with a cartoon of a dog sitting on the bed of a hospital patient, improving his master's spirits.

Research Lunch Series

The CCHS Research Conference Series is held the first Wednesday of each month at noon in the Carrel Room. Lecturers and topics this fall included **William "Dee" Fowler**, Graduate Research Assistant, Health Research Consulting Services, Dept. of Community and Rural Medicine—"Child Immunization Rates in Tuscaloosa County," Dr. **Jim Leeper**—"Alabama Cooperative Extension Agent Survey: Environmental, Occupational, and Medical Care Access Concerns in Rural Alabama," and Dr. **John C. Higginbotham**, Associate Professor of Community & Rural Medicine and Director, Health Research Consulting Services—"Barriers to STD Screening in Rural Alabama."

Miranda Andrus Joins CRM Faculty

Miranda R. Andrus, Pharm D, joined the Department of Community and Rural Medicine in August as Clinical Assistant Professor. She is also on the clinical faculty of the Auburn University School of Pharmacy and is the Interdisciplinary Education Coordinator for the Rural Alabama AHEC (Area Health Education Center) housed in the Dept. of Community and Rural Medicine. (Profile next issue)

Hefelfinger and Mozley Receive Emeritus Status

David Hefelfinger, MD, and **Paul Mozley**, MD, have been honored with Emeritus status by UA President Andrew Sorensen. Dr. Hefelfinger was one of the first faculty members recruited by Dean William R. Willard to the newly founded CCHS. Dr. Mozley joined the CCHS faculty in 1984 as Professor and Chair of OB/GYN.

Dr. **Hefelfinger**, formerly chair of Pediatrics, was appointed Professor Emeritus of Pediatrics effective March 1, 2000. Dr. **Mozley**, who retired last summer, became Professor Emeritus of Obstetrics and Gynecology effective October 1, 2000. Dr. Sorensen said the appointments recognize the many contributions to UA by the former professors. President Sorensen added that the appointments establish formally a continuing relationship with UA "that we hope will be long and active."

Pieroni Receives Recertification and Recognition

Robert E. Pieroni, MD, Professor of Internal Medicine and Family Medicine, recently passed recertification exams in Geriatric Medicine as well as Family Medicine. Dr. Pieroni also serves as adjunct faculty in the UA Department of Psychology. He has been named an item writer for Certification and Recertification exams of the American Board of Internal Medicine and is a Research Grant Peer Reviewer for the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation. He also reviewed abstracts for the Clinical Medicine and Behavioral Medicine sections of the Gerontology Society of America.

He was invited to Kameda Hospital in Japan earlier this year to present an "Update in Coronary Heart Failure" and to investigate a potential exchange program. He was elected Chairman of the Health Sciences section of the Alabama Academy of Science which recently published abstracts of Alabama Academy of Science, 2000 presentations by Dr. Pieroni ("Prevention of Pressure Ulcers" and "Update on hepatitis C"); by Pieroni and **Sherry Wedgeworth**, Director of CMC lab and X-Ray Services ("Impaired Fasting Glucose in a Family Practice Center"); and these co-authored with CCHS medical students and other faculty:

- **Stephanie Morgan** with Pieroni: "Atrial Myxoma: The Clinical Spectrum"
- **Eric Richardson**, **David Hefelfinger**, MD, Pieroni, and **Cathy Gresham**, MD: "Saddle Embolism in a Young Diabetic"
- **Jane Roy**, **Mark Richardson**, **Joe Smith**, and Pieroni: "Predicting Aerobic Fitness"
- **Amit Shah**, Pieroni: "Profound Hypokalemia Presenting as Guillain Barre Syndrome"

Dr. Pieroni, who is included in *Who's Who in America* and *Who's Who in the World*, was busy during his sabbatical leave this year. He was a guest lecturer in Geriatrics at Appalachian State University, volunteered at the Pine Apple Rural Health Clinic and the Good Samaritan Clinic, worked with Meals on Wheels, and assisted with activities of the Rural Alabama Health Education Center.

Higginbotham and Blum to Work with CCN on Internet Course

John C. Higginbotham, PhD, MPH, Associate Professor of Community and Rural Medicine and **Alan Blum**, MD, who holds the Gerald Leon Wallace Endowed Chair of Family Medicine at CCHS, have received a \$5,000 faculty research grant from the UA Office of Academic Affairs to work with faculty members in the UA Capstone College of Nursing to develop an on-line course, "Writing Successfully for the Health Sciences." The proposed WebCT course will be designed to help students and health practitioners communicate their research findings in writing and learn more about how to successfully publish their articles in professional journals. **Jeri Duncan**, PhD, RN, and **Sharol Jacobson**, PhD, RN, are collaborators on the project from the College of Nursing.

Notes from Alums

Please send alumni news to *OnRounds*.

Include your graduation date from med school or residency and your current address and phone. Send to address on back cover or e-mail to ljackson@cchs.ua.edu.

Hullett Chosen for Academy of Honor

Alum Is Psychiatrist and Mystery Writer

Jeffrey Smith, MD, a former CCHS medical student from Enterprise, Alabama, and 1986 graduate of the University of Alabama School of Medicine, has published two murder mystery novels within the past year. They can be previewed and purchased (in paperback or downloaded) at the website: www.1stbooks.com. Search by author's name (Jeffrey Smith) or by title (*Sudden Despair* is the name of his first novel, and *Two Down, Two to Go*, in which his main character reappears in another crime-solving situation, is his second).

Jeff Smith is a psychiatrist in private practice, and also a professor in the University of South Carolina School of Medicine. Dr. Smith resides in Greenville, S.C., with his wife Anne and their two sons Andy and Ben.

Dr. Smith's e-mail address is BodineMD@aol.com.

Family physician **Sandra Hullett, MD**, (CCHS Residency grad, 1979) was inducted into the Alabama Academy of Honor in a ceremony at the state Capitol on August 28, 2000. Dr. Hullett, Executive Director of Family Health Care of Alabama and a member of the UA Board of Trustees since 1982, is one of four Alabamians elected to the Academy of Honor this year. Others were Rosa Parks, whose arrest in 1955 for sitting in the front of a segregated Montgomery bus helped spark the civil rights movement; John J. McMahon, Jr., a Birmingham businessman and civic leader who is also a UA Trustee; and William V. Muse, President of Auburn University.

The Academy is limited to 100 living Alabamians whose service has greatly benefited or reflected credit on the state. Dr. Hullett's work with the non-profit community health agency based in Eutaw--which serves 20 rural counties--and her dedication to improving health care and quality of life for thousands of Alabamians were cited in the announcement of



Dr. Sandra Hullett (left) with UA President Andrew Sorensen at the first Rural Medical Scholars Convocation at CCHS in 1996. Dr. Hullett is on the Alabama Family Practice Rural Health Board, which helps fund the RMS program.

her election to the Academy. Dr. Hullett has been active in state and national organizations to make sure that rural health and primary care are not overlooked in planning for delivery of health care services. "Her work will have an impact for generations to come," said the Academy's news release.

Rural Alabama AHEC Involves Students in Primary Care Week activities

The Rural Alabama AHEC (Area Health Education Center) coordinated a number of activities in West Alabama counties to celebrate National Primary Care Week (NPCW) October 15 - 20, 2000. Medical students and premedical student volunteers from The University of Alabama were involved in each of the activities.

As part of the AHEC health education mission, staff and medical students held a "Doctor's Show and Tell" program at an elementary school in Double Springs, Alabama, and an "Anti-smoking Campaign" was held at Maddox Middle School in Jasper. Medical student volunteers offered free blood pressure screenings to the senior citizens who walk at University Mall in Tuscaloosa before the stores open. The medical students met at the mall at 8:00 a.m., took blood pressures, and talked with more than 50 senior citizens. One blood pressure check revealed that a woman had dangerously high blood pressure, and she was referred to a doctor who helped her get the needed medication even though she could not afford to buy it.

Rural Alabama AHEC employees and student assistants promoted STD (sexually transmitted disease) prevention and AIDS awareness on campus at The University of Alabama. They manned a booth on the "Quad," distributing information to college students concerning abstinence, unplanned pregnancy, STDs, and condoms.

UA medical students Chris Hillman and Beverly Jordan spoke to Clanton Elementary School students about the importance of wearing a helmet while riding a bicycle, and the Rural Alabama AHEC concluded the week by taking college students from seven different disciplines (Health Care Management, Medical Transcription, Medicine, Molecular Genetics, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Social Work) to Sulligent High School to speak to high school students about their chosen fields. Each volunteer discussed the field they were going into, classes needed in high school and college to prepare for the career, finding employment after graduation, and prospective salary ranges.

-Melissa Cox
Academic Activities Program Coordinator
Rural Alabama Area Health Education Center



2000. 10. 16



Right: CCHS medical students Chris Hillman (left) and Beverly Jordan (right) visited Clanton Elementary School to discuss bike safety, especially the importance of wearing a helmet. Sunny Duren (center), a member of the AHEC staff, watches as Chris puts a helmet on a Clanton student to show how a helmet protects the brain when a head injury occurs during a bike wreck.

CCHS medical student Curt Eddy (above and left) showed children in Double Springs what a doctor does during an examination. The "Show & Tell" was part of the Rural Alabama AHEC's observance of National Primary Care Week.



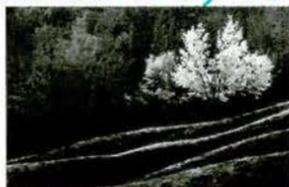
Alabama's Rural Health Dilemma: Getting Focus

SECOND ANNUAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

APRIL 26-27, 2001

Is it up to health professionals only?
What is the responsibility of Government?
What is needed from the private sector?
What can Alabama communities do to ensure the health of their citizens?

Come and help continue the discussion!



...The opinions of the people who live and work in rural Alabama are essential as decisions are made which affect our rural counties. The results of this conference will be valuable to the Legislature and state officials in planning for the future.

Representative Allen Layson
The Alabama Legislature
Pickens County

Key and McElrath Join NIEHS Team in Dept. of Community and Rural Medicine at CCHS

Timothy Key, MD, and **Jeff McElrath** have joined the CCHS Department of Community and Rural Medicine to assist with agromedicine-related projects, particularly implementation of the Rural Environmental and Occupational Health curriculum project funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Services. **John Wheat, MD**, Professor of Community and Rural Medicine and Internal Medicine, is Principal Investigator of the NIEHS study which is compiling information on rural health and medical priorities from people who live and work in rural Alabama and physicians practicing in these areas and incorporating their findings into materials for training physicians to meet the unique medical needs of rural populations.

"We are very pleased to have a senior colleague of Dr. Key's caliber with us to bring OEM to our teaching programs as Co-Investigator on the NIEHS grant and in agromedicine projects," said Dr. Wheat. Key is a graduate of the UASOM and trained in the specialty of OEM at the University of Pittsburg. He directed the OEM residency at UAB for over ten years and has directed the Occupational Medicine Component at the Deep South Center for Occupational Health & Safety, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Education & Research Center since 1990.

Dr. Key also assists the state Department of Public Health with Exposure Investigations for Toxic Substances and has worked with the Occupational Medical Review Program, U. S. Department of Energy, in Oak Ridge, TN, since 1992. Dr. Key is a Site Investigator for Education Resource Development Branch of NIOSH and serves on the American Board of Preventive Medicine's Committee on Question Writing for Occupational Medicine. He consulted on question writing for the National Board of Medical Examiners in 1990 and has served as peer reviewer for professional journals including *Southern Medical Journal* and *American Industrial Hygiene Assoc. Journal*.

Dr. Key was a member of the state Health Department's Committee which developed Objectives for Alabama Healthy People 2000, and he served on the MASA (state Medical Association) Committee on Workers' Compensation. In 1992, he was elected to the Delta Omega National Honor Society in Public Health.



Jeff McElrath

Jeff McElrath, a graduate of Auburn University who earned his master's degree in medical anthropology at UA, will coordinate the activities of the NIEHS grant project, working with faculty and staff to incorporate environmental concerns into the medical school curriculum through problem-based learning strategies. He will be assisting in the development of case-study materials, which are garnered primarily from incidents occurring in rural Alabama. Prior to accepting the role of Program Coordinator, he worked as a Research Assistant in environmental health under the advisement of Dr.

Tim Key. His research focused on organophosphate pesticide exposures. "My research interests with the grant are from the view of environmental and medical anthropology," said McElrath.



Dr. Tim Key

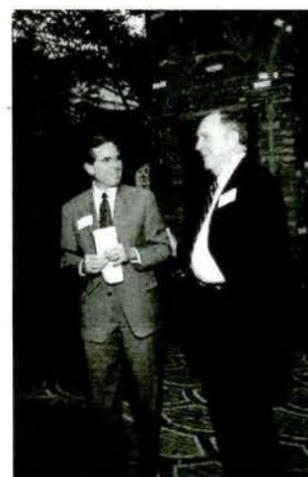


Alice Maxwell (left) and Anne Monfore, Lister Hill Society Board members who chaired planning for the Society's fundraiser in October, are pictured with Tommy Hester (center), Chairman of the Lister Hill Society Board, at the event, held this year at the Warner Guest House of the Chancellor's Residence.

Warners and Merediths Host Lister Hill Society Fundraiser

The third annual Lister Hill fundraiser was hosted by UA Chancellor Tom Meredith and his wife Susan and local businessman Jack Warner and his wife Elizabeth at the Chancellor's Residence on October 26. It was the most successful ever both in terms of attendance and money raised, said Vicki Johnson, CCHS Director of Advancement.

In previous years, the Lister Hill fundraiser has been hosted by UA President and Mrs. Andrew Sorensen at the President's Mansion, and by Jack and Elizabeth Warner at the Mildred Warner House, a historic structure which the Warners have restored and furnished with antiques and part of their extensive art collection.



Jack Warner (right) chats with Dean William Curry in the courtyard of the Warner Guest House.

Dean William Curry attributed the success of the annual event to Tommy Hester, Lister Hill Board Chairman, and Board members for their dedication to medical education and commitment to greater community support for the medical students and family practice residents in training at CCHS. "We feel that we are raising awareness in the community of the value of our program. As a result, support is increasing every year," said Dr. Curry. The Tuscaloosa Radiology Clinic and Pershing, Yoakley, and Associates were corporate sponsors for the event.



UA Chancellor Tom Meredith welcomes the Lister Hill Society.



Eleanor Hill Hubbard, a great granddaughter of Senator Lister Hill and a student at UA, with Dr. Mike Taylor (left) on Oct. 26.

To make a year-end, tax deductible contribution to the Lister Hill Society or to the College of Community Health Sciences as a designated or general gift, contact:

**Vicki Johnson, Director of Advancement
CCHS Dean's Office
Box 870326
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0326
(205) 348-0093 • vjohnson@ccha.ua.edu**

OnRounds
The University of Alabama
College of Community Health Sciences

The College of Community Health Sciences is a clinical branch campus of the University of Alabama School of Medicine. Established in 1972, CCHS emphasizes family practice and the other primary care disciplines and provides a sound basic medical education for all medical students assigned to this campus. CCHS also trains family doctors through a three-year family practice residency program to meet the urgent need for family physicians. A primary focus of the CCHS mission is seeking solutions for rural health care problems in Alabama.

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William A. Curry, Dean

Linda Jackson, Editor

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
HEALTH SCIENCES

The University of Alabama
College of Community Health Sciences
Box 870326
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0326

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