Graduating Medical Students Recognized in May

Graduates of the University of Alabama School of Medicine who completed their medical training on Tuscaloosa’s clinical campus of UASOM were recognized on May 16, 2003, at the 27th Annual CCHS Honors Convocation. David Mathews, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Kettering Foundation in Dayton, Ohio, was the speaker for the event held at the Four Points Hotel in Tuscaloosa. Dr. Mathews was president of UA 1969-1980 and was instrumental in establishing the College of Community Health Sciences in 1972.

Dr. Lala Patil of Centerville was named Preceptor of the Year, for her dedication to teaching medical students on Community Medicine and Family Medicine rotations at her family practice in Bibb County.

State Representative Jeff Dolbare received special recognition as an honorary Rural Medical Scholar to acknowledge his support for the UA Rural Medical Scholars Program, which is based at CCHS and recruits rural students into medical careers in rural Alabama. The program, which was founded in 1996, draws heavily upon the philosophy of Dr. William R. Willard, the ’Father of Family Medicine’ and the founding dean of CCHS who taught that physicians must understand and be part of the dynamics of the community.

Awards were given by each department to their top students, and Dr. William R. Shamblin, Professor Emeritus of Surgery, for whom the Surgery Award is named, received a standing ovation and a special award honoring him for his support of the college. (See more about Dr. Shamblin on page 7.)

The Tuscaloosa senior medical students cite excellence in teaching at Honors Convocation by giving the Faculty Recognition Award for the Junior Year and the Patrick McCue Award for contributions to medical education in the senior year. This year’s class gave both faculty teaching awards to Dr. Eugene Marsh and honored Dr. Salih Faldon with the Resident Recognition Award for teaching.

Emily Dolbare, MD, received the prestigious William R. Willard Award. This singular recognition is awarded annually to a senior medical student for outstanding contributions to the goals and mission of the College of Community Health Sciences. Dr. Dolbare, a Rural Medical Scholar, also won the Robert F. Gloor Award in Community Medicine.

Collin King, MD, was honored by his classmates with the James H. Akers Memorial Award. This award, chosen by members the graduating senior class, is presented annually to the Tuscaloosa Senior who best personifies both the art and the science of the practice of medicine.

Bridget Brunner, MD, presented the award.

Emily Dolbare (left) received an honorary Rural Medical Scholar award from Dean Curry, Dr. John Brandon, and Dr. John Wheat.

Dr. Beth Gober receives the Academic Achievement Award from Dean William A. Curry for highest average in clinical training at CCHS.

Collin King (right) was chosen by members of his class to receive the James H. Akers Memorial Award, presented annually to the Tuscaloosa senior who best exemplifies the art and science of the practice of medicine. Class President Bridget Brunner, MD, (left) presented the award.

Dr. Shamblin with his wife, Kay, after the presentation holds the plaque presented to him by Dr. Wallace which reads:

FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS, SETTING HIGH STANDARDS AND STRONG LEADERSHIP IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY

The University of Alabama College of Community Health Sciences

Former UA President and CCHS co-founder, Dr. David Mathews, was keynote speaker.

May 16, 2003
In the spring of ‘87, David Mathews, Bill Willard, and Bob Gloor, along with several others, committed themselves and the University of Alabama to an intensive, yet unique experience in the history of academic medicine. Their purposes were threefold: (1) to address the need for physicians in rural Alabama, (2) to counter the trend toward technology-driven, expensive, and impersonal patient care, and (3) to expand the definition of health and of health professions education to include the community as an essential and central component of such a model. The result was the College of Community Health Sciences (CCHS). To give life to this vision, key components of CCHS from the start were a Family Practice Residency, community-based education for medical students, residents, and other health professions students; and community-responsive research and outreach. At every level, the approach was to be interdisciplinary.

The early team was soon to expand to include John Packard, Bob Moore, Bob Pieroni, David Heffelfinger, and a “Kentucky Mafia” emigrating with Willard from the newly formed UK College of Medicine, including Bill Winterritz, Roland Ficken, Doug Scutchfield, Russ Anderson, and Bob Gloo. So as America walked on the moon, as the war in Vietnam became a raging controversy, and as students demonstrated and rioted on campuses across the nation, Mathews, Willard, and company forged a new kind of college, with a new kind of mission, and with a new kind of need.

As we approached the 30th Anniversary of the founding of CCHS, it was apparent to me that for most of the CCHS family of alumni, students, residents, staff, and even faculty, our knowledge of the CCHS story was limited — mostly limited to tales of the trials and tribulations of CCHS and the larger UA medical campus in Birmingham. While knowing the truth about that part of the story was necessary, a view restricted to that perspective alone was sure to be lacking in many ways. CCHS Dean Emeritus Wilmer Coggins has given generously of his time and skill to head a superb effort of volunteers and staff to produce the gift of this story we have told — in a book which has been completed and submitted for publication. See article, column 2.

It is a story not just about the struggles — academic, financial, political, or personal — but about the reasons for those struggles: the purposes born of the efforts of our founders, and the results we can claim over these thirty years. It is important to know the truth about all of it, because knowing it frees us for today’s work. Surely it is so that he who ignores the lessons of history is condemned to repeat them. Beyond that, there are interesting parts of the story that have national implications, both in medical education and in the realm of public policy. However, in sifting the facts and plotting the vectors of the past thirty years, another, even more substantial reason for studying the history of CCHS emerges. It is that in doing so we can establish relationships with the minds and hearts that brought the experiment to life. We have the limited opportunity to get to know the people who did it, because many of the founders and early leaders are still with us. Not only are they able, but willing, to recall, to reflect, and to share of their experiences. For them, as for so many of our students, residents, staff, patients, and communities of people in Alabama and indeed across the nation — we can be grateful. They have contributed to a rich and fulfilling journey.

The journey begun amidst exploding azaleas and dogwoods, a journey designed to confront exploding technology, health care costs, and emerging dissatisfaction about the American system of health care, has continued. The route has been both predictable and unpredictable. The reasons for the founding of CCHS are as if anything more acute today as they were thirty years ago: rural communities have even more complex medical, economic, and social distress; American health care is even more technology-driven, expensive, and impersonal; and the role of community in health care and in other essential relationships and decision-making faces an uncertain future.

The people of our state and nation are crying out for something different, something to clarify and balance the whole confusing system. If we are going to participate in the discussion, we still need the vision of thirty years ago, refined and adapted for today. We still need physicians and others educated and trained with an extra dimension, an additional set of tools in their black bags. We still need a Special Kind of Doctor.

William A. Curry, M.D., F.A.C.P.
Dean, CCHS

Recalling Our History...
Hooper Named OB/GYN Chair

Dr. Dwight Hooper, MD, as Chair of the CCHS Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. “Dwight has served ably as Interim Chair and has the enthusiastic endorsement of the other members of the OB/ GYN department. He has been a great proponent of the idea of increasing the amount of time spent by our residents and students with patients. Dwight also led the team that successfully negotiated the changes in the office hours for the CCHS OB/GYN residents.”

Sundar to Chair Internal Medicine Branch for Teaching to Interim Role

Dr. Vijaya Sundar, Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine and a clinical faculty member at CCHS since 1985, accepted the position as interim chair of internal medicine because he “wants to make a difference in teaching.” She wants CCHS to be one of the best medical schools for clinical teaching of internal medicine, she said. Educated in India, she said, “Ildoctorian and her scores on national testing there” ranked her as a National Merit Scholar.

She graduated from Madras Medical College and was a tutor there before coming to the U.S. She completed her residency in New York at Flashing Hospital, an affiliate of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, where she was selected as Best Intern in Internal Medicine. Dr. Sundar oversees a teaching clinic in cardiology, one of her clinical practice interests, and supervises students in advanced psychology courses at U.A. Dr. Sundar and her husband, Tuscaloosa gastroenterologist S.B. Sundar, have a son who just graduated from Emory and a daughter who is a student there.

In Memory of Dr. Bill Shamblin

The College of Community Health Sciences Tuscaloosa surgeon and UA Professor Emeritus, Dr. William R. Shamblin, died July 10, 2003, at the age of 66. Shamblin organized the College of Community Health Sciences Department of Surgery and recruited volunteer faculty when the medical branch campus was established in Tuscaloosa in the early 1970’s. He was Chair of the Department of Surgery for 11 years.

“Dr. Shamblin had a deep commitment to medical education and to the College of Community Health Sciences. He was invaluable as a member of the Lister Hill Society Board of Directors for many years, giving of his time and money. He is one of the most compassionate and dedicated physicians I have ever met,” said CCHS Advancement Director Vicki Johnson.

Dr. Shamblin funded two state-of-the-art computer labs at CCHS in memory of his father, Dr. Roscoe Shamblin, and four were Shamblins.

Dr. Shamblin graduated from the University of Alabama in 1959 and earned his medical degree from the University of Tennessee in 1968. He served in the U.S. Army from 1967 to 1968. Dr. Shamblin served in a military practice at Fort Benning during 1967-1968.

He began private practice in Tuscaloosa in 1968 with particular interest in vascular, general, and later trauma surgery. He was appointed Professor of Surgery at The University of Alabama School of Medicine in 1991. Working with the students and residents was a tremendous joy to him. He was honored for his outstanding contributions and strong leadership in the Department of Surgery at The University of Alabama School of Medicine. Recently, The University designed the “William R. Shamblin” award in his honor to be given to the top surgical student, and the first award was presented at the 2003 Honors Convocation in May when the award was first presented.

Remembering Dr. Bill Shamblin

Dean William Curry, who honored Dr. Shamblin at ribbon-cutting ceremonies for the new computer labs and at Lister Hill receptions, spoke of Dr. Shamblin’s critical support for CCHS when it was founded and his invaluable contribution in organizing volunteer faculty to teach in the new surgery department. “His passion seemed strong for the college,” said Dr. Curry, “to demonstrate his commitment to providing the very best medical education possible.”

Dr. Timothy Winkler, Associate Chair of Surgery, was one of Dr. Shamblin’s medical students, and expressed his admiration for him as a surgeon and was saddened by his illness and death. Dr. Joseph Wallace, Surgery Dept. Chairman, spoke for the Surgery department and the college at the 2003 Honors Convocation when he commended Dr. Shamblin for his leadership and generosity to CCHS. Nikki Moore, Surgery Program Coordinator since 1979, who worked with Dr. Shamblin longer than anyone else in the College, said, “Dr. Shamblin worked very hard opening doors for our students and residents with local surgeons. He also worked closely with Dr. Willard to “launch” the college here. The College would be an important part of his life and continued to be for many years. He was known by his peers for his professionalism and by his patients for his compassion. We all will miss him.”

Sheppard, Lehman Become Internal Medicine Hospitalists

Robert Sheppard, MD, and Charles Lehman, MD, have joined CCHS and will focus on hospital-based teaching and service.

Dr. Sheppard, a graduate of Dothan High School and The University of Alabama, earned his MD degree at the University of Alabama School of Medicine (UASOM). He completed his internship and residency in internal medicine at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine in Mobile, Alabama, since 1980, and has been an active member of the Pickens County Medical Society staff since that time, serving as president of the Medical Staff four times and serving as chairman of the board of directors for the medical center for eight years.

Dr. Sheppard is a member of the Medical Association of Shelby County, the American Society of Internal Medicine, and the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine. He has been director of the Diagnostic Ultrasound Laboratory at Pickens County Medical Center since 1982. He also directs the Cardiovascular and Peripheral Vascular Laboratory there (since 1980) and the Intensive Care Unit (since 1981).

He has been a CCHS attending physician and professor of community medicine since 1992, and serves as clinical preceptor in the department of internal medicine, division of internal medicine and geriatrics for the USA College of Medicine.

His hobbies are golf, gardening, and computers, especially networking, internet applications, medical information systems, and medical education services.

CCCHS Assisting Research on Vaccine for Cytomegalovirus

The College of Community Health Sciences is involved in a Cytomegalovirus (CMV) vaccine study. A vaccine is being offered to women who have recently delivered a baby at DCH Regional Medical Center or Northport Medical Center who are seronegative. The purpose of this study is to develop a vaccine to prevent CMV infection of mothers and their unborn babies.

CMV is the leading cause of congenital infection in the U.S. and the leading infectious cause of hearing loss and brain damage in infants. CMV is a common virus that infects people of all ages throughout the world. In the U.S. 50-85% of adults usually have had CMV by the age of 40, but the person infected usually has no signs or symptoms. 

However, when a CMV infection occurs in a pregnant woman, the virus can be passed to the unborn fetus and can lead to central nervous system damage for each year at risk. Around 6000 to 7000 U.S. have congenital CMV infection. Around 6000 to 7000 infants are born annually with hearing loss, mental retardation, cerebral palsy or impaired vision. There is no effective treatment for congenital CMV.

This study is important because there are currently no vaccine for CMV infection in pregnant women. The study is funded by a grant awarded by the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. For more information about this study, call Liz Davis, RN, study coordinator, at (205) 348-4780.

Dr. Shamblin with William Award winner Beverly Joseph and Dean Curry at the 2000 Honors Convocation.
Neurology award winners with Dr. Eugene Marsh; Dr. Beth Gober, Marsh, Dr. Elizabeth Harper, and Dr. Christine Castrichini.

Dr. Emily Dolbare receives the William R. Willard Award from Dean William A. Curry. The honor is named for the founding dean of the college and recognizes the graduating senior who best reflects the goals and mission of the College of Community Health Sciences. Dr. Dolbare is a Rural Medical Scholar from Washington County.

Elizabeth Gober, MD, earned the CCHS Scholastic Achievement Award. This award is presented to the senior with highest academic performance during the clinical years in Tuscaloosa. Dr. Gober also received the American Medical Women’s Association Janet M. Glasgow Award, which recognizes each woman who is in the top ten percent of her class, and the Merck Manual Award. Dr. Gober received departmental awards in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Neurology, and Surgery.

The Larry Mayes Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Amanda Barron, a Birmingham-based medical student who plans to use the scholarship to work in Lima, Peru.

HONORS CONVOCATION (from page 1)

Dr. Emily Dolbare receives the William R. Willard Award from Dean William A. Curry. The honor is named for the founding dean of the college and recognizes the graduating senior who best reflects the goals and mission of the College of Community Health Sciences. Dr. Dolbare is a Rural Medical Scholar from Washington County.

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CCHS's Newest Alums Enter Residency Training
University of Alabama School of Medicine- Tuscaloosa
NATIONAL RESIDENT MATCH PROGRAM - 2003

NAME
Ammons, Jessica M.
Black, L. Vandy
Brunner, Bridget S.
Castrichini, Christine M
Cole, Jonathan E.
Dolbare, Emily L.
Gerhardt, Christina Michael
Gierevan, Brad M.
Gober, Elizabeth H.
Harper, Elizabeth L.
Kennedy, Jason D.
King, Collin K.
Martin, T. Wade
McDonald, John T., Jr.
Melton, Emily Y.
Muhammad-Faldon, Medinah
Ojeda, D. Melissa
Pepper, Jeremy S.
Pua-Vines, Zyria R.
Quinn, Randolph L.
Reynolds, Gregory B.
Sheppard, J. Dustin
Smith, Joshua E.
Thompson, T. Lee
Valentine, Brian N.

PROGRAM
UAB Medical Center, Birmingham, AL
UAB Medical Center, Birmingham, AL
Univ. of TN-Chattanooga, Chattanooga, TN
Univ. of TX-Southwestern, Dallas, TX
Baptist Health System, Birmingham, AL
Baptist Health System, Birmingham, AL
Bowman Gray/Wake Forest Med. Ctr., Winston-Salem, NC
Univ. of Cincinnati Hospital, Cincinnati, OH
Vanderbilt Medical Center, Nashville, TN
Vanderbilt Medical Center, Nashville, TN
UAB Medical Center, Birmingham, AL
Baptist Health System, Birmingham, AL
Univ. of KY Medical Center, Lexington, KY
Univ. of South Alabama Medical Center, Mobile, AL
Emory Univ. School of Medicine, Atlanta, GA
Univ. of Chicago Hospitals, Chicago, IL
Tuscanyta Family Practice, Tuscaloosa, AL
Carolinas Medical Center, Charlotte, NC
Baptist Health System, Birmingham, AL
Baptist Health System, Birmingham, AL
Methodist Hospital of Memphis, Memphis, TN
SUNY Health Science Center, Syracuse, NY

SPECIALTY
Pediatrics
Pediatrics
OB/GYN
Pediatrics
Internal Medicine
Pediatrics
Internal Medicine
Pediatrics
Surgery
OB/GYN
Prelim. Internal Medicine
Neurology
Anesthesiology
Transitional
Anesthesiology
Anesthesiology
OB/GYN
Internal Medicine
OB/GYN
Emergency Medicine
Family Medicine
OB/GYN
Prelim. Internal Medicine
Transitional
Anesthesiology
Internal Medicine
Transitional
Radiology


On behalf of the senior class, Dr. Elizabeth Harper presents Dr. Eugene Marsh with an award for contributions to medical education in the junior year, one of two teaching awards he received from the graduating class.

OnRounds • Summer 2003

Dr. Ashley Evans (at podium) and Dr. Karen Burgess (right) awarded "Kids Rule" tee-shirts to top seniors in pediatrics: Vandy Black, Christi Gerhardt, Chrsy Castrichini, and Jessica Ammons. Inset: Ammons examines her new shirt.

Melissa Ojeda (right) and Christine Castrichini (left) with Dr. Cathy Gresham, director of Medical Student Affairs, won Janet M. Glasgow awards for academic excellence.
New Residents Join Family Practice Residency Program

Ernest Tim Viator, Jay Darji, Saqib Hamid, Chan Nguyen Middle: Song Yu, Irma Higginbotham, Suzanne McLeod Mohammed Choudry Back: Dr. Sam Gaskins, Han Chen, Jason Todd, Randy Quinn, Antonioine Adam Not Pictured: Antonioine Zaharia

Antoine Adams, MD, was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti and came to America in his teens. He received his degree in Management at the University of Alabama in 2000, and went to the University of Central Florida to study medical school and graduated in 1996. Since then, he worked for NY as a critical care investigator and medical diagnostician. Dr. Adams speaks fluent Spanish, French, and Portuguese.

Han Chen, MD, was born in Taipei, Taiwan, but has lived in America most of his life. He graduated from UCLA with a degree in biology and went to medical school in Mexico for five years before transferring to the University of Maryland, and graduated in 2001. He speaks Mandarin, Taiwanese fluently. He is learning Spanish.

Muhammad Choudry, MD, was born in Gujrat, Pakistan. He has lived in America since he was 14 years old. He went straight from high school to the University of Pennsylvania's School of Medicine, and graduated in 2004. He is fluent in English and Arabic.

Jason Todd, MD, was born in Montgomery, AL. He went to undergraduate at Auburn University and graduated with a degree in Pre-Medical/Geology. He worked as a geology technician before going to medical school. He went to medical school at St. George's University and graduated in 2003.

Song Yu, MD, was born in Jiang Hong, South Korea, and came to America at the age of 12. He graduated from Michigan State University School of Medicine and graduated in 1999. After returning to the U.S., Dr. Yu opened Your Fragrances, which was located on Times Square in New York. He is fluent in Mandarin, Taiwanese, and is learning Spanish.

Antoanela Zaharia, MD, was born in Bucharest, Romania. She went to medical school at Carol Davila in Romania and graduated in 1997. She is fluent in Romanian and French.

Lister Hill Society Board Meets

The Lister Hill Society Board of Directors met on April 27, 2003, at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. Alice Maxwel was elected as the new President of the Board and Sammy Watson, Vice President. Tommy Hester has served as President for the past three years and will remain active on the Board. New board members elected are: Charles Williams, Eddie Lovingood, Kay Buna, Jamie Clark, MD, and Betty Shirley. Other board members are Dean Emeritus William Goggans, MD, Sam Gaskins, MD, Anne Monfore, Michael Saylor, MD, and William McCants. Planning has begun for the upcoming 5th annual Lister Hill fund-raiser set for November 11, 2003 at the Warner Museum.

In other business, the Board voted to make a major gift of $25,000 to the CCHS building fund.

Alice Maxwel, Tommy Hester, and Anne Monfore at a Lister Hill reception in 2000.

Building Update

Construction of the new 77,000 sq. ft. facility, to house the College of Community Health Sciences remains on schedule. The building will consolidate clinical and administrative offices, providing for greater efficiency. Steering Committee members for the building fundraising effort are: Madeleine Hill, Chair, Jim Fleming, Anne Monson, Dean Emeritus Roland Ficken, Ph.D., Ed Shotts, MD, Carol M. Johnson, MD, Roxie J. Hill, Jon Sanford, MD, Fuller Kemble, Donna Smith, MD, Dean William A. Curry, MD, and Vicki Johnson.

The committee set a goal of $3.1 million for private gifts and have raised $1.1 to date. Several people have taken advantage of naming opportunities in the new building and others remain. Spaces named to date are: The Betty Shirley Clinic for Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine, Energy Psychiatrist Administrative Suite, Anne & Buddy Moman Reception area, Psychiatry Suite, Bank of Tuscaloosa and Jim & Dianna Fleming Clinic Lobby, William W. Winterritz Internal Medicine Administrative Suite, Reese Phifer, Jr. Internal Medicine Lobby, and the Toyzali Dean’s Office and Conference Room.

For more information on the project or naming opportunities contact Vicki Johnson, (205)348-0903 or vjohnson@cchs.ua.edu.
Jimmie Clark Wins FleetBoston Community Fellows Award from Brown Medical School

Dr. Jimmie Clark, a 1995 residency graduate, has been awarded a 2003 FleetBoston Fellowship, an award to graduates of Brown Medical School who exemplify the qualities of social responsibility and human service in their medical careers. The innovative loan relief program for outstanding Brown medical graduates was made possible by support from the FleetBoston Charitable Foundation. Dr. Clark was one of only nine recipients chosen from a nationwide pool of 25 Brown alumni nominees.

Dr. Clark, a family physician in Tuscaloosa, has been active in the American Academy of Family Physicians and was appointed as resident representative to the AAFP Committee on Minority Health Affairs when she was a second year resident at CCHS. She is now president-elect of the Alabama Chapter of AAFP. She is a board member of the Lister Hill Society and has also been a preceptor to CCHS medical and premed students, rural scholars, and residents. "Dr. Clark has been an invaluable resource as we set up rural scholars programs and select rural scholars to participate in the programs," said Dr. John Wheat, founder and director of Rural Scholars programs based at CCHS.

CCHS Alums and First Grads in Rural Medical Scholars Program Lead Residency Programs

Three 1996 Rural Medical Scholars have been chosen as leaders of their residency programs. Drake Lavender is Chief Resident of the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency. Kevin Ellis is Chief Resident in Pediatrics at UAB; and Paul Tabereaux will serve as Chief Resident in Internal Medicine at Yale in New Haven, Connecticut. All three completed their clinical training at CCHS and graduated from UASOM in 2001.

Southern Medical Journal Features Farm Field Trips for Med Students

John R. Wheat, MD, MPH, Professor of Community and Rural Medicine and Internal Medicine, is lead author for an article in Southern Medical Journal, “Agmedicine Focus Group: Cooperative Extension Agents and Medical School Instructors Plan Farm Field Trips for Medical Students.” Collaborating authors are Tamela Turner, PhD, Lloyd Weatherly, MS, and Oscar S. Wiggins, MA. The article explains the importance of joint efforts between professionals in agricultural science and medical science in educating medical students who will become doctors treating patients in rural occupations.

Since 1996, the Tuscaloosa program has required third-year medical students to visit a farm with an agricultural extension agent as part of a two-month rural family and community medicine experience. The students learn about extension agents’ roles, farmers’ concerns, and hazards associated with farming and the farm environment. A goal for Tuscaloosa students preparing for rural practice, say the authors, is to understand the importance of the agromedicine partnership in addressing needs and concerns arising out of agricultural lifestyles, environments, and products. “The intent is to lay the groundwork for future collaboration” among county agents and these students who will become physicians. The field trips are valuable to Birmingham medical students, whose ambitions are generally directed toward specialty practice in urban areas, because, according to a Birmingham medical faculty member who participated in the focus group, it gives students a chance to observe differences and disparities among people and practices and talk to people “outside the isolating culture of the academic medical center.” Though most of these students will have urban practices, they will have rural patients and interact with rural physicians.
Dr. Blum Lectures in Finland

Alan Blum, MD, Professor and Gerald Leon Wallace Endowed Chair in Family Medicine and Director, Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society attended the 12th World Conference on Tobacco or Health in Helsinki, Finland, where he was invited to give four presentations. In “Artists as Ashtrays: History of Tobacco Industry Sponsorship of the Arts,” Dr. Blum discussed examples of cultural sponsorships by Philip Morris in its quest to become the premier corporate patron of the arts.

Another talk, “Doctors Ought to Care ( DOC) and Tobacco: A 25-year Evaluation of Physician Involvement in the Clinic, Classroom, and Community,” reviewed more than 30 paid mass media counter-advertising campaigns and satirical sports and cultural events created by DOC, which Dr. Blum founded in 1977 as a resident in family medicine.

In a third presentation, “A Safer Form of Aromatic? The Dynamic Marketing History of Smokeless Tobacco,” Dr. Blum traced the history of advertising for oral mucosal tobacco products in the United States. In “Doctors Ought to Care (DOC) and its 10-Year Counter-Advertising Campaign Aimed at Marlboro Consumers,” Dr. Blum discussed the brand name ridicule approach utilized by DOC in its campaign to reduce demand for Marlboro.

Dr. Blum also exhibited a poster entitled, “Canaries in the Mine: The Airline Flight Attendants’ Fight to End Smoking Aloft,” which provides an illustrated history of smoking aloft. The poster is based upon an exhibit prepared by the Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society and displayed at the Flight Attendant Medical Research Institute this spring. In recognition of his efforts in tobacco control, Dr. Blum was one of 15 conference attendees awarded a laptop computer.

UA Rural Health Scholars Program Marks Tenth Anniversary

Rural Medicine Pipeline at CCHS Sees Progress in First Decade

The UA Rural Health Scholars Program (RHSP) and CCHS’s Rural Medicine Pipeline celebrated ten years at a luncheon on August 19 attended by students and a wide variety of supporters of rural health programs. RHSP’s founders – Dr. Bob Garner, Cynthia Moore, and Dr. John Wheat – were recognized. The Rural Medicine Pipeline Model was created to find and nurture capable rural students who want to become rural physicians. The basic premise is that rural students are more likely than urban students to become rural physicians. Additional requirements of the rural medicine pipeline are: a) educational programs to produce family physicians with knowledge and skills specific to rural practice, b) rural community educational experiences to offset the influence of training in urban medical centers, and c) public support for rural physician practices in economically depressed areas.

The Rural Health Scholars Program (RHSP), the first of the rural scholars programs at CCHS, was initiated in 1993 to attract competitive rural eleventh graders to a five-week summer experience at the University of Alabama to boost their interest and academic skills for pursuing health careers. In ten years, a diverse group of 298 rural students from 59 Alabama counties have completed the program. Three members of the first class have graduated from medical school and others are continuing in the Rural Medicine Pipeline.

The Rural Medical Scholars Program (RMSP) was initiated in 1996 with permission from the Dean of the University of Alabama School of Medicine to enroll as many as ten rural students yearly in a pathway of education aimed at producing rural primary care physicians. The RMSP requires these specially selected students to spend a rural community health year at the University of Alabama before entering medical school. The Rural Medical Scholars complete their third and fourth years of medical school at UA’s College of Community Health Sciences, the University of Alabama School of Medicine-Tuscaloosa, and several have chosen to remain for their residency training at CCHS. RMSP has enrolled 82 students from 43 counties.

In 2001, the Minority Rural Health Pipeline Program enrolled its first ten college-bound high school graduates. After three years of conducting the Rural Medical Scholars Program, it had become apparent that special efforts would be required to recruit needed minority Rural Medical Scholars. Minority Rural Health Scholars who had credentials for success in medical education rarely had the standardized test scores they needed to gain significant scholarship support offered at the University of Alabama. Thus, we were losing these students to other colleges, often in other states. The Minority Rural Health Pipeline Program (MRHPP) was designed to attract minority Rural Health Scholars and other competitive minority students to the University of Alabama in the summer after they graduate from high school and for successive summers. MRHPP keeps these students in the “pipeline” during premedical studies, prepares them to take the Medical School Admissions Test, and seeks to enroll them in the RMSP.