

ON ROUNDS

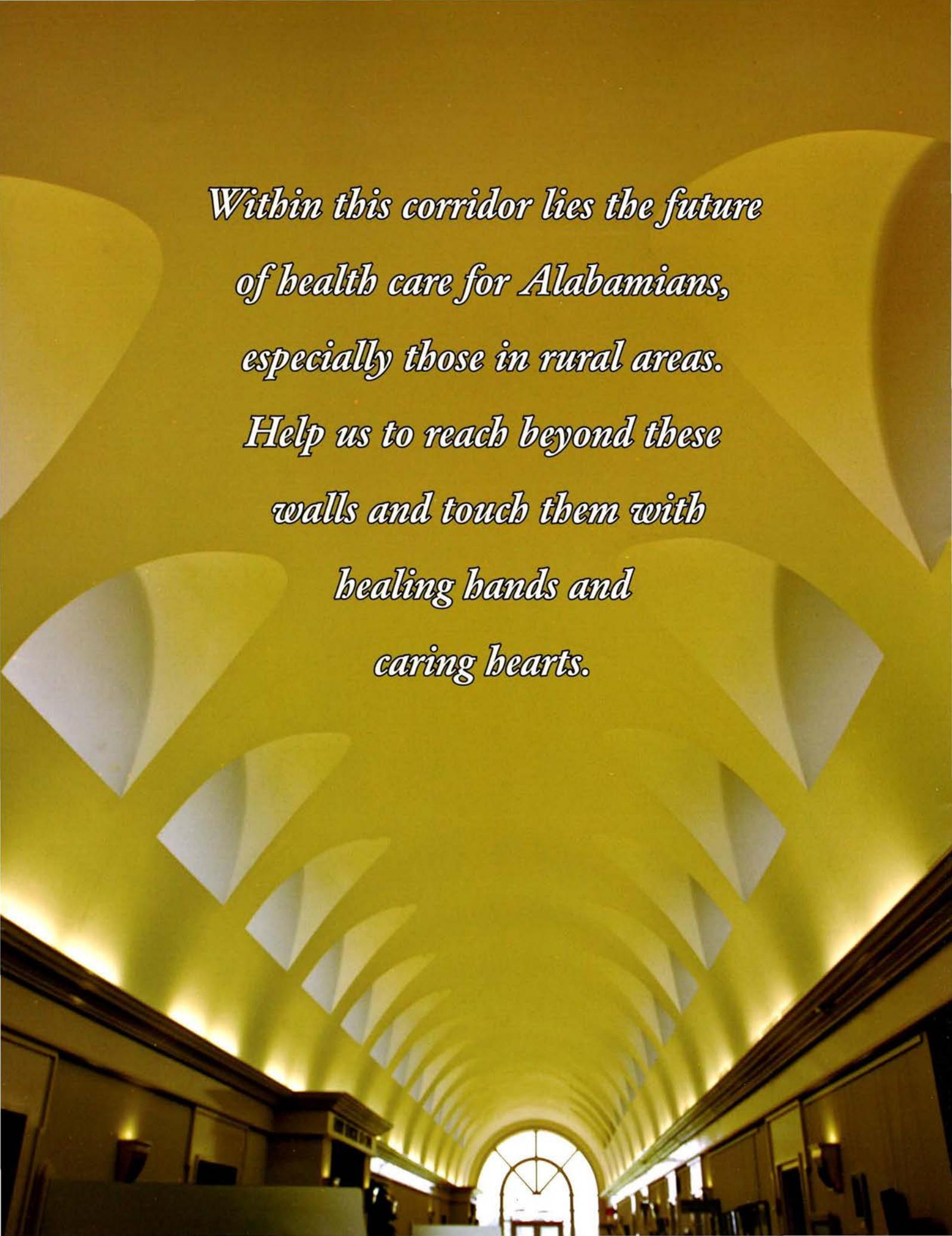
The University of Alabama College of Community Health Sciences
School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus

Fall 2006



Health Sciences Library

- New Lecture Series named for William W. Winternitz, M.D.
- College Marks 30th Anniversary of First Residency Graduates

A long, brightly lit corridor with a vaulted ceiling and arched windows at the end. The ceiling is a series of repeating white, fan-like shapes that create a rhythmic pattern. The walls are a warm, golden-yellow color, and the floor is dark. The lighting is soft and even, creating a sense of depth and perspective. The overall atmosphere is clean, modern, and inviting.

*Within this corridor lies the future
of health care for Alabamians,
especially those in rural areas.
Help us to reach beyond these
walls and touch them with
healing hands and
caring hearts.*

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

“A Perfect Opportunity”

It doesn't get any better than this! We all want to make a difference, and in my opinion, there is no better opportunity to make a difference than to be part of the College of Community Health Sciences at this time.

We have an extremely talented faculty and staff, excellent students and residents, a superb facility, outstanding administrative support from The University of Alabama and The University of Alabama School of Medicine, growing community support and a top-notch medical center. As a result of the hard work of the faculty and staff of this College over the last two years, we are now in a very good financial position. We have moved into a new clinical and academic facility that is second to none. We have seen changes in our educational programs, clinical programs and research that have been challenging, but necessary.

The culmination of these and other factors will position us for strategic growth over the next several years. Instead of the “perfect storm,” we are facing the “perfect opportunity.”

The College of Community Health Sciences has a long and successful history of training medical students and Family Medicine residents. In its 33 years of existence, 336 residents have graduated from our program and approximately 50 percent of those continue to practice in Alabama. We have trained approximately 580 medical students in their third and fourth years. These students have trained in a variety of specialties and 49 percent are practicing in Alabama. The rural programs are having an increasingly important impact as these students proceed through the “pipeline” that has been developed by Dr. John Wheat and others over the last 10 years. We have had outstanding administrative and faculty leadership since the College was founded by a small group of dedicated physicians 33 years ago. Many of these individuals continue to play important roles in the College today.

The College of Community Health Sciences has an impressive legacy, but there is a lot of work still to be done.

Our “perfect opportunity” is occurring at a time when health care nationally is in transition, Family Medicine is being redefined and health care in many parts of Alabama is of poor quality or not available at all. I believe that our College represents the future of Family Medicine and is



E. Eugene Marsh, M.D.

poised to make an even larger impact on health care in this state. We are positioned to be leaders in what, I believe, is inevitable – a major transformation in health care over the next five to 10 years.

There is growing recognition nationally that we must refocus our efforts on preventive care, we must improve the quality of care that is delivered, and we must become more “customer centered.” This fits well with our history, our mission and, most importantly, our opportunity.

Our goal is to become the best Family Medicine training program in the country, the best clinical training site for medical students, an example of how to provide high-

quality, patient-centered health care in a busy clinical setting, a nationally recognized center for the training of physicians for practice in rural Alabama and a leading center for research as it applies to our rural and primary care mission. The result will be a significant contribution to helping Alabama become a state where health care rankings are viewed with the same pride as athletic rankings.

These are lofty goals, but I believe they are achievable. It will take the continued effort of our faculty and staff, our previous and future graduates, and others in the community and state who share our vision and who do their part to support our mission.

As for me, I did not become affiliated with the College of Community Health Sciences aspiring to become dean. I came here because I believed in the mission of this College, because I love to teach, and because of the respect I have for the College faculty I have worked with over the years. Becoming dean was unplanned, but it is one of the most rewarding opportunities I have ever encountered.

I am proud to serve this College as dean, appreciative of all the excellent work that has been done here in the past and excited about the challenges that lay before us as we work together to make the most of this “perfect opportunity.”

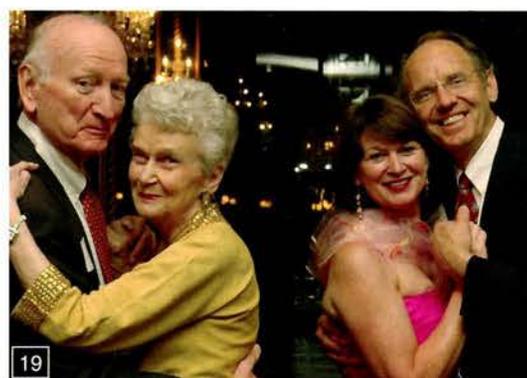
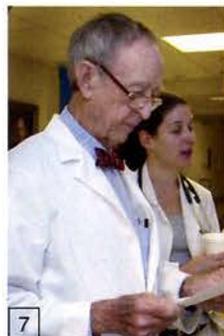
E. Eugene Marsh, M.D.

Dean, College of Community Health Sciences
Associate Dean, The University of Alabama
School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus

ON ROUNDS

Volume 15, Number 3
Fall 2006

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IMPROVING HEALTH CARE IN ALABAMA

On Rounds is a semi-annual publication of The University of Alabama College of Community Health Sciences/School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus. CCHS emphasizes family practice and 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 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.

College launches new lecture series

The College of Community Health Sciences/School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus has started a new lecture series for medical students and residents named in honor of a long-time and distinguished member of the College's faculty.

The Winternitz Conferences will feature prominent speakers who will address such topics as ethics, communication, professionalism and quality improvement, among others. The conferences are named in honor of William W. Winternitz, M.D., who joined the College in 1977 and chaired the Department of Internal Medicine. Winternitz is now retired and living in Tuscaloosa.

The conferences replace the lecture series "First Friday," which Winternitz created more than two decades ago. That lecture series exposed College faculty, staff, medical students and residents to other disciplines at The University of Alabama, including music, art and literature. Speakers were typically University faculty and staff who provided lectures, readings and performances in their areas of expertise. This approach will continue with the Winternitz Conference series, but the topics will be selected as a way to meet the College's commitment to a well-rounded education, addressing the art, as well as the science, of medicine.

A native of Connecticut, Winternitz was the son of two physicians. He received his medical degree from John Hopkins University, where he also completed a residency. Opting for a career in academic medicine, Winternitz returned to New England, where he spent nine years at Yale University as a research fellow and then as an assistant professor of Internal Medicine.

After completing a fellowship at the University College Hospital Medical School in London, Winternitz joined the faculty at the University of Kentucky as chief of the endocrinology division.

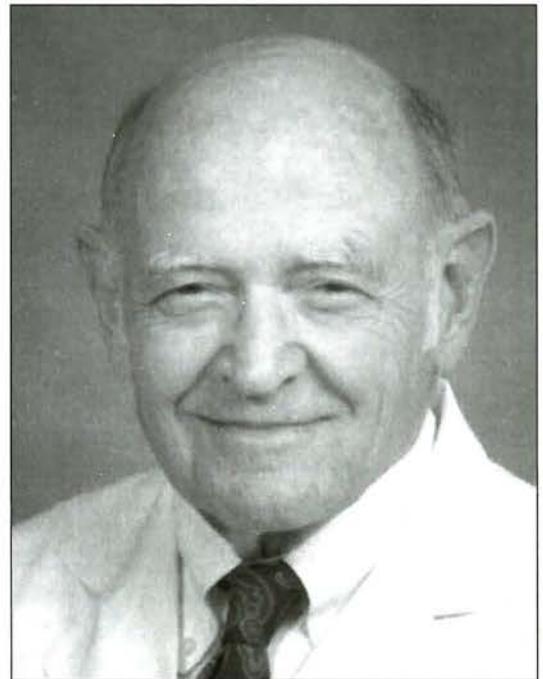
It was there that he worked closely

with William R. Willard, M.D., the founding dean of The University of Alabama College of Community Health Sciences.

In Tuscaloosa, Winternitz served as chair of the College's Department of Internal Medicine and was later appointed director of Medical Student Affairs. He was a valuable addition to the teaching efforts of the College; his strength as a classical clinician and teacher who taught by example was recognized by faculty, students and residents as representing the best in academic medicine. Under his direction, the Department of Internal Medicine was recognized for its strong and dedicated cadre of teachers.

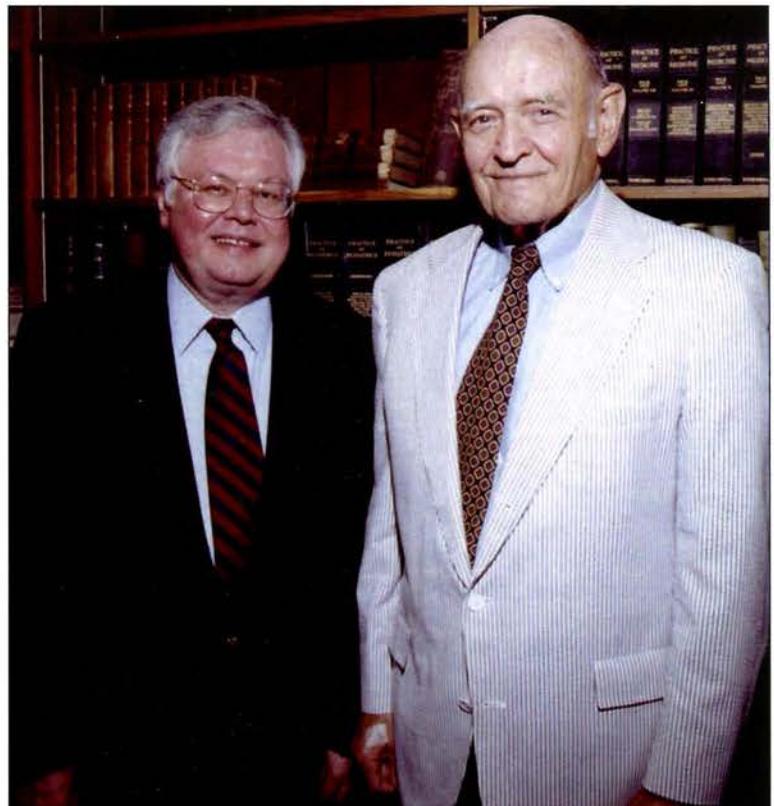
In recognition of his contributions to teaching, Winternitz received an award from the UA National Alumni Association for excellence in teaching.

The Winternitz Conferences will be



William W. Winternitz, M.D.

held at noon on the first Friday of the month (September through May) at the College of Community Health Sciences/School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus building located at 850 5th Avenue East. For more information, contact Vicki Johnson at (205) 348-0093 or 205-348-1288.



William Winternitz, M.D., longtime chair of the Department of Internal Medicine (right), is pictured with Roland P. Ficken, M.D., dean of the College of Community Health Sciences from 1990 to 1995.

NEW FACES



and staff and trains and educates medical students, residents, faculty and other library users in how to use the Health Sciences Library. Allen earned a bachelor's degree in cultural studies from Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, N.Y., and a master's of

library and information sciences from The University of Alabama. She was a Fulbright Scholar Fellow in 2002-2003 and studied at the Freie Universität zu Berlin, Germany.



Pamela P. Foster, M.D., M.P.H., has joined the staff of the Institute for Rural Health Research as deputy director and is also an assistant

professor in the College of Community Health Sciences' Department of Community and Rural Medicine. Previously, Foster, a preventive medicine and public health physician, was a faculty member in the School of Veterinary Medicine, Nursing and Allied Health at Tuskegee University, and was affiliated with the Tuskegee University National Center for Bioethics in Research and Health Care. Her research interests include health disparities issues, particularly those that impact Alabama's Black Belt region, cardiovascular health, and diabetes management. Foster earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Xavier University in New Orleans, a master's degree in biomedical sciences and a medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tenn., and a master's degree in public health from Columbia University School of Public Health in New York.

Amelia E. de los Reyes, M.S.N., R.N., has joined the College of Community Health Sciences as Electronic Medical Records chief information officer and quality improvement coordinator. She is also director of clinical operations. Her primary responsibilities include training medical students, residents, faculty and staff in the use of electronic medical records and maintaining and making improvements to the College's records system. In addition, de los Reyes works in areas related to quality improvement. She has more than 30 years of experience as a registered nurse. She worked previously for DCH Health System in Tuscaloosa, where she was a primary resource for project planning, education, communication and support, with a special emphasis on issues that affected physician practices and computerized processes.

Katy Allen, M.L.I.S., has joined the staff of the College as a technical services/systems librarian. Her responsibilities include managing the Health Sciences Library database, serving as a liaison with the Systems Department of University Libraries, implementing new modules and upgrades for the library system, and maintaining the Health Sciences Library and College of Community Health Sciences websites. She also provides technical assistance and training to College faculty

Allison H. Arendale, CPA, has joined the College of Community Health Sciences as director of Financial Affairs. Arendale served previously as vice president and chief financial officer for Boone Newspapers, Inc., in Tuscaloosa. Prior to that, she worked as a controller for Cypress Inn and Diner Restaurants in Tuscaloosa, and before that as an assistant controller for Hunt Refining Company in Tuscaloosa. Arendale earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from The University of Alabama. She has been a Certified Public Accountant since 1992. Arendale is a member of the AICPA, the Alabama Society of Certified Public Accountants, and the Tuscaloosa County Industrial Board. She is also a graduate of the Leadership Tuscaloosa program.

Angela Hammond, M.S.N., CFNP, has joined the staff of the Faculty-Staff Clinic as a nurse practitioner. She is also director of nursing for University Medical Center, the clinical component of the College of



Community Health Sciences. Previously, Hammond worked as a family nurse practitioner for a private practice in Tuscaloosa. Prior to that, she worked as a family nurse practitioner for Grenada Doctors Clinic in Grenada, Miss., and as a registered nurse at The University of Alabama at Birmingham Hospital. Hammond received a bachelor's degree in nursing from The University of Alabama in Huntsville, and a master's degree from the Family Nurse Practitioner program at The University of Alabama at Birmingham.

NEW ROLES



The following College of Community Health Sciences/School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus faculty members were appointed to new administrative positions this year:

Chelley Alexander, M.D., was named assistant dean for Graduate Medical Education. Alexander, chair of the Department of Family Medicine, also serves as residency director.

Dan Avery, M.D., F.A.C.O.G., F.A.C.S., was named chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Avery, an

associate professor in the OB/GYN department, also serves as the OB/GYN clerkship director and as a mentor for medical students interested in OB/GYN.

Elizabeth Cockrum, M.D., FAAP, was named associate dean for Clinical Affairs. In this role, her responsibilities include operational oversight for all clinical activities of the College. Cockrum is also a professor in the Department of Pediatrics.

Ashley Evans, M.D., was named assistant dean for Undergraduate Medical Education. Evans, an associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics, is also the clerkship director and serves as director of the High Risk Infant Follow-up Clinic.

Margaret Garner, M.S., R.D., L.D., was named assistant dean for Health, Education, and Outreach. Garner, an associate professor, is also director of Nutrition Education and Services for the College.



Residents, interns, faculty honored

Residents, interns and faculty from the College of Community Health Sciences/School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus were recognized during the 11th Annual Argus Society Awards on April 26, 2006. The awards honor teaching faculty, and recipients are selected by medical students and residents. The awards ceremony is hosted by The University of Alabama School of Medicine at Birmingham.

Ty Blackwell, M.D., (Surgery) won Best Residents/Interns. Also nominated were Jon Roden, M.D., (Obstetrics and Gynecology) and Katherine Bivona, M.D. (Pediatrics).

Dan Avery, M.D., (Obstetrics and Gynecology) won Best Attending. Also nominated were E. Eugene Marsh, M.D., (Neurology) and Joseph Wallace, M.D., (Surgery).

Obstetrics and Gynecology won Best Clerkships. Also nominated were Pediatrics, Psychiatry and Surgery.

"We have excellent teachers here, and it is wonderful to see some of them recognized in this way," said Marsh, dean of the College of Community Health Sciences.

Book on history of College recognized

A Special Kind of Doctor: A History of the College of Community Health Sciences was one of four books recognized by The University of Alabama Press for excellence in focusing on local historical concerns.

The book details the history of the College from its creation more than 30 years ago until the present time. It was written by Patricia J. West and Wilmer J. Coggins, M.D., a former dean of the College who is now retired and living in Tuscaloosa. West is a former local writer who now resides in the Washington, D.C., area.

A Special Kind of Doctor: A History of the College of Community Health Sciences was published by The University of Alabama Press in August 2004.

Student Health Center Open House



The UA women's soccer team and Big Al visited the Student Health Center during its open house. They are shown with Vicki Johnson, the college's events planner.

Approximately 250 University of Alabama students, athletes and retirees celebrated the opening of the new Student Health Center during an open house on April 20, 2006.

The Student Health Center is part of the College of Community Health Sciences/School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus and is located adjacent to University Medical Center. It was formerly located in Russell Hall. The center provides health care services to the University's more than 20,000 students.

During the Student Health Center open house, tours of the new state-of-the-art facility were provided and door prizes were given. Those in attendance included University students, Student Government Association officials, Student Health Center retirees, the UA women's soccer team, Associate Athletics Director Kevin Almond, representatives of Capstone Men and Women and Big Al.

Hispanic health disparities discussed

Several hundred health care professionals, researchers, community leaders, government officials and others attended the Seventh Annual Rural Health Conference April 19-21, 2006, at the Bryant Conference Center on The University of Alabama campus.

The Rural Health Conferences are hosted annually by the Institute for Rural Health Research, which is part of the College of Community Health Sciences. The conferences are supported in part by a grant awarded to the Institute by the National Institutes of Health's National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities.

This year's conference focused on the health disparities that exist in the Hispanic community. Keynote speakers included: Adolph P. Falcon, vice president for science and policy at the National Alliance for Hispanic Health in Washington, D.C.; Fernando M. Trevino, Ph.D., M.P.H., professor and founding

dean of the School of Public Health at the University of North Texas Health Science Center and executive director of the Texas Institute for Hispanic Health; and Isabel Rubio, executive director of the Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama in Birmingham.

Topics at the conference included community outreach, children's issues, diabetes and the Hispanic population, occupational health, and faith-based approaches to reducing health disparities in the Hispanic community. The conference also included two pre-conference workshops: Medical Spanish and Breast Cancer Awareness.

The Rural Health Conferences are part of ongoing efforts to share research findings and other information about the health disparities that exist in Alabama so that partnerships and strategies can be developed to eliminate these disparities.

Maxwell receives University honor

John Maxwell, director of the UA Student Health Center, has received one of the University's top awards for outstanding work. Maxwell was awarded the Dr. Minnie C. Miles Endowed Excellence Award, which honors non-faculty administrative employees who have performed in an exemplary manner, exceeding the expectations set for their position, and fostering the mission of the University.

Maxwell was nominated by E. Eugene Marsh, M.D., dean of the College of Community Health Sciences. In his nomination, Marsh noted that Maxwell was instrumental in the development of plans for a new facility for the Student Health Center and provided for a "seamless" move to the new building. Marsh also noted that Maxwell navigated the center through a difficult conversion to electronic health records and led the recent effort to accredit the center through the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, resulting in a three-year accreditation for the center. During all of these changes, Maxwell continued to serve CCHS in other capacities, including chief administrative officer for the Capstone Health Services Foundation.

"John is a successful and unselfish leader who takes great pleasure in seeing others succeed, and in seeing the mission of the SHC, CCHS and UA fulfilled," Marsh said.



The exhibit guides viewers through the 40-year battles over the use and promotion of cigarettes since the landmark U.S. Surgeon General's report on smoking and health in 1964. "Cartoonists Take Up Smoking" also addresses the roles of organized medicine, politicians and the mass media.

"The wide-ranging controversies surrounding tobacco are captured in the cartoons, from the misguided quest for a safe cigarette to the targeting of tobacco advertising to women and minority groups," Blum said. "Editorial cartoons on smoking have had an impact at both the national and local levels. For instance, they laughed Joe Camel out of existence and have helped influence public opinion leading to the passage of countless indoor air laws."

In addition to the cartoons, the exhibition features extensive illustrated material, from the newspaper headlines that inspired the cartoons to the advertisements promoting the health benefits of lighting up.

The exhibit will be on display at the National Museum of Health and Medicine through January.

Junior investigators program expands

The Institute for Rural Health Research Junior Investigators Program, an annual seminar series designed to enhance the research knowledge and skills of new investigators at The University of Alabama, recently expanded to include

medical students. Future programs may include medical residents.

The Institute for Rural Health Research, which is part of the College of Community Health Sciences, created the program in 2001 to provide an opportunity for young faculty interested in research to learn more about grant writing, and to receive guidance in conducting and managing research projects.

Each year, one faculty member from various academic divisions on campus is invited to attend. With assistance from staff members, program participants discuss relevant issues in grant writing and receive practical tips about the grant application and management process. Participants also work closely with Institute researchers to prepare and submit grant applications of their own.

UA graduate joins College faculty

Scott Louis Arnold, M.D., has joined the College of Community Health Sciences as an associate professor in the Department of Internal Medicine. He served previously as program director of Internal Medicine at Greenville Hospital System University Medical Center and was also an associate professor of Internal Medicine at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine. Arnold received his medical degree from The University of Alabama School of Medicine and is also a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology.

UA exhibit on display in D.C.

The National Museum of Health and Medicine in Washington, D.C., recently opened "Cartoonists Take Up Smoking," an exhibition of original newspaper editorial cartoons, curated by Alan Blum, M.D., the College's Gerald Leon Wallace Endowed Chair in Family Medicine and director of The University of Alabama Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society. Blum is a national expert on the history of the tobacco industry.

Pieroni retires after 31 years with CCHS

Robert Pieroni, M.D., retired in late 2005 after more than three decades with the College of Community Health Sciences.

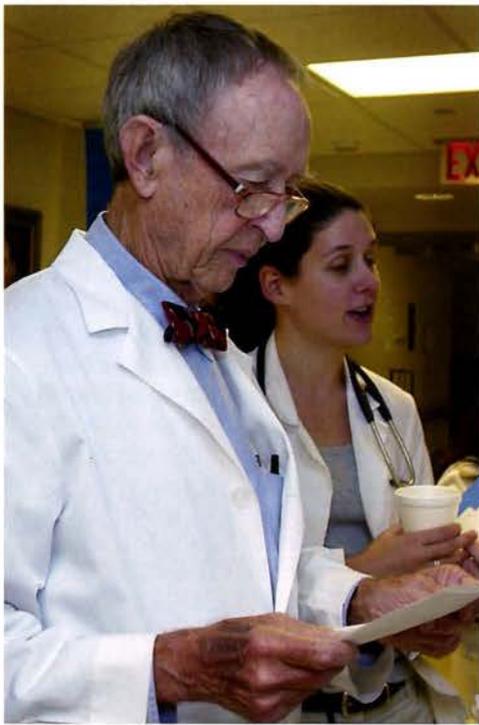
"During the past 31 years, I have greatly enjoyed working and associating with the excellent and dedicated College faculty, staff, students and residents," Pieroni said. "The growth, maturation, and many contributions of our College continue to be a constant source of gratification and fulfillment. I look forward to continued close collaboration with the College and its outstanding personnel in future years."

Pieroni joined the College in 1974 after graduating with a medical degree from The Pennsylvania State University and completing a residency in Massachusetts. He was the



Robert Pieroni, M.D., is pictured with wife Dorothy and daughter Michelle at retirement ceremony.

second internist to join the College staff. He was certified in both Family Medicine and Internal Medicine.



“I think your doctor ought to be your friend.”

Dr. John Francis Burnum remembered for his role in helping create College

John Francis Burnum, M.D., who played a major role in the creation of the College of Community Health Sciences more than 30

years ago and who was one of Tuscaloosa’s most-loved doctors, died last year. He was 82 years old.

“This is a tremendous loss for the University, for our College, and for the Tuscaloosa community,” says E. Eugene Marsh, M.D., dean of the College of Community Health Sciences. “Dr. Burnum will be remembered as a skilled and brilliant clinician, an outstanding teacher, and a community leader.”

Burnum was remembered during the College’s 30th Annual Honors Convocation on May 19. (See related article on pages 17-18.)

Burnum was a Tuscaloosa native and a graduate of The University of Alabama. He served as a combat infantryman in the Battle of the Bulge. Upon his return from military service, he was accepted into the Medical College of Alabama, what was then The University of Alabama School of Medicine at Birmingham. After two years there, he entered Harvard Medical School and graduate cum laude. He completed an internship and residency at New York Hospital, Cornell University’s teaching hospital, and a fellowship in cardiology at Duke University.

He returned to the Medical College of Alabama in Birmingham in 1953, where he established a residency program. A year later, he returned to Tuscaloosa and began an Internal Medicine practice that would last 45 years. From the early 1970s on, he served as a faculty member at the College of Community Health Sciences.

“His life experiences brought richness and greater depths of insight to our own patient care experiences,” says Cathy Greshman, M.D., an associate professor in the College’s Department of Internal Medicine. “Dr. Burnum certainly had a heart for students, seeking always to give them insight and feedback. He was readily accessible for the residents as well. And as a colleague, he was extremely supportive.”

Burnum played a major role in the creation of the College of Community Health Sciences. He helped secure funding

for the medical program in Tuscaloosa and work tirelessly to increase support for it. With an impressive clinical research record, he had gained the respect of many in the community and at The University of Alabama School of Medicine at Birmingham.

“Dr. Burnum was the only doctor in Tuscaloosa who was privileged to conduct teaching rounds in Birmingham,” says Will Coggins, M.D., dean emeritus and professor emeritus of Internal Medicine at the College.

In September 1969, Burnum was asked to serve as University of Alabama President David Mathews’ special assistant for Medical Affairs for the University. At the same time, he was also asked to serve DCH Hospital as the director of Medical Education, thus becoming a vital link between community physicians, the hospital, UAB and UA.

Upon retirement from private practice in 1999, Burnum joined the College of Community Health Sciences’ medical faculty full-time as a scholar in residence, dedicating himself to the teaching of medical students and beginning Family Medicine practitioners. His appointment in the Department of Internal Medicine was such that all third- and fourth-year medical students, and all residents, had clinical experiences with him.

“Without question, he was one of the most brilliant and skilled clinicians I have worked with anywhere,” Marsh says. “His ability to make a diagnosis without relying on a lot of expensive tests was incredible.”

Burnum wrote and published more than two dozen articles during the decades that he practiced. His clinical practice, teaching and medical writings brought him national visibility in the medical profession. His publications appeared in such prestigious journals as *The New England Journal of Medicine* and the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

In 1982, Burnum was awarded the College’s Teacher of the Year Award. In 1992, he was awarded the prestigious Ralph O. Claypool Sr. Medical Award by the American College of Physicians, which recognizes one outstanding practitioner of Internal Medicine nationwide each year. Also in 1992, Burnum received the Internist of the Year award from the Alabama Society of Internal Medicine and the Laureate Award from the American College of Physicians.

Together with his wife Celeste, Burnum founded and endowed The University of Alabama Burnum Distinguished Faculty Award, the University’s highest award for excellence in teaching and research.

DR. WILLIAM F. DESHAZO

IN MEMORIAM

William F. deShazo, III, M.D., former chair of the College of Community Health Sciences' Department of Family Medicine and former director of the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency, died March 12, 2006.

Dr. deShazo began his career as a general practitioner in Atmore, Ala. Upon his return from military service in Korea, he opened a practice in Jackson, Ala. He joined The University of Alabama Russell Student Health Center as a staff physician in 1972 and was recruited in 1975 by the College's founding dean, William R. Willard, M.D., to be one of the College's first faculty members.

From 1975 to 1977, Dr. deShazo served as director of the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency. He served as chair of the Department of Family Medicine from 1977 to 1980 and as team physician for The University of Alabama Athletic

Department from 1972 to 1985. He served as a personal physician to Coach Bear Bryant, as well as a team physician for the football, basketball and baseball teams. Dr. deShazo introduced the sports medicine rotation into the College's curriculum.

He continued to work part time in the Department of Family Medicine as a preceptor in the Family Medicine clinics from his retirement in 1988 until 1996.

At the request of residents, Department of Family Medicine faculty members established the William F. deShazo Award, which is presented each year to the outstanding resident in Family Medicine upon completion of the three-year program.

"Dr. deShazo will be greatly missed by our College and the community," says E. Eugene Marsh, M.D., dean of the College.



Photo Courtesy University Relations

Team physician Dr. deShazo takes a stroll with head coach Bear Bryant.

Physician making difference at High Risk Infant Follow-Up Clinic

Ashley Evans, M.D., works to make a difference in the lives of the tiniest members of the West Alabama community.

Evans is an associate professor in the College of Community Health Sciences' Department of Pediatrics and assistant dean for Undergraduate Medical Education. She also is director of the High Risk Infant Follow-up Clinic at University Medical Center.

The High Risk Follow-up Clinic provides early medical intervention to infants and toddlers up to 3 years of age who weighed three-and-a-half pounds or less at birth, or who were born at a gestational age of 32 weeks or less. The clinic provides ongoing evaluations of children who are at risk of experiencing medical or developmental problems as a result of being born prematurely or at a low birth weight. The clinic has been in operation for 25 years.

"The premise behind the clinic is the concept of early intervention," Evans says. "We route children into medical or therapeutic assistance programs when it is needed. The sooner these problems are identified, the better."

Premature and low birth-weight babies

are at greater risk for medical and developmental problems, nearly 25 times greater than babies of normal birth weight, according to the *Kids Count 2004 Data Book*.

Evans, who has been director of the High Risk Infant Follow-up Clinic for 11 years, works with a multi-disciplinary team that includes physicians, nurses, a social worker, physical therapist, audiologist, speech therapist, nutritionist and a developmental specialist.

She said there are few other facilities in West Alabama where at-risk infants and toddlers have access to such a wide range of health care professionals.

The High Risk Infant Follow-up Clinic, which is housed in University Medical Center's Pediatrics Department, focuses on prevention and early detection of



Ashley Evans, M.D.

developmentally handicapping conditions. The majority of children treated there are premature. Services are also provided to full-term children who are also at risk for future problems.

Clinic personnel work with Community Services Programs of West Alabama Inc. to coordinate pre- and post-clinical visits.

To date, the High Risk Infant Follow-up Clinic has helped hundreds of infants and children regain and maintain good health, Evans says. She says the clinic hopes to raise additional funds so that it can provide medical services to even more premature and low birth-weight babies in West Alabama. The clinic is currently open two half days per month.

"It is a blessing to see children do very well and improve over time. And it is rewarding to see the families of these children show such courage and unconditional love," Evans says. "It has been a joy to be part of the High Risk Infant Follow-up Clinic."

To learn more about the clinic or to make a donation, contact Allison Leitner, director of development for the College of Community Health Sciences, at (205)348-5701, or via e-mail at aleitner@cchs.ua.edu.

First Rural Scholars Pipeline doctors enter field

At the end of the first decade of the Rural Medical Scholars Program, which is part of the College of Community Health Sciences' Rural Scholars Pipeline, 11 new rural doctors have emerged from the program and are practicing in Alabama.

"The first two classes of the Rural Medical Scholars Program have completed study of rural community health, medical school and residencies, yielding 17 physicians, of which 11 have already chosen rural practice sites in Alabama," says John Wheat, M.D., M.P.H., professor of community and rural medicine and program founder and director.

Wheat says the Rural Medical Scholars Program has begun to realize the goals of program founders: Rural Medical Scholars are more likely than other medical students to choose primary care specialties like Family Medicine and to enter rural practice.

Of the first seven physicians from the Rural Medical Scholars Program to enter practice in rural Alabama, five are family physicians: Julia Boothe, M.D., in Carrollton; Angela Clifton, M.D., in Boaz; Thomas Holt, M.D., in Jasper; Drake Lavender, Jr., M.D., in Gordo; and Stephanie Morgan, M.D., who returned to Centre in her home county. Two more Rural Medical Scholars in rural Alabama are primary care physicians: Anne Davis, M.D., an internist from Talladega who returned home; and Arly native Danny Whittaker, M.D., now a pediatrician in Enterprise.

Rural Medical Scholar Randy Quinn, M.D., graduated in June and entered family practice in Cullman. Rick Jotani, M.D., completed his Sports Medicine fellowship in Daytona Beach, Fla., in July. He plans to enter private practice in Pell City, close to his hometown of Talladega. Beverly Jordan, M.D., who also completed her Sports Medicine fellowship this summer, will start her family practice in Enterprise in her home county of Coffee.

"The Rural Medical Scholars Program is directly responsible for my career choice," Jotani says. "The RMSP has been the tool which helped me get my medical education and prepared me for private practice in Pell City. I would tell those interested in becoming small town docs to pursue their goal wholeheartedly. The Rural Medical Scholars Program represents a wonderful opportunity to learn medicine in the context of rural Alabama."

Family physician and Rural Medical Scholar Clifton Garris, M.D., now an Obstetrics fellow at the College, says: "If it weren't for the RMSP, I would not be in the position I am – doing what I dreamed, caring for patients and helping families." The



Julia Boothe, M.D., a family physician in Carrollton, entered medicine through the Rural Medical Scholars Program.

Washington County native, who entered private practice in Sylacauga in August, adds: "Programs such as the RMSP are no longer an option but a necessity."

The Rural Medical Scholars Program is part of the College's Rural Scholars Pipeline, a sequence of programs that has received regional and national recognition and been cited as a model to effectively recruit and train rural health and medical professionals. (See box below.) Currently, only 9 percent of U.S. physicians practice in rural America where 20 percent of the population resides. And only 3 percent of recent medical graduates nationwide indicate plans for rural practice.

Family physicians are the doctors most likely to choose rural practice, says Wheat, who has compiled data on physician distribution.

Rural Scholars from across Alabama and the first doctors from the pipeline are being followed by additional students. Each year, approximately 25 high school Rural Health Scholars, 15 college-level Minority Rural Health Scholars, and 10 Rural Medical Scholars are added to the pipeline envisioned 15 years ago. Students living in any rural area of Alabama are eligible to apply. For information or applications, contact Irene Wallace at (205) 348-5892 or e-mail iwallace@cchs.ua.edu. – Linda Jackson, *Rural Health Programs*

The Rural Scholars Pipeline (officially the Rural Health Leaders Pipeline) is a sequence of programs at The University of Alabama and University of Alabama School of Medicine that helps rural students enter health professions and prepare for rural service. The pipeline provides enrichment programs during high school and college and emphasizes agricultural/rural health during premed and medical school training. Statistics show that rural students are more likely to live and practice in rural areas. To date, 360 Rural Health Scholars, 111 Rural Medical Scholars, and 49 Minority Rural Health Scholars have entered the pipeline. Fifty percent of the physicians produced by this program have selected rural practice sites.

Eyeing Rural Alabama

College seeks to expand clinical trials in new areas

A new version of a nasal spray flu vaccine shows greater effectiveness in preventing influenza in test patients than did an injectable flu vaccine, according to data from the new drug's latest clinical trial.

The data, released in late 2005, came from a study based on more than 8,000 children in 16 countries, including some three dozen patients enrolled through The University of Alabama's University Medical Center. Such links between broad-based clinical trials and UA are likely to become more common in the future, according to John C. Higginbotham, Ph.D., M.P.H., associate dean for research and health policy in the College of Community Health Sciences/School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus.

"Clinical trials are an excellent way for new clinical faculty at the School of Medicine here in Tuscaloosa to have exposure to research and research activity," says Higginbotham, who also directs UA's Institute for Rural Health Research, which coordinates the clinical trial efforts in Tuscaloosa. It also gives students more research interaction, an objective for all of the UA School of Medicine's campuses, he says.

"We think doing this sort of research also provides cutting edge information for faculty, which provides cutting edge information to students and the patients we see here and, ultimately, for the patients our students will see down the road," Higginbotham says.

Historically, the health care industry has concentrated clinical trials within large urban areas, where the pool of potential patients is large and where the patients have easy access to their physicians for the sometimes frequent follow-up visits that are required. Those patients have also typically been white and from middle to upper class status, Higginbotham says. With fewer participation opportunities, rural patients are often less familiar with, and sometimes more skeptical of, trials when they are approached, industry leaders say.

"We have found over the last several years that not all medicines act the same in all groups," Higginbotham says. "What we're trying to do here is provide an avenue where we can include rural and minority groups in those trials to make sure they have representation."

A documented shortage of clinical research investigators is causing the industry to revisit its focus areas. In response, some are turning their research trial efforts to overseas patients and physicians, but others are turning toward rural U.S. markets.

In 2005, UA's University Medical Center participated in seven clinical trials, says Melanie Tucker, a research associate who, as clinical study coordinator, leads the Institute for Rural Health Research's clinical trials. In addition to the value health care workers, students and patients receive and the medical knowledge gained, hosting clinical trials provides the Institute and the College a source of revenue for additional research, Tucker says.

In the recent MedImmune Inc.-sponsored trial of the nasal spray flu vaccine, patients gained free access to the vaccines.



Photo by Laura Shill

Sherry Wedgeworth examines a specimen at University Medical Center where clinical trials are taking place.

"It was when the vaccine was at a premium," Tucker says. "The children who received the vaccine might not have been able to find it otherwise, and some would not have been able to afford it." Throughout the duration of the trial, patients who became ill, whether from the flu or another cause, received free exams, tests and access to after-hours care.

Only 3.9 percent of the patients who took MedImmune's easier-to-store version of the FluMist, known for now as CAIV-T, came down with the flu, according to the overall Phase III trial results. Of those in the study who took conventional flu shots, 8.6 percent contracted the flu, MedImmune announced. The company says it is seeking FDA approval and hopes to begin selling the new drug beginning in the 2007 flu season.

Trials may be initiated by pharmaceutical companies, the National Institutes of Health or a qualified physician. "More than half of our clinical trials today are investigator initiated," Tucker says.

University Medical Center, UA's \$13.5 million, 77,000-square-foot, multi-specialty clinic, which opened in May 2004, can only positively impact UA's efforts to increase the level of clinical trials on site, Tucker says.

Elizabeth L. Cockrum, M.D., F.A.A.P., a physician and member of the UA College of Community Health Sciences faculty, was principal investigator on the FluMist trial at UA. Her colleague, Karen Burgess, M.D., was the sub-investigator. Cockrum and Burgess were recently awarded Certified Physician Investigator designation. This certification, by the American Academy of Pharmaceutical Physicians, signifies that a physician possesses the capabilities to conduct clinical trials in accordance with the required regulatory standards. (See related article below.)

Cockrum, associate dean for clinical affairs at the School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus and a professor of Pediatrics, says many families are initially hesitant to participate in clinical trials and somewhat apprehensive about using an experimental drug. "However, once everything is explained, most view it as an opportunity to contribute to medicine and find it exciting," she says.

Addressing all the patient's concerns, giving them ample time to review the information and explaining all risks, procedures and expectations can help patients feel more comfortable in participating, she says. "They should also be assured that they are free at any time to withdraw from the study without any penalty or threat of loss of medical care," she adds.

Clinical trials are significant on many levels, including allowing patients to directly contribute to the knowledge of medicine, Cockrum says.

"As a physician, it is important to keep current of the newest therapies being developed," she says, "and this is a way to do that. It is also good exposure for our medical students who may decide to make medical research their career."

Higginbotham says participating in the industry-initiated trials is another step in working toward solving specific health care issues.

"Our experience here will lead to more of our investigator-initiated projects that closely work with the problems that we identify for rural and minority groups and which, hopefully, will help alleviate those disparities that we see," he says.

– Chris Bryant



Photo by Laura Shill

Carleigh Clark, 5, visits with Drs. Elizabeth Cockrum, *left*, and Karen Burgess at University Medical Center. Cockrum and Burgess are among a number of the medical center physicians conducting clinical trials.



Melanie Tucker, M.A., C.C.R.C., clinical study coordinator and research associate, leads clinical trials for the IRHR. She is pictured here with John C. Higginbotham, Ph.D., M.P.H., director of the IRHR.

Two faculty certified as physician investigators

Two physicians who are faculty members in the College of Community Health Sciences/School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus have been awarded the prestigious Certified Physician Investigator designation.

Drs. Elizabeth L. Cockrum and Karen Burgess were awarded the certification by the American Academy of Pharmaceutical Physicians. Certification as a CPI signifies a physician possesses the knowledge and experience necessary to conduct clinical trials in accordance with the required ethical, medical, scientific, legal and regulatory standards. Certification is awarded based on a physician's education, training and experience as a primary or co-investigator, or monitor, supervisor or designer of clinical trials.

Clinical research trials are designed to evaluate the safety, efficacy and effectiveness of a drug, biological or medical device or procedure or other intervention. The University of Alabama conducts clinical trials through its Division of Clinical Investigations, which is part of the College's Institute for Rural Health Research.

Cockrum is associate dean for clinical affairs at the School of Medicine and a professor in the Department of Pediatrics. Burgess is an assistant professor in the Department of Pediatrics, director of the University Medical Center Pediatric Clinic and is also director of the department's residency affairs.

Rural Medical Scholars, MASA physicians visit Congress

Nine members of last year's Rural Medical Scholars class accompanied physicians from the Medical Association of the State of Alabama to Washington, D.C., earlier this year to meet with Alabama's congressional delegation about federal laws and programs that affect the provision of health care.

"Making sure our patients get good health care involves more than having a good doctor-patient relationship and using the right medical procedures," says John Brandon, M.D., a family physician in Gordo and medical director of the College of Community Health Sciences' Rural Medical Scholars Program. Health care for the poor and uninsured, home health care for the elderly, prescription drug benefits and maternal and child health care are controlled in large part by federal appropriations, government policies and reimbursement guidelines, Brandon says.

Policies governing rural hospitals, budget cuts and reimbursement guidelines were among the issues that elected officials and the Rural Medical Scholars discussed.

Observing the governmental process in person was "enlightening," says James Henderson, a Rural Medical Scholar. "Seeing the ways in which lawmakers modify how we as doctors will have to practice medicine was eye-opening."

Travel expenses for the Rural Medical Scholars were funded by a grant from the Alabama Chapter of the American Academy



(Front row, from left): Mark Christensen, Madison County; Robert Martin, Houston County; Ashley Poe, Winston County; LaRea Kelly, Walker County; U.S. Senator Jeff Sessions; Adam Shaw, Etowah County; Brent Ballard, Marion County. (Back row): Dana Todd, Hale County; Dr. Jerry Harrison, president of the Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians; James Henderson, Escambia County; and Chris Clayton, Madison County.

of Family Physicians Foundation.

"The Alabama Academy's Foundation has had a long-standing commitment to promote interest in Family Medicine to pre-medical and medical students," says Dr. Jerry Harrison, a family physician from Winston County who is Alabama AAFP president. "And we have also had an interest in addressing the dire shortage of family physicians in almost all areas of rural Alabama. It really was a natural fit for us to network with the Rural Medical Scholars Program to enable a group of students to go on the Washington trip."

Holly Midgley, executive director of the Alabama Chapter of the AAFP, adds: "Congressmen are always happy to meet the folks from back home. And getting to meet some of Alabama's best and brightest students was a bonus."

— Linda Jackson, Rural Health Programs

Two publications feature Rural Medical Scholars

Two University of Alabama Rural Medical Scholars have recently been featured in area publications.

Deanah Maxwell, a 2002 Rural Medical Scholar and a third-year medical student at the College of Community Health Sciences, was featured in Alfa's *Neighbors* magazine

The article profiled Macon County's needs and Maxwell's intention to return to her rural home county to practice medicine as a family physician. Her preparation for that career through the College of Community Health Sciences' Rural Medical Scholars

Program is also described.

An article written by Rural Medical Scholar Josh Bell, titled "Health Care for All," was featured in the January 2006, forecast issue of *Tuscaloosa Business Ink*. Bell, a 2004 Rural Medical Scholar from Dekalb County, wrote about the current shortage of rural physicians, citing state and national statistics and describing the consequences of poor access to health care for both rural communities and residents of urban areas.

— Linda Jackson

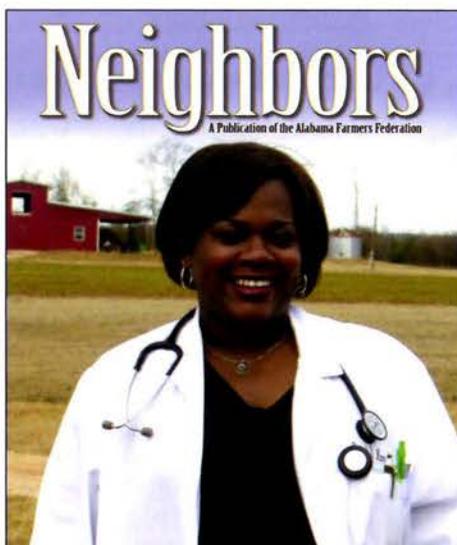


Photo courtesy of Alfa

Deanah Maxwell, a 2002 Rural Medical Scholar and third-year medical student, is on the cover of a recent issue of Alfa's *Neighbors* magazine.



Photos by Richard Andrew Mullins

By ALLISON GOUAUX

Students at The University of Alabama have a new health center to call their own. Construction was recently completed on the state-of-the-art Student Health Center adjacent to University Medical Center. Both the Student Health Center and University Medical Center are operated by the College of Community Health Sciences/School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus.

The Student Health Center opened its doors in January. Its proximity to University Medical Center means the Student Health Center will be able to collaborate more easily with other health care professionals on campus and have access to specialty services not typically available in traditional student health centers, thereby enhancing the Student Health Center's ability to provide first-rate health care to the University's more than 20,000 students.

The new Student Health Center includes more examination rooms, cutting-edge medical technology and an expanded in-house pharmacy that will continue to serve students. Murals of the University's scenic campus adorn the walls of the examination rooms providing students with a warm, welcoming environment.

The Student Health Center, formerly located in Russell Hall, is staffed with board-certified physicians and nurse practitioners, some with more than 25 years of experience in college student health care, as well as a registered dietitian and health educators, according to David Maxwell, M.D., the center's medical director.

"The physicians here are excited about the new facilities because of the comfort and benefits they provide to students," Maxwell says. "We are now seeing anywhere from 100 to 150 students per day at the new Student Health Center."

The Student Health Center houses the Department of Health Promotion and Wellness, a unique feature in student health care settings and one that complements the traditional practice of medicine by providing patient education. A major focus of

the department is primary prevention and awareness of health issues within the campus community. The department collaborates with key campus stakeholders to address health issues of common concern in the state and nationally that might affect University of Alabama students.

The Department of Health Promotion and Wellness also sponsors events throughout the year and provides leadership in the development of collaborative programs directed toward alcohol

and substance abuse, mental health, nutrition, eating disorders, tobacco education, healthy relationships, financial health and fitness and recreation. Some of these events include the Student Health and Fitness Fair, Safe Spring Break, Sexual Responsibility Week, World AIDS Day, The Great American Smoke Out and Eating Disorders Awareness Week.

"The department is vital to the Student Health Center's outreach to students," says Margaret Garner, director of Health Promotion and Wellness and an associate professor of Family Medicine at the College.

"Engaging students through a new initiative in peer education for health and wellness is one way we are addressing student involvement and commitment to healthier lifestyles. It is our vision that students reach their academic goals more easily when they are healthier and make healthy choices," she says.

Last year, there were more than 11,000 contacts with students through the department's programs, classes and events, Garner says.

The Student Health Center recently was awarded full accreditation by the Association for Ambulatory Health Care Inc., making the center a premier student health center in the state of Alabama. The Student Health Center joins only 175 other student health centers nationwide that have received such a distinction.

Says Maxwell: "The Student Health Center's voluntary accreditation reflects the center's commitment to high-quality student health care."

(above), Student health care will benefit from a new facility in the midst of the campus medical complex.

(left), Yvonne Burton, a nurse at the Student Health Center, discusses medical history with patient Jonathan Snell.

A Health Center They Can Call Their Own

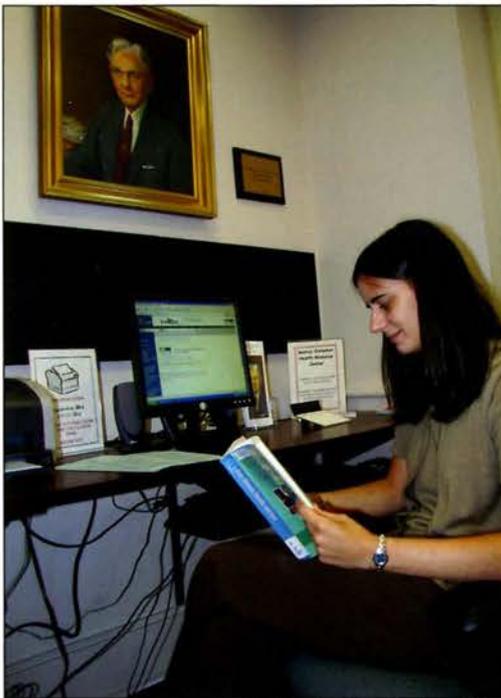


Photo by Richard Andrew Mullins

Madeline Sims, third semester School of Library and Information Sciences intern, uses the new Searcy Consumer Health Resource Center in the Health Sciences Library.



Library patrons can find authoritative information on health issues.

Public can get health information at Health Sciences Library

Have you or a family member been diagnosed with an illness that you do not know much about? Perhaps your doctor told you about the condition, but you may not remember what was said or you may want more detailed information.

If so, The University of Alabama Health Sciences Library can help. Housed within the library, which is part of the College of Community Health Sciences/School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus, is the Searcy Consumer Health Resource Center. The center, which is open to the public, is named in memory of Harvey Brown Searcy, M.D., a practicing physician in Tuscaloosa during the early 1900s and the fifth Dr. Searcy to practice medicine in the city.

The consumer health collection first came into existence in 2001 when the Health Sciences Library was located within DCH Regional Medical Center. Both DCH and the library provided funding to start the collection and to purchase computer and video equipment. Materials were also donated

by various hospital departments.

Today, the Searcy Health Resource Center provides important health information written for the general public on a wide variety of topics, including heart conditions, cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and pediatric health. Books, magazines and newsletters are available for public use. Patrons may also use the Internet-accessible computer to find health information.

Part of the library's mission is to foster the use of quality health information, and that extends to consumers seeking health-related information, as well as to health care professionals.

Experienced librarians and staff can help patrons find quality, authoritative health information on the Internet, in print or on video. Specialized research services are also available.

Funds for the Searcy Consumer Health Resource Center were donated by Searcy's daughters, Mrs. Clayton Rogers and Mrs. Robert Yoder.

Searcy, who practiced medicine

for more than 56 years, specialized in ophthalmology and otolaryngology. During his career, he invented and developed numerous medical instruments. He was one of the founders of the first Druid City Hospital and later worked to build the new DCH at its current location.

He also served as president of the Alabama Medical Association, first president of the Alabama Chapter of the American College of Surgeons and was involved in many other organizations. Searcy authored many professional publications, as well as "We Used What We Had," a humorous book describing his life and medical practice.

The Searcy Consumer Health Resource Center is available during the library's open hours: Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. until 9:30 p.m.; Friday from 8 a.m. until 4:45 p.m.; and Sunday from 2 p.m. until 9:30 p.m.

Library hours change during the summer and between semesters. For information or assistance, please call the library at (205) 348-1360.

Clinic provides quick, convenient care for UA employees

Employees of The University of Alabama can now get quick and convenient non-emergency medical care without ever leaving campus.

The Faculty-Staff Clinic, a service of University Medical Center, is devoted exclusively to the care of University employees and their dependents covered under the University's BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama medical insurance plan.

Located in the new building of the College of Community Health Sciences/School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus, the Faculty-Staff Clinic is staffed by board-certified nurse practitioners who treat everything from colds and fevers to minor injuries and rashes.

They administer shots, write prescriptions and perform physical examinations related to sore throats, asthma, coughs, minor eye infections, strains and sprains. Physician consultations are readily available when needed.

The Faculty-Staff Clinic provides walk-in service (no appointments necessary) and a private waiting room.

In addition, University employees who use the Faculty-Staff Clinic also have access to additional health care and special services provided by University Medical Center, including nutrition therapy, assistance with applications for nursing home care for elderly relatives, assistance with locating resources for disabled patients or family members and counseling services for individuals or families.

"I chose to use the Faculty-Staff Clinic when my daughters needed to go to the doctor," says Fannie Crenshaw, a custodian with the University's Facilities Operations and Maintenance Department. "We did not have to wait, and we were in and out."

Adds Satilmis Budak, Ph.D., a research associate at the UA Center for Materials for Information Technology: "I like the clinic and the staff. Staff members are very careful in their duties and they follow the condition of their patients after the patients leave the clinic."

University Medical Center is located at the corner of University Boulevard and 5th Avenue East. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information about the Faculty-Staff Clinic call 205-348-1770.



Photos by Richard Andrew Mullins

Nurse practitioners see faculty and staff with non-emergency medical conditions in the new Faculty-Staff Clinic at University Medical Center. Shown here are Angela Hammond, a nurse practitioner, left, and Melinda Ikard, M.S.N., who works part-time at the clinic.

**"We did not have to wait,
and we were in and out."**

— Fannie Crenshaw



The Faculty-Staff Clinic waiting room offers privacy and a computer with Internet access.

ALUMNI PROFILE

Robert A. Posey, M.D.

Posey puts family first



left: Dr. Robert A. Posey, a graduate of the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency and owner of MedCenter South, is pictured with his wife, Mary Helen Posey.

Robert “Bob” Posey, M.D., a graduate of the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency, has always had a fondness for and a commitment to the practice of Family Medicine.

Born in Troy, Ala., Posey moved to Eufaula in rural Alabama when he was 5 years old. He began his college career at Montevallo but soon joined the Army, where he spent three years on active duty. With the help of the GI Bill, he graduated from The University of Alabama in 1975 and spent the next four years completing medical school at The University of Alabama School of Medicine at Birmingham.

While an undergraduate at The University of Alabama, Posey and his wife, Mary Helen, moved to Moundville in Hale County. He realized then the extent to which Moundville was medically underserved.

After graduating from medical school, Posey joined the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency. His plan was, upon completing the program, to practice in Moundville with Larry Skelton, M.D., who had finished the residency program about 18 months earlier.

“One of the reasons I became interested in medicine, and rural medicine in particular, was because of the trips we had to make to the doctor with our son Josh when he was a baby,” Posey says.

“I was a student at UA and we lived in Moundville. This was prior to the four-lane (highway) and Tuscaloosa seemed very distant on middle-of-the-night trips with a sick child.”

Unfortunately, there were not enough patients to support both Skelton and Posey at the Moundville practice, so in 1982 Posey accepted an offer he had received from the Emergency Department at DCH Hospital, where he had moonlighted during his residency.

In February 2002, Drs. Posey, Perry Lovely, Steve Lovelady and Chris McGee—all graduates of the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency—opened MedCenter South, an urgent care and Family Medicine clinic in Tuscaloosa. Since then, Lovelady has left to start a private practice, but two more graduates of the residency program, Mike McIntrye, M.D., and David Tuten, M.D., have joined MedCenter South. Posey has continued his position at the DCH Emergency Department, where McGee and Lovelady also work.

Meanwhile, MedCenter South has become somewhat of a family affair for Posey. His daughter, Haven Williams, is the billing coordinator. Another daughter, Holly Harzell, will soon serve as clinic and personnel director. Son Josh Posey, a nurse in the DCH Hospital Emergency Department and a graduate student at Samford University, will likely work for MedCenter South as a Family Nurse Practitioner upon graduation. Though wife Mary Helen does not work for MedCenter South, she provides support for the medical community and served as one of the chairpersons of the 2004 DCH Foundation Ball.

Earlier this year, ground was broken on the construction of MedCenter North, located at the intersection of Highways 43 and 82 in Tuscaloosa. The facility is scheduled to open in the fall 2006.

Posey said the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency is one of the strongest in the country and offers the most exposure to the practice of Family Medicine.

“The residency is very strong for several reasons,” he says. “The faculty has always been good. DCH is a good hospital system for the residency program. The referral area provides so much pathology that there is opportunity to be well-exposed by the time you leave. The association with the University is also a big plus.”



Anne-Laura Rhodes Cook (right) presents the James H. Akers Memorial Award for Excellence in the Practice of Art and Science in Medicine to Lee Ryan Carter.



Lee Ryan Carter (left) and Anne-Laura Rhodes Cook (right) receive the William R. Willard Award (Dean's Award) from CCHS Dean E. Eugene Marsh, M.D.



John C. Higginbotham, Ph.D., M.P.H., (left) and John Wheat, M.D., M.P.H., (right), Department of Community and Rural Medicine, present the Robert F. Gloor Award in Community Medicine to Lee Ryan Carter.



Lee Ryan Carter (right) and Anne Doran Halli (center) receive the Research Award from John C. Higginbotham, Ph.D., M.P.H., CCHS associate dean for research and health policy.



Spencer Elton Romine (left) receives the William R. Shamblin Surgery Award from Joseph C. Wallace, M.D., Department of Surgery.



Spencer Elton Romine receives the Merck Manual Award from Cathy Gresham, M.D.



Cathy Gresham, M.D., director of Medical Student Affairs, (left), presents the Larry Mayes Memorial Award to Alissa Renee Carver to recognize her work in underserved areas.



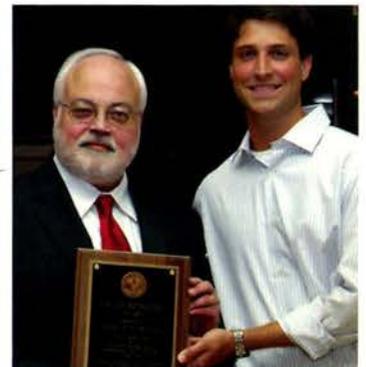
Angelia Elliott, M.D., of Cullman, (center), receives the Family/ Rural Medicine Preceptor's Award from John Wheat, M.D., M.P.H., (right), and John Waits, M.D.



Lee Ryan Carter (right) receives the Family Medicine Award from John Waits, M.D., Department of Family Medicine.



Abbey McGough Carroll (left) receives the Pediatric Recognition Award from Ashley Evans, M.D., Department of Pediatrics.



Josh Wharton (right) presents the Faculty Recognition/Junior Year Award to Dan Avery, M.D., Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

2006 Student Honors Convocation

Members of the 2006 Graduating Class were honored during the College of Community Health Sciences' 30th Annual Honors Convocation. The event was held May 19, 2006, at the Four Points Sheraton on The University of Alabama campus.

A total of 25 medical students are in the graduating class, and they will soon begin their residency training. They will enter the practice areas of Family Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, General Surgery, Orthopedic Surgery, Obstetrics/Gynecology, Anesthesiology, Neurology, Psychiatry, Pathology, and Dermatology.

The convocation speaker was Celeste Burnum, daughter of the late John F. Burnum, M.D. Ms. Burnum's address was titled "A

Tribute to Dr. John F. Burnum."

Dr. Burnum played a major role in the creation of the College of Community Health Sciences and joined the College faculty full-time as a Scholar in Residence upon retirement from private practice. Medical students and College faculty were also recognized with various awards.

The College of Community Health Sciences provides the clinical education component for The University of Alabama's junior and senior medical students, while also addressing the need for training medical students and residents to practice in the smaller, rural communities of Alabama.

STUDENT AWARDS 2006 (CONTINUED)



(From left), Neil Cameron Yeager, Joshua Blake Wharton, Jill Megan Grilliot, Terry Matthew James and Lee Ryan Carter receive the Gold Humanism Honor Society Award for excellence in patient care and dedication to service.



Jill Megan Grilliot (right) receives the Finney/Akers Memorial Award in Obstetrics-Gynecology from Dan Avery, M.D., Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology.



Jill Megan Grilliot (right) receives the Neurology Award from E. Eugene Marsh, M.D., dean of the College of Community Health Sciences.



Cathy Gresham, M.D., (left), director of Medical Student Affairs, presents the American Medical Women's Association Janet M. Glasgow Award to Jill Megan Grilliot.



E. Eugene Marsh, M.D., dean of the College of Community Health Sciences (right), presents the Scholastic Achievement Award to Spencer Elton Romine.



Amit Shah, M.D., Department of Internal Medicine (right), presents the William W. Winternitz Award in Internal Medicine to Spencer Elton Romine.



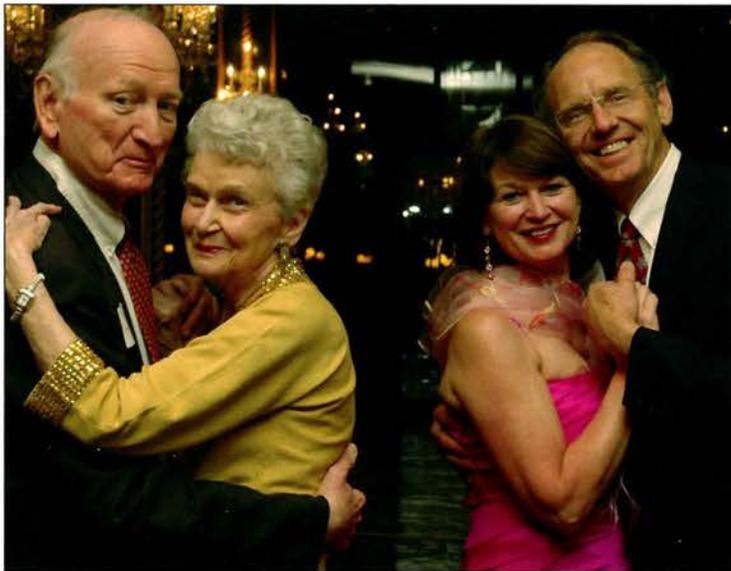
Elizabeth Amanda Johnson (left) presents the Patrick McCue Award/Senior Year award to A. Robert Sheppard, M.D., for outstanding contributions to undergraduate medical education during the senior year.



Ashley Evans, M.D., (right), presents the Peter Bryce Award in Psychiatry to Elizabeth Amanda Johnson on behalf of the Department of Psychiatry.



Jennifer Cooke White, M.D., (right), Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency, receives the Resident Recognition Award from Anne Doran Halli.



Dick and Nancy Rutland (left) with Mike and Cindy McBrearty. Dick Rutland, M.D., was instrumental in the creation of the College of Community Health Sciences and also served as an interim residency director and as a preceptor for residents. Mike McBrearty, M.D., was a member of the first graduating class of the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency in 1976 and currently practices in Fairhope, Ala.



E. Eugene Marsh, M.D., dean of the College of Community Health Sciences (left), talks with Barbara Geater, a graduate of the class of 1996, and her husband.



(From left,) John and Pat Ross are pictured with Samuel Gaskins, M.D., a professor in the Department of Family Medicine, and his wife, Susan Gaskins, D.S.N., a professor in the Capstone College of Nursing. Pat Ross served for many years as Gaskins' administrative assistant.

College marks 30th anniversary of first resident graduates

The College of Community Health Sciences celebrated the 30th anniversary of the first graduating class of the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency during a weekend reunion in Tuscaloosa on April 28-29. More than 100 alumni, faculty and friends attended.

The reunion weekend kicked off on April 28 with two cocktail parties. Mark Woods, M.D., and wife Susan hosted at their home alumni who graduated between the years of 1976 and 1989. Woods is a 1988 residency graduate who also spent his third and fourth years of medical school at the College. Mike McBrearty, M.D., who completed the program in 1976, attended and represented the first class of graduates.

The second cocktail party was held at the home of Dale Christensen, M.D., and Nikki Christensen, M.D., who hosted 1990 to 2005 alumni. Dale completed his residency in 2003 and Nikki in 2005.

During the cocktail parties, a photo presentation was shown that highlighted each residency class, as well as faculty members. Dianne Kerr was recognized for her 32 years of service to the College. Serving as a Blue Suite nurse and, more recently, as head nurse at University Medical Center, Kerr is the only faculty or staff member to have known all the residents. Kerr retired from the College in April. In addition, Samuel Gaskins, M.D., received a University of Alabama Captain's Chair for his many years of service to the University and the College.

On April 29, alumni and faculty received a tour of the new College of Community Health Sciences/School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus facility. They also heard from E. Eugene Marsh, M.D., dean of the College, who gave a state-of-the-College address.

"It is my goal for the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency to be recognized as the premier Family Practice training program in the United States, and for the College to become a model for the future of medical education focused on delivering high-quality, compassionate health care to the citizens of Alabama," Marsh said in his address.

(Continued on next page)

Chris Germany, a graduate of the class of 2000 (left), and his wife Robyn, also a 2000 graduate, talk with Dianne Kerr, retired nursing supervisor at University Medical Center.



30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION (CONTINUED)

Sage Smith, M.D., a 1984 residency program graduate, also addressed the group about the importance of alumni support.

During lunch, roundtable discussions



Lisa Columbia, M.D., (left), a graduate of the class of 1992, is pictured with fellow 1992 graduate Freddy Yerby, M.D., and his wife, Debbie Yerby.



Dan Avery, M.D., (left), chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, is pictured with Melissa Behringer, M.D., a graduate of the class of 1994, and her husband, Stuart Austin.



Michael Belyeu, a graduate of the class of 1977 (left), with Andy and Jennifer White, both current third-year medical students.

were held. Michael Taylor, M.D., professor of Pediatrics at the College, led a discussion on electronic medical records. Chelley Alexander, M.D., residency director, assistant dean for Graduate Medical Education and chair of Family Medicine at the College, led a discussion about the future of Family Medicine in Alabama.

The weekend concluded with a cocktail reception and dinner and dance at NorthRiver Yacht Club.

The next reunion weekend is set for 2011, when the College will celebrate the 35th anniversary of the first graduating class of the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency.



Sydney Cook, (left), a College of Community Health Sciences supporter and father of fourth-year medical student Anne-Laura Rhodes Cook, and Joe Fritz, a graduate of the class of 1978.

More than 100 alumni from the first graduating class and subsequent classes, as well as faculty and friends, attended the 30th Anniversary Celebration of the first graduating class of the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency. The celebration ended with a cocktail reception and dinner and dance at NorthRiver Yacht Club.

Photos by
Jessica Maxwell



Nancy Rubin, Psy.D., (left), an associate professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine, talks with E. Eugene Marsh, M.D., dean of the College of Community Health Sciences.

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2005

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SAVE THE DATES

Fall 2006/Spring 2007 Events

COLLEGE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES/SCHOOL OF MEDICINE TUSCALOOSA CAMPUS

FALL 2006

Continuing Medical Education
Special Emphasis Week
October 23 – 27
“Infectious Diseases”

The Alice McLean Stewart
Endowed Lecture (TBA)

National speakers will present lectures on the following topics: Pediatric ID, Re-emerging Infections, Neuropsych Manifestations of HIV, Sepsis and Antibiotic Update
Contact: Vicki Johnson, 205-348-0093

(All lectures held at Willard Auditorium,
DCH Regional Medical Center
from 12:15-1:15 p.m.)

Game Day Brunch
Alabama vs. Auburn
Saturday, November 18
Contact: Vicki Johnson,
205-348-0093

SPRING 2007

Eighth Annual Rural Health
Conference
April 18 – 20
Contact: Leslie Zganjar,
205-348-3079

31st Annual Honors Convocation
May 18
Contact: Mary Kay Hannah,
205-348-1384

ENDOWED LECTURES

The David and Natica Bahar
Endowed Lecture (TBA)

A Brief History of the College of Community Health Sciences/ School of Medicine Tuscaloosa Campus

In the late 1960s, a public outcry arose in response to the country's acute need for more physicians. The College of Community Health Sciences was established at The University of Alabama in response to that demand. Many areas of Alabama, particularly small towns and rural communities, suffered from a serious lack of health care. Turning to the University for a comprehensive solution to the need for improved health care delivery in these areas, the Alabama Legislature funded the Tuscaloosa program and a similar program in Huntsville.

With a mandate to improve rural health care in Alabama, the College looked to Family Medicine to achieve its goals. The College was committed not just to training more physicians, but also to cultivating health care professionals with the desire to serve these smaller, underserved communities.

The College became official with the arrival of William R. Willard, M.D., a nationally recognized leader in Community and Family Medicine, who came from the University of Kentucky in 1972 to lead the program as its first dean. Willard wasted no time in developing College disciplines to meet the needs of the state. Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Behavioral Science, Internal Medicine, and Obstetrics-Gynecology all became part of the new curriculum. A residency in Family Practice, a new field of medicine, was begun within two years. The first class of medical students graduated in 1976.

In the more than 30 years of the program, the College has made significant strides in making health care more available and accessible in the state. Approximately 580 practitioners have received their third- and fourth-year clinical training at the College. Of those graduates, more than half have chosen careers in primary care. And those who choose to specialize in other areas of medicine are well prepared to do so.

The College's residency program has seen similar success. More than half of those who completed their training at the College of Community Health Sciences are practicing in Alabama, and the majority of those are practicing in towns with fewer than 25,000 residents. In fact, nearly one out of every seven family



Photo by Richard Andrew Mullins

Nott Hall, our home from 1972-2004 and still part of the College.

physicians now practicing in Alabama graduated from the College's residency program.

The College has implemented other successful programs to attract even more family physicians to serve the state. The Rural Health Scholars Program and the Rural Medical Scholars Program were developed to guide rural students into careers in health care. Hundreds of high school and college students from across Alabama have taken advantage of these programs.

In 1999, the College continued its commitment to rural research and outreach by establishing an annual Rural Health Conference dedicated to identifying issues and proposing solutions for improving the health of people in rural areas. The conference has become the place where various constituent groups

can meet, share concerns, and build networks to address common problems.

As a corollary to this effort, the College also created the Institute for Rural Health Research in 2001. The institute has since become a driving force behind identifying and researching a variety of rural health issues that, in turn, help shape the strategic direction of the College.

During the past three decades, the College of Community Health Sciences has contributed greatly to improved health care in the state. Now in its fourth decade, the College will continue to address the state's unique health care problems, as well as the problems associated with rural health care in Alabama, by training skilled medical practitioners and researchers for the future.



Our Mission Statement

The School of Medicine will provide the physicians and expertise needed for accessible, high quality, and compassionate health care for the citizens of Alabama through education, research, and service associated with the training of medical students and primary care physicians with a special emphasis on rural areas.



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