Dr. Pieroni Honored by The University of Alabama

CCHS Internal Medicine Professor Wins Top Teaching Award

Robert Pieroni, MD, Professor of Internal Medicine, received the 2002 Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award (OCTA) at The University of Alabama. He was one of four faculty members to receive the award, which is given by UA's National Alumni Association. OCTA is the University's highest honor for excellence in teaching. He was nominated by John Burnum, MD, Professor of Internal Medicine at CCHS.

Established in 1976, the award recognizes dedication to the teaching profession and the positive impact professors have on their students. Previous OCTA recipients of OCTA are: Elizabeth Cockrum, MD, Associate Professor of Pediatrics; James Leeper, PhD, Professor of Community & Rural Medicine and Chair of the Department of Behavioral & Community Medicine when its name changed to reflect its rural mission; William Winternitz, MD, Associate Professor, Internal Medicine; and former Community Medicine professor and UA Vice President, Harry Knopke, PhD.

Dr. Pieroni joined the faculty of the UA College of Community Health Sciences—the Tuscaloosa branch of the University of Alabama School of Medicine—in 1974 after completing his residency in internal medicine at the Harvard-Affiliated Hospitals. He received his bachelor’s degree from Boston College. Before attending medical school at Penn State College of Medicine, he conducted research in microbiology that contributed to the development of the acellular pertussis vaccine and a novel test for bacterial endotoxin that bears his name.

Dr. Pieroni is a diplomat and fellow in five areas of medicine: internal medicine, family medicine, allergy and immunology, geriatrics and quality assurance. He has more than 300 publications in these disciplines and has been an editorial board member and reviewer of many journals. Pieroni was the first U.S. Visiting Professor at the Kyoto Medical Education Program in Japan and has established an exchange program for medical residents at the University. He was named one of the "Best Doctors in America" and in the Southeast Region and is included in the U.S. Guide to America’s Top Family-Doctors.

He received the Golden Stethoscope Award for Clinical Teaching, the Army Commendation Medal for Valor, Army Achievement Medal, Clinical Recognition Award and the Alabama Golden Eagle Humanitarian of the Year Award. A colleague said in a letter that his interests aid his effectiveness as a teacher: "His vast knowledge of medicine coupled with his perpetually inquisitive mind provide the background for a teaching experience that, in my opinion, few students ever encounter."

27th Class of Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residents Graduate

Dr. William Owings, CCHS Interim Chair of Family Medicine, presided at the 27th annual graduation ceremony of the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency on June 20, 2002. DCH Healthcare Authority and DCH Regional Medical Center hosted dinner for the graduates and their families, followed by presentation of awards and special recognition.

Edward Martin, MD, Chairman of Family Medicine at LSU, was the speaker. Dr. Martin, who was Chief Resident in 1983-84, shared faculty photos from his CCHS days and today.

Residency Director Sam Gaskins, MD, presented the William R. Willard Award to Thomas Carter, MD, the first year resident who most closely embodies the mission and goals of CCHS, and awards (in box at right) were presented. Chief Residents, Jennifer Burdette and Shane Phillips, received University of Alabama chairs in appreciation for their leadership. Dr. Bobbi Adcock, a residency graduate and former full-time CCHS family medicine faculty member, received special recognition from the graduating class and the Dept. of Family Medicine. (More pictures, p 4.)

DeShazo Award winners Dr. Burdette (left) and Dr. Katona (right) with Cheley Alexander, MD, of the Family Medicine faculty, who presented the award.
REFLECTIONS
by William A. Curry, MD, Dean

The CCHS Extended Family

Someone wise once said that the best advice to give a young person considering career choices is this: “Pick the job you would be willing to do for free.” An impressive discovery for me has been how many people assist this College long after anyone would expect it. Alumni, retired faculty and staff, and loyal supporters of our mission form a strong network that is critical to our progress.

On a walk through our hospital services and clinics in recent years, you could still encounter great names from the history of CCHS: Lumpkin, deShazo, Winternitz, Burum. On a walk through Nott Hall, you might run into them again as members of a committee writing the history of CCHS, joined by former deans Wil Coggins (general editor of the project) and Roland Ficken (chair of the committee), along with former residency director and preceptor Dick Rutland. At a CME Committee meeting, you might see Bill Winternitz again, as he continues to plan Grand Rounds speakers.

Down the street at the University Club, at a Lister Hill Society board meeting, former surgery chair Bill Shamblin would be pledging funds for student and resident computer labs, a project embraced by him and his family that culminated in state-of-the-art facilities named for his father, Dr. Russom Shamblin. He is joined by many volunteers in the society such as Tommy Hester, Jim Fleming, Anne Monfore, Maddie Hill, Sammy Watson, and Alice Maxwell, as well as those at the Capstone Health Services Foundation board — stalwarts over the years like Sam Faucett, Gordon Rosen, Jim Merrell, and Ken DeWitt. Then there are those involved in fundraising projects surrounding our new building, most notably Anne Moman and the team involved in funding the Betty Shirley Clinic for Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine. Back at Nott, the Advancement Group might be meeting, including again Dean Emeritus Ficken, who has continued to contribute his time to fundraising and special events.

David Bahar was a longtime member of our clinical faculty. We lost David in the past year, but his contributions to student and resident education live on through the David and Natica Bahar Endowed Memorial Lecture, to be held this year on November 11. Another recently departed good friend is Alice McClean Stewart, memorialized in the annual lecture on alcoholism and substance abuse named in her honor. The College continues to receive memorial gifts in honor of both the Bahars and Alice McClean, increasing the impact of their original donations. Victor Poole, who was instrumental in our founding, has added an endowment for the William Willard Awards for a graduating student and a graduating resident, ensuring those awards in Dr. Willard’s name in perpetuity.

One problem with starting a litany of names is realizing just how many there are. At the risk of further omission, let me offer these as examples. They are accompanied by many more friends, some yet to be met, who will support the mission of CCHS/UA School of Medicine – Tuscaloosa as we educate students in clinical medicine, train residents in family practice, and respond to the needs of rural Alabama. From all of us whose lives are richer and whose work is more effective because of your unselfish gifts of time, talent, and money: Thank you.

Doctors for Rural Alabama: 2002 RMS

The UA College of Community Health Sciences greeted the 2002 Rural Medical Scholars and their families at a picnic in Tuscaloosa on August 18 prior to fall semester RMSP orientation. Ten qualified students from rural areas are chosen each year by medical faculty and practicing rural physicians for the highly selective Rural Medical Scholars Program of The University of Alabama and the University of Alabama School of Medicine (UASOM). Admission is based on high academic achievement, character, and leadership qualities. This year’s class will enter the RMSP next July after a year studying community medicine, primary care, and rural health issues and working with their preceptors (practicing family physicians). The Alabama Family Practice Rural Health Board provides the primary funding for the program, which is designed to recruit and prepare primary care physicians for Alabama’s rural communities.

2002 RMS (Front) David Corbett, Winfield; Ashley Coleman, Jackson; Tatum McCafferty, Greenville; Jodi Hembury, Opp; (Middle) Deidra Maxwell, Tuskegee; and Carrie Fexman, caramel. (Back) Brad Guy, Milly, Ray Stewart, Phoenix City; Michael Luther, Dawson; and Jon Binkerd, Shelby.

Wheat Addresses Economic Development at Auburn Seeks Community Partners for Rural Medical Pipeline

On September 19, Dr. John Wheat, Professor of Community & Rural Medicine and Director of UA Rural Scholars Programs, presented “Health Care and Economic Development: Rural Scholars Programs as Partners with Rural Communities” at the Auburn Cooperative Extension System’s 2002 Innovative Economic Development Training Course. Speaking to the statewide audience that attended, he discussed the role of physicians and health care facilities in the economic development of rural communities. He highlighted the Rural Scholars Program of the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa and the joint funding it receives to develop the human resources that help build and sustain health sector developments in rural communities. Because several students in the first class of medical school graduates in the Rural Medical Pipeline as part of the Rural Medical Scholars Program, he solicited the interest of rural community economic developers who wish to partner with these new doctors to “incubate” a rural health industry in their communities.

Office of Clinical Research Reports Studies at CMC

The Office of Clinical Research at Capstone Medical Center has a number of projects underway. Director Dean E. Eugene Marshall, MD, and Randal Fendley, CCHS Coordinator of Sponsored Programs, provide direction for the Office of Clinical Research and assist faculty and staff conducting studies.

The Asthma Study directed by Dr. Elizabeth Cockrum and Karen Burgess has 16 patients and plans follow-up of those patients for one full year.

The HERIS study directed by Dr. McKnights, has processed more than 1900 participant forms. CMC lab personnel are drawing and testing all blood samples for the project.

The CMV Study, a vaccine study being conducted by Dr. Ashley Evans, has started enrollment of study participants, screening newborn mothers at the DCH Women’s Center. Mothers who are seronegative are invited to enter the study.

The Rural Medical Pipeline includes the Rural Health Scholars Program for high school students; the Minority Rural Health Pipeline Program, which students enter after graduation from high school; and the Rural Medical Scholars Program. For information and applications for all the rural scholars programs, contact: Rural Scholars Program Office • Department of Community & Rural Medicine • University of Alabama • Box 870320 • Tuscaloosa AL 35487-0320 • (205) 348-5982 • 2 • OnRounds • Fall 2002
Meet the New Residents

Stelian Andreca grew up in Bucharest, Romania. His father, a retired assistant professor of Medicine, persuaded him to become a physician. Dr. Andreca earned his bachelor’s degree from Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy in 1988 and has worked in New York City and in Meade, Kansas, a town of 2000, where his wife, Daniela, is an ultrasound technologist. They have a 6-year-old son.

Julia Let Boothe is from Buhl and graduated from Tuscaloosa County High School. She earned her degree in Biology from The University of Alabama in 1997. She worked at a medical school at UASOM and completed coursework for an MPH. She is a Rural Medical Scholar and graduated from UASOM in 2002. She was president of the Tuscaloosa campus senior medical student class and won the Family Medicine Award at Honors Convocation in May, 2002. She was a coordinator for the Student Coordinator for Community Health at UA and became aware of the need for physicians in rural areas. She and her husband, Aubrey, have a daughter, Laura Adelyn, born a month before Boothe received her MD.

Larisa Bradford, a native of Belarus, is the daughter of Olga and Victor Kaishevich. She earned her MD from Minsk State Medical Institute in Minsk, Belarus in 1993. Her husband, Zane, is a territory manager with BellSouth in Huntsville. They have a seven-year-old son, Andrew. Dr. Bradford enjoys science and won awards for her research as a member of the student scientific society. She also likes music, theatre, and dancing as well as sports and reading. Her mother and grandmother influenced her decision to enter medicine, a profession she considers difficult but very rewarding.

Nikki Christensen, a 2002 graduate of UASOM, completed her clinical training in Talladega and graduated from Talladega College in 1997 and was a pharmacists before going to medical school. She and her husband, Dale, are parents to Luke and Sarah Beth. In her spare time, Nikki is active in her church and enjoys softball, weight training, football, and tennis.

Pharmacy Services Offered at Rural Clinic

Pharmacy services are available at a rural clinic operated by the Capstone College of Nursing because of Dr. Miranda Andrus, and her students. Capstone Rural Health Center opened in Parrish on June 4, 2001, said Dr. Andrus. “Parrish is a small town with a population of approximately 1200 and had been without a primary care facility for more than a year.” The clinic is operated by The University of Alabama Capstone College of Nursing and staffed by two nurse practitioners. It is funded through the Division of Nursing, Bureau of Health Professions, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The clinic, whose patient loads is approximately 1200 uninsured, provides primary health care, health promotion, home visits, and community-based programs.

Miranda Andrus, PharmD, is a faculty member at Auburn University Harrison School of Pharmacy and holds a joint appointment on the UA faculty as Assistant Professor of Community and Rural Medicine, began offering clinical pharmacy services at the clinic in July of 2001. Dr. Andrus teaches primary care rotations for fourth year Doctor of Pharmacy students from Auburn and pharmacy residents from DCH. She is a territory manager with BellSouth in Huntsville. She has a seven-year-old son, Andrew. Dr. Bradford enjoys science and won awards for her research as a member of the student scientific society. She also likes music, theatre, and dancing as well as sports and reading. Her mother and grandmother influenced her decision to enter medicine, a profession she considers difficult but very rewarding.

Dr. Andrus provides services at the clinic two days per week along with pharmacy students from Auburn and pharmacy residents from DCH. The arrangement provides a unique learning environment for students to practice patient assessment, develop pharmacy knowledge, and learn about working in a rural area. It also provides a unique interdisciplinary environment in which they work closely with the nurse practitioners, nursing students, and nutrition students. Dr. Andrus is currently collecting outcome data on the pharmacy services provided and hopes to publish it to demonstrate the need for clinical pharmacy services in rural areas.

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Faculty Appointments at CCHS

Christopher K. Finch, Pharm.D., Assistant Clinical Professor (joint appointment of Auburn University Harrison School of Pharmacy and University of Alabama School of Medicine) was born in Memphis, TN. Dr. Finch joined the Internal Medicine faculty in August 2001. He received a bachelor’s degree in Chemistry from Samford University and the Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Tennessee. He completed a specialized residency in internal medicine at the University of Tennessee. Dr. Finch precepts fourth year pharmacy students on an internal medicine rotation as well as fourth year medical students and family medicine residents on an applied pharmacotherapy rotation. His clinical interests include asthma, drug interactions, and significant adverse drug events.

Dr. Finch presented his research on peak flow meters at the World Asthma Conference in Chicago in 2001 and repeated the presentation at the American College of Clinical Pharmacy meeting in April 2002. He is currently working in collaboration with members of Internal Medicine department on several manuscripts for publication.

Bronwen Lichtenstein, Ph.D., is a medical sociologist and has recently been appointed as Associate Research Scientist with the Institute for Rural Health Research based at CCHS. Dr. Lichtenstein came to The University from UAB, where she has been an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology, an Affiliate Research Fellow in the Center for AIDS Research, the Lung Health Centers and the Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) Clinical Research Center, and Associate Director of the Center for Social Medicine and STDs. The numerous articles, presentations and technical reports authored or co-authored by Dr. Lichtenstein have largely addressed HIV/AIDS and other STDs, methadone services and perinatal health, illicit drug use, and the social politics of health. Among her many publications are "How AIDS Became a Race Issue: The Case of Alabama"; "Secret Encounters: Black Men, Sexuality and AIDS in Alabama"; "HIV Risk and Health Care Attitudes Among Detained Adolescents in Rural Alabama"; and "Women and Crack-Cocaine use: A Study of Social Networks and HIV Risk in an Alabama Jail Sample." Dr. Lichtenstein reviews funding applications for the Health Research Council (her native New Zealand’s equivalent to the National Institutes of Health's addressing aspects of HIV/AIDS, women’s health, illicit drug use, and the social history of epidemics. She is Principal Investigator of a study funded through the University of Alabama at Birmingham, titled "Drugsm as a Barrier to Treatment and Screenings of STDs in the South Eastern States," and was an Investigator for a 1996-1998 study funded through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Titled "Epidemiologic Research Studies of AIDS and HIV Infection I: Prior to becoming a sociologist, Dr. Lichtenstein enjoyed considerable success as a fiction writer, winning twelve literary awards for stories she published in Australian journals, magazines, and anthologies.

Please join Alumni, Faculty, Students, Staff, and Friends of the College of Community Health Sciences

New Facility Groundbreaking
Sunday, November 24, 2002
3:00 p.m.
corner of 5th Avenue East and University Boulevard

a Cocktail Buffet to benefit the Lister Hill Society
and to celebrate Thirty Years of Medical Education
November 24, 2002
4:30-6:30 p.m.
11 Pinheiro
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

$100 donation per person
RSVP: (205) 348-0093 or vjohnson@cchs.ua.edu

About the Lister Hill Society...
The Lister Hill Society, named in honor of the late U.S. Senator from Alabama who worked for better health care for all citizens, is the annual fund for CCHS, the College of Community Health Sciences. The focus of this branch of the University of Alabama College of Medicine is community medicine and primary care, especially in the preparation of family physicians to care for patients in rural areas.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

On ROUNDS

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

On Rounds is published quarterly by CCHS. Send information to the editor, Box 870326 Tuscaloosa, AL 35487. (205) 348-1302, jackson@cchs.ua.edu

William A. Curry, Dean
Linda Jackson, Editor

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