

# Med School Watercooler

NEWS FROM FREDERICK P. WHIDDON COLLEGE OF MEDICINE  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Friday, August 27, 2010

## Dr. Mark Taylor Appointed as Director of COM BioImaging Core Facility



Dr. Mark Taylor, associate professor of physiology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, was recently appointed director of the BioImaging Core Facility.

"Basic research is fundamental to both our understanding of science and our ability to improve medical care for patients," said Dr. Samuel J. Strada, dean of the USA College of Medicine. "As director of the USA BioImaging Core Facility, Dr. Taylor will serve and support our institution's research mission." Funds to support the facility were provided by basic science departments in the College of Medicine, the dean's office, and the office of the vice president for research.

Dr. Taylor will provide oversight for the day-to-day operation of the equipment housed in the core facility. He will also chair an advisory committee charged with formulating policies and procedures on operational matters, and serving in an advisory role to the dean's office with respect to needs and costs assessments, developments in technology, and the tracking of trends in image-related research fields.

"I look forward to establishing the facility as a major component of our research mission at USA, as well as working in the development and expansion of cutting-edge imaging capability at our medical school," Dr. Taylor said.

The facility, located on the third floor of the Medical Sciences Building at USA, is home to a new Nikon A-1 Spectral Confocal Microscope. The instrument is capable of capturing high-quality confocal images of cells and molecular events at high speed and enhanced sensitivity.

The instrument was obtained from the award of a NIH competitive instrumentation grant awarded to a team of collaborative investigators in the College of Medicine and the College of Engineering. Dr. Tom Rich, associate professor of pharmacology, was the principal investigator on the grant.

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Dr. Rich received his bachelor's degree and his master's in aerospace engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. He received his doctorate degree in biomedical engineering from Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

Dr. Taylor has served on the USA faculty since 2003. Trained in vascular physiology and pharmacology, he has always had an interest in the complex signals in and among cells of the vascular wall that control and fine-tune blood pressure and blood flow.

Dr. Taylor received his bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Alabama and his doctorate degree in basic medical sciences from USA. Prior to joining the USA faculty, he completed his postdoctoral training at the University of Vermont.

For more information about the confocal microscope at the BioImaging Core Facility, visit <http://medschoolwatercooler.blogspot.com/2010/08/bioimaging-core-facility-installs-nikon.html>.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at 2:58 PM No comments:

## Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program Student Receives Edwin R. Hughes Award



Heba Khader, a second-year student in the University of South Alabama Basic Medical Sciences Interdisciplinary Graduate Program, was recently awarded the Edwin R. Hughes Memorial Award.

The award is named in memory of Edwin R. Hughes, who served as director of the Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program at the USA College of Medicine from its inception in 1978 until 1990. The award, which will be given annually, recognizes the student with the best performance in the curriculum.

Khader, a native of Jordan, received her undergraduate degree in pharmacy from the University of Jordan in Amman, Jordan. She is currently studying with Dr. Brian Fouty, associate professor of pharmacology and internal medicine at USA.

The USA Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program's first doctoral degrees were awarded in 1983. To date, the program has awarded 167 doctoral degrees to students who have concentrated their advanced studies in the areas of biochemistry and molecular biology, cell biology and neuroscience, lung biology, microbiology and immunology, pharmacology, and physiology.

The Edwin R. Hughes Memorial Award was established in 2008 through donations

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from the Basic Medical Sciences Graduate faculty members and graduates of the program. To make a contribution to the Edwin R. Hughes Memorial Award, call (251) 460-7032.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [2:57 PM](#) No comments:

## Seven Things Every Parent Should Know for 'Back to School'



With summertime behind us and school days ahead, it is important to know what you can do to keep your children healthy. Dr. Thomas Martinko, associate professor of pediatrics at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, has some advice for parents who have children going back to school this year.

Dr. Martinko, who specializes in adolescent medicine, said nutrition can affect a child's entire day. "Kids who eat breakfast tend to do better in school," he said. "Even something small, like a granola bar, is better than skipping breakfast."

For lunch, he recommends a healthy, well-balanced meal that will keep children full throughout the day. "Because children are going through a growth spurt, they need a lot of calories," Dr. Martinko said. "But they also need to be careful what they eat. Students should avoid vending machines during the day, and eat a nutritional snack once they get home from school."

Dr. Martinko said students should get eight to nine hours of sleep each night. "During the growing stages, children are going to need much more sleep," he said. "Make sure they follow the recommended sleep cycle on the weekends. If they don't, it will be harder for them to function on Mondays because their bodies aren't used to the change."

Parents should also watch for signs of bad vision. "If they start getting headaches toward the end of the school day or if you notice they are sitting closer to the TV or computer, then they are most likely having vision problems," he said. Dr. Martinko said that during the pubertal growth spurt, the shape of the eye often changes, so a child who never needed glasses before may develop a problem. "When they come in for their annual exam, children should have their vision checked so if any problems exist, they can be corrected."

Although it can sometimes be difficult to determine if your child needs to stay home from school because of illness, Dr. Martinko said there are a few symptoms that can help you make the decision. "Fever is one of the main indications that they need to stay home," he said. "Also, if you think they will pose a threat to others – for example, if they are coughing or sneezing -- then it is best that they stay home to avoid spreading the germs to classmates."

According to Dr. Martinko, bullying can be seen at all age levels. "Discuss with your children ahead of time. Chances are, others are getting bullied by the same person," he said. "If you think your child is being bullied, contact the school and let them know of your concerns."

If you have teenagers, Dr. Martinko stressed the importance of watching for signs of substance abuse. "Alcohol is one of the main causes of death among teenagers," he said, "and it leads to bad choices and bad judgment." Dr. Martinko recommends that parents and students set up a contract through Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), organizations dedicated to preventing destructive decisions and setting a healthier, safer course for the lives of teenagers.

"Most importantly, every parent should keep tabs as to what's going on with their child at school, and get to know their friends," Dr. Martinko said. "Talk to your kids after school everyday, and give them that emotional support that they want and need."

*Dr. Martinko is board certified in adolescent medicine and has more than 20 years of experience in dealing with adolescent issues. His outpatient practice is located at USA Springhill Avenue. To schedule an appointment, call 434-3915.*

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [2:53 PM](#) No comments:

## Your Top Picks For Online Resources - Part 3



*The following is the last of a three-part series highlighting online resources frequently used by COM faculty and staff. To read the first post, [click here](#). To read the second post, [click here](#).*

Dr. Silvio de Melo, assistant professor of internal medicine, uses several websites to keep up-to-date with medical information. He frequently visits the [National Cancer Institute](#), the [American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy](#) and the [American Association for the Study of Liver Disease](#). Dr. de Melo accesses gastroenterology and clinical gastroenterology and hepatology journals on the [American Gastroenterological Association's website](#), which also includes useful information for patients and family.

Nan Johnson, secretary in the department of surgery, frequently visits the [Alabama Board of Medical Examiners](#) to locate physicians for referral within the state of Alabama, [Merriam-Webster online](#) for quick reference, and [Healthgrades](#), which is helpful when trying to locate a physician outside of Alabama.

Dr. Michael Cohen, co-director the division of cardiology, receives a daily summary of clinically-oriented healthcare news from the [American College of Cardiology's CV News Digest](#). The summary keeps him informed about current events and includes information about pharmaceutical products and companies, regulatory agencies such as the FDA, and government health-related programs.

Melodie Robinson, assistant director of medical alumni affairs, visits the [American Association of Medical Colleges](#), [American Medical Association](#), and the [Medical Association of the State of Alabama](#).

The [Endocrine Society](#) and the [Lawson Wilkins Pediatric Endocrine Society](#) are favorites of Dr. Kenneth Rettig, professor of pediatrics. He also visits [OMIM](#) (Online Mendelian Inheritance in Man) for up-to-date information.

Dr. Gregory Rutecki, professor of internal medicine, is an editor for [ConsultantLive](#), peer-reviewed consultations in primary care.

Kathryn Brouillette, word processing specialist in internal medicine, uses [rxlist.com](#), an invaluable tool for finding drug information. She also visits [Medicaid.alabama.gov](#) for drug lists, contact lists and provider lists.

Dr. Wladimir Wartecki, professor of medical genetics, developed four websites that enables physicians, as well as patients, to gain information regarding birth defects, disabilities and genetics. The websites are [Information Birth Defects Information System](#), <http://www.pandorawordbox.com/>, <http://www.birthdefects.net/> and <http://www.medword.net/>, which consists of overviews, clinical genetics, healthcare policies and guidelines.

Thanks to everyone for sharing your favorite online resources with your colleagues!

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