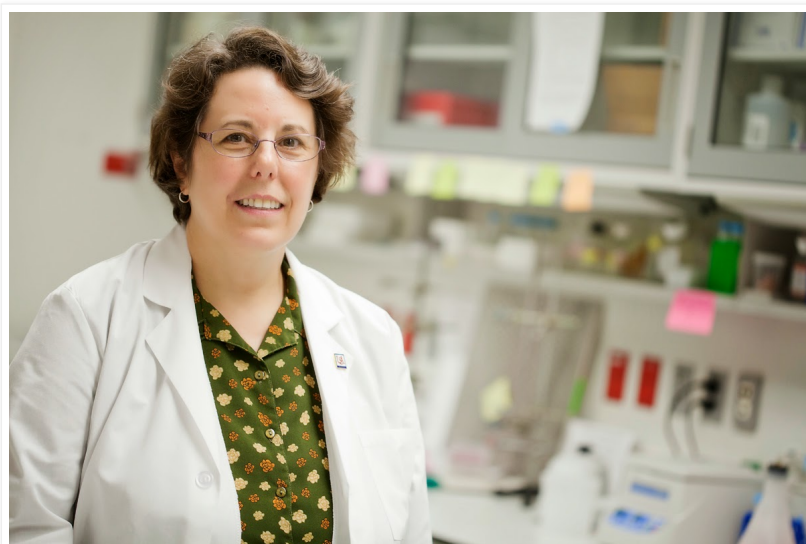


# Med School Watercooler

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

Thursday, May 1, 2014

## Dr. Donna Cioffi Awarded for Excellence in Respiratory Physiology, Medicine



Dr. Donna Cioffi, assistant professor of biochemistry and molecular biology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, was recently awarded the Giles F. Filley Memorial Award for her excellence in respiratory physiology and medicine.

According to Dr. Cioffi, the award is presented annually to an individual demonstrating outstanding promise based on his/her research program in respiratory physiology and medicine.

"I am extremely honored that I was selected to receive the Giles F. Filley Memorial Award this year," said Dr. Cioffi. "This is really a reflection of the wonderful environment in the Center for Lung Biology here at USA." She said that the Center is a fabulous training environment that is very supportive and collaborative in learning and research efforts.

Only two of these awards are given annually. One of the two awards is designated for a scientist affiliated with the University of Colorado, while the other is open to members of the American Physiological Society working in the United States. Award recipients are selected based upon their current and future research programs, research productivity and letters of support.

One of her current research projects involves endothelial cells -- the cells that line the blood vessels of the lungs -- and how they function when challenged by disease or illness. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) awarded Dr. Cioffi a four-year \$1 million grant in 2013 to better understand this niche in medical research.

Dr. Cioffi's work focuses on store-operated calcium (SOC) entry in endothelial

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cells in the lung. When SOC entry is activated, comes into cells leading to endothelial barrier disruption. Understanding mechanisms that regulate SOC entry may lead to development of new therapeutics for treatment of pathologies that involve endothelial barrier disruption such as acute respiratory distress syndrome.

"Being a recipient of this award will allow me to begin exploring new areas of research in lung biology," Dr. Cioffi said.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [9:01 AM](#) No comments:

## USA Medical Students Cook for Ronald McDonald Families



USA medical students pose for a group photo before preparing a meal for families staying at the Ronald McDonald House at USA Children's & Women's Hospital. Picture above, from left to right: Heather Griffin, Chris Mills, Stefan Osborn, Brytney Cobia, Miles Cobia, Megan Hudson, Audrey Paulzak, Vivian Yeilding, Jon Newsom and Abby Weems.



Families staying at the Ronald McDonald House at USA Children's & Women's Hospital grab dinner provided by USA medical students.

Third-year medical student Audrey Paulzak's desire to help people extends beyond the hospital walls. "Illness not only affects the sick, but also has an impact on those not in the hospital bed," she said.

On April 16, 2014, Paulzak, along with a group of classmates, cooked a homemade taco dinner for the patients and families staying at the Ronald McDonald House at USA Children's & Women's Hospital. The Ronald McDonald House is an organization that provides a temporary home – where they can eat, sleep,



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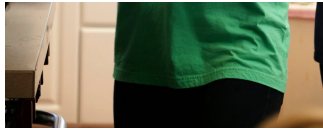
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shower, and wash their clothes -- for families of c

The students hope to make it a permanent progr  
a month.



"Everybody goes through something at some point in their lives where they can't possibly hold up the weight of the world on their own," Paulzak said. "Sometimes the best 'medicine' we can offer is to feel 'normal.' A hot, home-cooked meal is a ritual that brings comfort, familiarity, and closure at the end of the day."

When Paulzak's older brother Michael was born in Niceville, Fla., he had to stay in a Florida neonatal intensive care unit for six weeks. Her parents lived an hour away from the hospital. "As any family with a sick newborn can testify to, the only place my first-time parents wanted to be was by his side every second of the day."

Ronald McDonald house took her parents in for the full six weeks. "I remember growing up and hearing the story of his first few hours, and my mom always said what a relief it was to come home to Ronald McDonald house after a long day of stressing by his bedside - about how kind they were and how the cabinets were always stocked full of food."

Paulzak knew she wanted to find a way to give back. "When the Ronald McDonald House at USA Children's & Women's Hospital expressed a need for hot, home-cooked meals for their residents I figured that was a really feasible way I could contribute," she said.

Paulzak knew her classmate, Chris Mills, would be on board. "I immediately started coming up with ideas for meals," said Mills. "Cooking is something I have really grown to love and is a big part of my life. It even serves as an outlet for the stresses of medical school."

Mills says preparing the meals is a great way to serve the community as well as interact with patients' families. "They are not in the comfort of their own homes, so having a home-cooked meal at a time like this can really make someone's day, and hopefully it helps contribute to the positive experience they have at the USA hospitals."

For another third-year medical student, Brytney Cobia, cooking dinners for Ronald McDonald House is a familiar task. "My dad took me to do this on the weekends when I was growing up," she said. "It is such an easy way to give back that makes such a difference for these families with so much on their plate."

Cobia said many parents are from cities more than an hour away, and having a child in the hospital for a prolonged period of time can make for a difficult, time-consuming, and expensive commute.

"As a medical student, we are so focused on the medical care of our patients that it is easy to lose sight of the other people involved in the patient's healing - and that they often need care themselves," she said. "I think this program is a great way to stay grounded in medicine and to not lose sight of the bigger picture of a patient's health."

For those interested in volunteering, contact Chris Mills at [csm1101@jagmail.southalabama.edu](mailto:csm1101@jagmail.southalabama.edu).

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [8:59 AM](#) No comments:

## USA Health System Welcomes Garry Adkins

Garry Adkins was recently appointed assistant chief information officer for the University of South Alabama Health System.

Adkins, who has 19 years of success in developing support operations and creating technology environments, will be responsible for all day-to-day information systems services for the USA Hospitals.





"Garry brings a lot of experience in the health care field as well as a great customer service orientation," said Mark Lauteren, chief information officer for the USA Health System. "We are very glad to have him as part of the team."

Prior to his appointment at USA, Adkins served as director of information systems at Colquitt Regional Medical Center in Moultrie, Ga. While there, he built and implemented an information services (IS) strategic plan and managed all aspects of technology and clinical implementations for the hospital and clinics.

From 2005-2011 Adkins served as director of technical services at Cabell Huntington Hospital in Huntington, W.Va., where he managed all aspects of technology and support services for the 313-bed teaching hospital associated with Marshall University Medical School and Clinics.

In addition, Adkins served in multiple positions at Applied Card Systems, Inc., a national financial services firm, and as president and owner of Ichthus Access Networking, Inc.

Adkins earned his bachelor of science degree in computer sciences from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind.

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [8:56 AM](#) 1 comment:

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## Medical Alumni Association Hosts Distinguished Alumnus Lecture



Dr. H. Gordon Deen, professor of neurosurgery at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Fla., presented the USA Medical Alumni Association's "Distinguished Alumnus Guest Speaker" lecture.



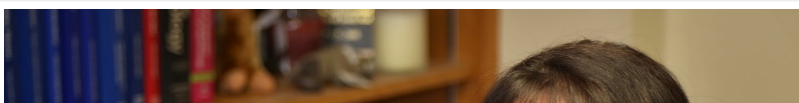
The University of South Alabama Medical Alumni Association hosted its first "Distinguished Alumnus Guest Speaker" event on April 23, 2014.

The event featured Dr. H. Gordon Deen, professor of neurosurgery at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Fla. Dr. Deen, who graduated from the USA College of Medicine in 1978, discussed his path from USA to the Mayo Clinic, as well as the importance of graduate medical education.

Dr. Deen has been awarded the distinction of being one of the "Best Doctors in America" on multiple occasions and was named as one of the "Top Doctors" in U.S. News and World Report in 2011. He has extensive military service including serving as the attending neurosurgeon for President Reagan's Medical Support team in Bali, Indonesia.

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [8:56 AM](#) No comments:

## Dr. Andrea Kahn Named Pathology Residency Program Director



Dr. Andrea Kahn, associate professor of pathology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, was recently appointed as the USA pathology residency program director. The graduate education committee voted unanimously on her behalf.

"I was very pleased to be appointed residency program director for the department of pathology," said Dr. Kahn. "I have served as associate program director for the past seven years, and I am excited about my new role."

According to Dr. Kahn, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) defines the program director as the physician designated with authority and accountability for the operation of the residency program.

The program director wears many hats -- filling the role of principal, counselor, registrar, financial officer, time keeper, and recruiter. "I could not fill all these roles alone," Dr. Kahn admitted. "The chair of the department, the faculty, the program coordinator, the staff and residents themselves are essential to the operation and success of the program."

As the program director, Dr. Kahn's short and long term goals are focused on creating the best possible learning and working environment for the residents while upholding the program requirements.

"I have worked with residents for many years and I choose to continue doing so every day as the reward is great, both professionally and personally," said Dr. Kahn.

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