

# Med School Watercooler

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

Friday, March 16, 2018

## USA Medical Students Open Next Chapter of Their Lives at Match Day



University of South Alabama fourth-year medical student Alex Wiles celebrates after opening his envelope containing his residency training assignment at this year's Match Day ceremony. Wiles matched in internal medicine at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tenn.

"This is a bigger deal than when we matched. Back then it was just a small event for students. We got our envelopes and that was it. Today is a much bigger deal for all of the students in this room," said Dr. Catherine Huettemann, mother of a fourth-year medical student at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine. Her son, Richard Huettemann, matched this morning in general surgery at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, S.C.

At 10:55 a.m., excitement filled the air as 73 USA medical students scattered throughout the ballroom of the Mobile Convention Center to collect an envelope containing results that they had been working toward over the last four years – the specialty and program where they will spend the next years training as a physician. Dr. Susan LeDoux, associate dean for medical education and student affairs at the USA College of Medicine, reminded anxious Match Day participants to not open their envelopes until she had rung the bell signaling it was time to open them at 11 a.m.

The National Residency Matching Program (NRMP), or Match Day, is the annual event in which thousands of doctors across North America learn where they will be doing their residency training. The graduating medical students simultaneously opened their envelopes containing their assigned matches at 11 a.m. CST. After celebrating the results with their families in Mobile, each student announced their Match Day results on stage and marked the location of their residency training program on a map.

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"It is my pleasure to celebrate the accomplishments of our medical students and their transition into the next phase of their medical education- their residency training. With Match Day results known and as medical school comes to an end for these students, in reality it is the beginning of a lifelong commitment to learning in order to best care for their patients," said Dr. John Marymont, vice-president of medical affairs and dean of the USA College of Medicine.

"As medical students match in residency programs across the country, it is with pride that we send them into their next steps as physicians serving patients, the medical profession and their communities," Dr. LeDoux said.

Huettemann, along with his parents and wife, has been waiting anxiously for this day for the past four years. The Huettemann's view Match Day as a family tradition, as both of his parents are pediatricians practicing in Mobile and participated in their Match Day ceremony in the early 1990s.

"Both of my parents being physicians definitely had an influence on my decision to pursue medicine as a career," he said. "I grew up watching my parents enjoy what they did so much while still challenging them enough to keep them engaged with their work all of the time. Being able to have those experiences while growing up and sorting out my own interests put medicine at the top of potential careers for me."

The Mobile native decided to study close to his roots after earning his bachelor of science degree in biology from the University of Louisiana in Baton Rouge, La. Huettemann credits his upbringing for setting a positive example of how to be a physician. "From a young age, my understanding of being a physician had everything to do with helping sick people," he said. "All of the extraneous things about being a doctor seemed to take a backseat when I would ask my parents about their job and what drew them to become physicians. It has been my motivation to try my hardest through medical school to do everything I can to help heal sick people in my future medical career. It was the first thing I understood about being a physician, and I will continue to use this background throughout my career."

"I know graduation is when we are officially physicians, but Match Day is when you find out where the hard work of medical school has taken you next," Huettemann said. "My wife and I were so excited about my match that we were jumping up and down."

Huettemann said that he is prepared for his residency because of hands-on training and volunteer service he experienced at USA.

"USA gives medical students the opportunity to get involved at an early stage in their medical education, which is crucial to a well-rounded physician-in-training," Huettemann said.

Olivia Means, another fourth-year medical student at the USA College of Medicine, volunteers as a Sunday school teacher in her community. "Teaching Sunday school and building my own faith has set the foundation for how I approach my academics and clinical duties," she said.

Means has been interested in science and medicine since childhood. From a young age, she participated in science fairs and other extracurricular activities that reinforced her love of the subject. "My mother pushed me to participate in activities like this, and I thank her and others in my life for encouraging my love of science and medicine," Means said.

While earning her bachelor of science degree at the University of South Florida in Tampa, Fla., Means was introduced to plastic surgery and conducted research in mental health and pediatrics while volunteering her time as a Sunday school teacher. "Different experiences helped shaped my care of others and led me to a career in medicine," Means said.

Means matched in integrated plastic surgery at Michigan State University in Grand Rapids, Mich.

"Plastic surgery was the first specialty that I shadowed in. I am interested in

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working with children and adults in a variety of cases to give them the best level of care," Means said.

"Working with wonderful advisors and instructors at USA helped reinforce to me that this is my passion," she said. Brimming with excitement after her match, she gushed, "I want to give a shout-out to Dr. Brooks and Dr. Simmons, who, among many other wonderful advisors, helped me get where I am now."

During her time at the USA College of Medicine, Means said she also has matured as a leader through her volunteer work and by serving nationally with the Association of American Medical Colleges.

Means is thankful for all of her experiences and the mentorship she received during her time at the USA College of Medicine. "I was challenged, encouraged and supported in ways I did not expect," she said.

Daniel Johnson, a fourth-year student who matched earlier this year into the military match, was excited to spend the morning celebrating the successes of his classmates. "Since I already knew where I was going, seeing my friends and their families being excited was the best part of this morning for me."

Johnson serves in the U.S. Navy. In December he matched in orthopaedic surgery at Fort Smith Medical Center in Portsmouth, Va.

"I made a short video of myself opening the envelope and finding out my match then," Johnson said. "I was so excited to match into my first choice and later sent the video to my mom."

Adam Powell, another fourth-year medical student at USA, earned his bachelor of science degree in biochemistry from the University of Alabama in Huntsville, Ala. He also earned an emergency medical technician certificate from Calhoun College in Huntsville, Ala.

Powell has donated his time to many student organizations, including serving as vice-president of his class and serving with the Christian Medical Ministry of South Alabama. Recently, he embarked on a trip to Rwanda, Africa, to care for local residents.

While serving as vice-president of his class, Powell said that he grew as a physician-in-training while listening to classmates' needs and communicating them to the class and administrators. "I hope to continue to follow Christ's example as a physician by leading through service and by putting others' needs before my own," Powell said.

Powell learned about compassionate care through his activities and plans to continue to practice it throughout his career. "Through these activities, I learned that compassionate care requires engaging the whole patient-body, soul, mind and spirit," he said.

Powell matched in pediatrics at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in Birmingham, Ala. He said he is most excited to learn how best to serve pediatric patients. "In medical school, we learn so much, and pediatrics is just a small portion," he said. "I want to fully learn how to love my pediatric patients and their families."

Powell said that through his father, who is also a pediatrician, and experiences watching foster siblings receiving excellent pediatric care, he was moved to serve younger patients. While studying at USA, he said that he knew pediatrics was for him as he saw pediatricians come in to work every day. "You could just tell they were excited to be in the hospital and clinics every day," he said.

Fourth-year medical student Alexandria Sims, did not initially plan to go to medical school. It was not until her junior year at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Ala., that she decided to pursue a career in medicine while earning her bachelor of science degree in chemistry.

"I was drawn to the idea of a career that could combine the science that I love with a chance to directly impact patients' lives every day," Sims said. "Plus," she

laughed, "I had always enjoyed school and figured another four years might be fun!"

Sims matched in anesthesiology at the University of Carolina School of Medicine in Chapel Hill, N.C. She said she is thrilled to be attending her first choice of residency and to be the first physician in her family.

"Finally being able to be fully responsible for patients is one of the most fulfilling and also one of the most frightening parts of starting my residency," Sims said. "USA has prepared us all for the level of responsibility we will have over the care of our patients."

Sims is grateful for the time she has spent honing her skills at the USA College of Medicine. "The past four years have been the toughest and yet most fun of my life. I've made incredible friendships that will last a lifetime and learned more than I could have ever imagined," she said.

[Click here](#) to view more photos from the event.

Complete Match Day results can be found [here](#).

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [4:52 PM](#) [No comments:](#)

## Staying Connected



The University of South Alabama College of Medicine helped Dr. Michael Hennigan achieve his career goals. Thirty five years later, the university is also helping him achieve his fitness goals.

Last week, the USA Physicians Group Facebook Page awarded Dr. Hennigan a Fitbit Charge 2 in a giveaway promoting health, fitness and wellness. "I was pleasantly surprised since I knew my odds were just under one percent," he said.

As an endocrinologist with the Baptist Health Group in Pensacola, Fla., Dr.

Hennigan plans to use his new Fitbit to achieve his fitness goals. "I tell my patients that I strive to keep hypocrisy to a minimum and personally benefit from tools to help maintain my personal motivation," he said.

Dr. Hennigan's late father-in-law, Dr. James Vacik, was among the inaugural faculty in the pharmacology department at the USA College of Medicine, and his late mother-in-law, Dr. Dorothy Vacik, also worked as a researcher for the USA College of Medicine. Dr. Hennigan said there was never a moment in his life when he did not want to pursue medicine.

A native of Pensacola, Fla., he chose to attend the USA College of Medicine, graduating with the class of 1982.

"Throughout my time at the USA College of Medicine I was able to see, experience and participate in so many different clinical situations that have continued to benefit me throughout my career," Dr. Hennigan said.



"I continue to enjoy and be honored by the experience of the exam room and the delight in seeing patients often suffering for years being able to improve," Dr. Hennigan said.

Dr. Hennigan enjoys keeping up with social media for the USA College of Medicine and the USA Physicians Group. Before he moved back to the Gulf Coast after years spent away last September, he said that it has been a small touch of home to see how the USA College of Medicine is growing and changing.

Dr. Hennigan plans to keep up with the USA College of Medicine through Facebook. "I have continued to keep a finger on the pulse and have greatly enjoyed the alumni events over the years, allowing me to keep in touch with many I trained with," he said.

To view the USA College of Medicine Facebook page, [click here](#).

To view the USA Physicians Group Facebook page, [click here](#).

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [3:17 PM](#) No comments:

**Wednesday, March 14, 2018**

## USA SNMA to Host Health Fair



**SNMA HEALTH FAIR**  
Come join us for free health services and counseling  
for ALL AGES

- Blood Pressure
- Exercise
- Nutrition
- Blood Sugar
- Dental Health
- Sexual Health
- Skin Health
- Mental Health

AND MUCH MORE!

**Saturday, March 24th**  
**2:00pm – 6:00pm**

USA Faculty Club 6348 Fincher Rd. Mobile AL 36688  
For more information contact Juan Torres 251-656-4953

Logos for participating organizations: Student National Medical Association, Freestyle, SNMA Alabama, AltaPointe Health, Women's Resource Center, SMART START, BELONG, Family Health, and others.

In collaboration with Belong, a local non-profit organization that provides resources to immigrant families, the University of South Alabama College of Medicine chapter of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) is hosting a health fair on March 24, 2018, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the USA Faculty Club.

"The health fair is designed to impact the Hispanic community, however, the event is open to everyone," said Hilda Watkins, a third-year student at the USA College of Medicine. "According to the CDC, the top causes of death in the Hispanic population are cancer, heart disease, stroke, unintentional injuries and diabetes. With such a growing population in the Mobile area, our goal is to provide educational resources that improve health literacy and health outcomes."

At the event, medical students will facilitate six health-centered tables to provide counseling and information on various health topics. Members from the Medical Spanish Interest Group at the USA College of Medicine also will serve as translators at the event.

The health fair is free and open to the public. For more information, call Juan Torres at (251) 656-4953.

The USA Faculty Club is located at 6348 Fincher Road in Mobile.

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## USA Health Photographer Bill Starling Honored with Award



Bill Starling, photographer for USA Health, recently was honored with the American Advertising Award (ADDY) at the 2018 American Advertising Federation (AAF) Mobile Bay American Advertising Awards.

Starling received two silver ADDYs for his photography used for printed materials for USA's Player to Player (P2P) Concussion Awareness Program. Starling worked with local firm Lewis Communications in creating marketing materials for the program. The P2P program focuses on how athletes can protect themselves from the dangers of concussion on the field by emphasizing peer-to-peer support from players.

For the same project, Starling also was honored with two Gold Awards from the Sports Advertising Awards, an organization that recognizes excellence in sports advertising and marketing.

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**Tuesday, March 13, 2018**

## Mark Your Calendar: OFA Junior Faculty Lunch



The University of South Alabama College of Medicine Office of Faculty Affairs is hosting a junior faculty lunch session on Tuesday, April 3, 2018, at 12 p.m. in the USA Children's & Women's Hospital boardroom.

The lunch session will include a question and answer session with Dr. John Marymont, vice president for medical affairs and dean of the USA College of Medicine.

Lunch will be provided, and the session is open to all USA College of Medicine junior faculty members. For more information and to RSVP contact Nicole Shultz at [nschultz@southalabama.edu](mailto:nschultz@southalabama.edu) by Wednesday, March 21,

2018.

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