

Med School Watercooler

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

Friday, August 24, 2018

Dan Howard Joins USA Health as Chief Information Officer



Dan Howard recently was named chief information officer for USA Health. In his new role, Howard will provide vision, leadership and strategic direction in the development and implementation of information systems for USA Health.

"Technology plays an increasingly vital role in health care. We are excited that Dan brings great experience and knowledge to USA Health as we continue to be the leading academic health system in our region," said Owen Bailey, chief executive officer of USA Health.

Prior to joining USA Health, Howard served as site chief information officer at Loma Linda University Health in California, where he had increasing leadership responsibilities since 2012. As the senior information services executive for Loma Linda University Health's affiliate and partner hospitals, he focused on strategic business alignment, project management and collaboration with executive, physician and service-line leadership. He also worked closely with the system's electronic medical record systems.

Howard earned his bachelor's degree in biology from California State University San Bernardino, and his master's degree in business administration, with an information systems emphasis, from the University of Redlands.

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Blog Archive

- 2023 (11)
- 2022 (249)
- 2021 (269)
- 2020 (191)
- 2019 (245)
- ▼ 2018 (236)
 - 12/30 - 01/06 (3)
 - 12/23 - 12/30 (2)
 - 12/16 - 12/23 (8)
 - 12/09 - 12/16 (5)
 - 12/02 - 12/09 (4)
 - 11/25 - 12/02 (4)
 - 11/18 - 11/25 (2)
 - 11/11 - 11/18 (7)
 - 11/04 - 11/11 (3)
 - 10/28 - 11/04 (4)
 - 10/21 - 10/28 (3)
 - 10/14 - 10/21 (3)
 - 10/07 - 10/14 (4)
 - 09/30 - 10/07 (4)
 - 09/23 - 09/30 (7)
 - 09/16 - 09/23 (6)
 - 09/09 - 09/16 (8)
 - 09/02 - 09/09 (4)
 - 08/26 - 09/02 (8)
 - ▼ 08/19 - 08/26 (7)

[Dan Howard Joins USA Health as Chief Information O...](#)

[Dr. Frankel to Discuss 'The Gut Microbiota and Can...](#)

[USA Health Expansion Proves Beneficial for Residen...](#)

[Cardiology to Host Grand Rounds Sept. 7](#)

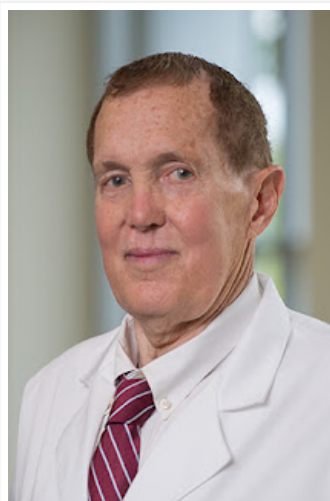
Thursday, August 23, 2018

Dr. Frankel to Discuss 'The Gut Microbiota and Cancer Immunotherapy' at Med School Café

Dr. Arthur Frankel, chief of medical oncology and the Arlene and Mayer Mitchell Chair in Medical Oncology at the University of South Alabama Cancer Institute, will present at the September Med School Café.

His lecture, titled "The Gut Microbiota and Cancer Immunotherapy," will be held on Friday, Sept. 7, 2018, at the Strada Patient Care Center Conference Room on the first floor. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m., and the presentation will begin at noon.

Dr. Frankel will discuss how specific gut bacteria or probiotics can enhance cancer immunotherapy by stimulating dendritic cells leading to more tumor cytotoxic T lymphocytes.



The Med School Café lecture and lunch are provided free of charge, but reservations are required. For more information or to make reservations, contact Kim Partridge at (251) 460-7770 or kepartridge@health.southalabama.edu.

Med School Café is a free community lecture series sponsored by the USA Physicians Group. Each month, faculty from the USA College of Medicine share their expertise on a specific medical condition, providing insight on the latest treatment available.

The [Strada Patient Care Center](#) is located at 1601 Center St. in Mobile.

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Wednesday, August 22, 2018

USA Health Expansion Proves Beneficial for Resident Physicians



Dr. Thomas Myers, a rheumatologist with USA Mobile Diagnostic Center, examines his patient Joseph Nelson in the clinic.

The expansion of USA Health to include Mobile Diagnostic Center (USAMDC) – one of Mobile's largest primary care groups – provides resident physicians greater access to subspecialty care as they complete rotations with rheumatologists at USAMDC.

Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program Student Re...

Register Now: 27th Annual Obstetrics and Gynecolog...

Class of 2019 Medical Students Named to Alpha Omeg...

► 08/12 - 08/19 (5)

► 08/05 - 08/12 (4)

► 07/29 - 08/05 (6)

► 07/22 - 07/29 (4)

► 07/15 - 07/22 (4)

► 07/08 - 07/15 (6)

► 07/01 - 07/08 (2)

► 06/24 - 07/01 (5)

► 06/17 - 06/24 (5)

► 06/10 - 06/17 (6)

► 06/03 - 06/10 (4)

► 05/27 - 06/03 (4)

► 05/20 - 05/27 (4)

► 05/13 - 05/20 (4)

► 05/06 - 05/13 (5)

► 04/29 - 05/06 (4)

► 04/22 - 04/29 (5)

► 04/15 - 04/22 (5)

► 04/08 - 04/15 (5)

► 04/01 - 04/08 (5)

► 03/25 - 04/01 (4)

► 03/18 - 03/25 (4)

► 03/11 - 03/18 (5)

► 03/04 - 03/11 (4)

► 02/25 - 03/04 (4)

► 02/18 - 02/25 (3)

► 02/11 - 02/18 (6)

► 02/04 - 02/11 (4)

► 01/28 - 02/04 (3)

► 01/21 - 01/28 (3)

► 01/14 - 01/21 (5)

► 01/07 - 01/14 (3)

► 2017 (231)

► 2016 (206)

► 2015 (205)

► 2014 (241)

► 2013 (232)

► 2012 (245)

► 2011 (262)

► 2010 (247)

► 2009 (88)

In addition to Dr. Joseph Michalski, professor of internal medicine at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine and a rheumatologist with USA Physicians Group, internal medicine residents with USA Health now have the opportunity to complete rotations with one of the four rheumatologists at USAMDC.

According to Dr. Luis Betancourt, an internal medicine resident with USA Health, the partnership with USAMDC has been very helpful for internal medicine residents thus far. "This collaboration has allowed us greater access to learn and become well-versed in how to approach problems related to rheumatology," he said. Before, rheumatology was difficult to rotate through, as there was only one rheumatologist on staff."

Dr. Betancourt recently completed a month-long rotation with Dr. Thomas Meyers, a rheumatologist with USA Mobile Diagnostic Center. "Dr. Meyers is very knowledgeable and was eager to teach," he said. "Rheumatology is a very broad field that incorporates multiple subspecialties and I was able to learn a lot about how to approach rheumatic problems."

Dr. Meyers emphasized the importance for residents to discover their own interests, which can be difficult to fully accomplish without observing an extensive offering of subspecialty medicine. "This collaboration introduces residents to rheumatology in its natural environment: an outpatient setting, seeing a collection of diseases of varying severity and complexity, observing and participating in the craft of understanding what patients' needs are, and then tailoring a medical approach to accomplish the patient goals within the parameters of evidence-based medicine," he said. "Residents need to experience how to interact, not only with patients with rheumatic diseases and their families, but also the clerical personnel, pharmaceutical industry, medical assistants and nurses."

According to Dr. Meyers, the benefits of the partnership are two-fold. "For the rheumatologists, it requires articulating a rationale for what, through repetition and experience, has become almost automatic," he said. "It requires an updating of a very mature perspective of medicine to a more youthful view. It is an excellent connection back to the medical school and eventually the staff as well."

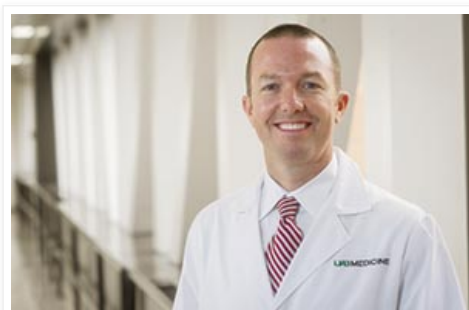
[Learn more about USA Mobile Diagnostic Center.](#)

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Tuesday, August 21, 2018

Cardiology to Host Grand Rounds Sept. 7

Dr. Marc Cribbs, assistant professor of internal medicine and pediatrics at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, director of the Alabama Adult Congenital Heart Disease Program and director of the Comprehensive Pregnancy & Heart Program at UAB, will present the next cardiology grand rounds.



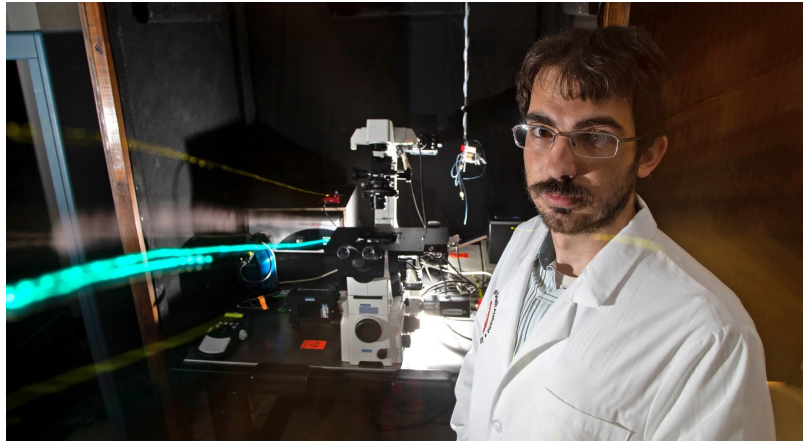
The lecture, titled "Adult Congenital Heart Disease: An Overview," is set for 11:30 a.m. Sept. 7, at the USA Medical Center in the second-floor conference center.

Objectives are to understand the evolution of pediatric cardiology, appreciate the growing number of adults with congenital heart disease, and be aware of why patients are often lost to follow-up.

For more information, contact Donna Gregory at (251) 471-7923 or dgregory@health.southalabama.edu.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [9:15 AM](#) No comments:

Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program Student Receives American Heart Association Funding for Fellowship



Joshua Deal, a student in the University of South Alabama Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program, recently received a Predoctoral One-Year Fellowship award from the American Heart Association.

The grant will allow Deal to research hyperspectral imaging as a novel method to classify atherosclerotic plaque. Deal said although there are techniques that can detect the plaques, they are slow, inefficient and nonspecific, and some require a potentially harmful contrast agent.

Together, Dr. Thomas Rich, professor of pharmacology at USA College of Medicine, and Dr. Silas Leavesley, professor of chemical and biomedical engineering at USA, and their lab students have been working to develop a new imaging technique known as excitation-scanning hyperspectral imaging. Hyperspectral imaging is the process of subjecting an object to large portions of the electromagnetic spectrum in small segments and collecting the resulting spectral information in order to determine what that spectral fingerprint is. This technique may allow a user to identify individual molecular components in a given sample quickly, efficiently, with great specificity and without any need for contrast agents.

The imaging may also be able to find plaques that have already begun to build and determine the type of plaque, its likelihood to rupture and any additional damage the plaque has caused. Contingent on the sensitivity of the technique, Deal said they may also be able to identify sites that could develop into problem areas in the future.

Deal said the biggest challenge with his research will be the patient-to-patient variability. No two individuals have the exact same distribution of molecules, so they will have to identify what the spectral images will look like at each disease stage and the bounds for normality for each of those stages. Deal said this compounds the fact that what they define for animals may not be sufficient when applying the findings to humans.

"The award is for one year, but an engineer's device is never truly optimized," Deal said. "The one year timeline should provide great insight into the feasibility of the project. If it works as well as we think it will, this line of research will continue for the foreseeable future."

Though majority of the grant will pay Deal's tuition, stipend and lab materials, he plans on using a small portion to attend the Photonics West conference to present his findings and gain useful feedback to improve his research.

Deal said he would like to thank a host of people who contributed to his receiving this grant: "My mentors, Silas Leavesley and Tom Rich, are fantastic editors and sounding boards, and they generate ideas at an incredible rate; the rest of my dissertation committee, Troy Stevens, Mark Taylor, David Weber and Dhananjay Tambe, have asked several difficult questions that guided the evolution of this project; Dr. Mary Townsley and Dr. Donna Cioffi teach a class designed to help students write grant applications, and a lot of my better edits came directly from that classroom; Dr. Wiltz Wagner and Ivan McMurtry teach a class designed to help students refine and communicate their ideas clearly, and I used several discussions from that class in my grant application; our lab technician Andrea Britain who helped me find and set up various research components; and I would be completely lost in all the paperwork without Judi Naylor and Jennifer Collins. Thank you all for your contributions. Without each of you, this would not have been possible."

The American Heart Association has funded more heart disease and stroke research than any organization outside the federal government, thanks to the generosity of donors and supporters. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [8:54 AM](#) No comments:

Monday, August 20, 2018

Register Now: 27th Annual Obstetrics and Gynecology Conference

The University of South Alabama Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology will host its 27th annual Continuing Education Conference in Obstetrics and Gynecology on Sept. 27-28, 2018. The event will take place at the Battle House Hotel & Spa in Mobile.



The event will be of particular interest to OB/GYN physicians, family medicine physicians, advanced practice nurses, physician assistants, nurse midwives, social workers and others interested in the health care of women and newborns.

USA speakers include Dr. Charles Hanes, Dr. Charles Harmon, Dr. Jennifer Young Pierce, Dr. Bassam Rimawi, Dr. Lisa Spiryda, Dr. Renee Sprague, Dr. Franklin Trimm and Dr. Stephen Varner.

Special guest speakers include Dr. Zsakeba Henderson from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Karen Malowe from Auburn University, Dr. Seema Menon from the Medical College of Wisconsin, Beverly Huegel from the University of South Carolina, and Megan Mileski from Samford University.

[Learn more and register for the conference.](#) Fee includes course registration, continental breakfast, lunch and snack.

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Class of 2019 Medical Students Named to Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society

Thirteen fourth-year medical students at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine were named to the USA chapter of the Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) Honor Medical Society.



The following students were selected: Christina Artz, Natalie Carlisle, Harrison Dilworth, William Gambla, Seth Hill, John Morgan, Dalton Patterson, Matthew Robson, J. David Roveda, Ryan Screven, Emily Smith, Trevor Stevens and Kasey Stoutin.

AOA, a professional medical organization, recognizes and advocates for excellence in scholarship and the highest ideals in the profession of medicine. Members have a compelling drive to do well and to advance the medical profession and exemplify the highest standards of professionalism.

The top 25 percent of a medical school class is eligible for nomination to the society, and up to 16 percent may be elected based on leadership, character, community service and professionalism.

Members may also be elected by chapters after demonstrating scholarly achievement and professional contributions and values after medical school and during their careers in medicine.

The AOA motto is "Be Worthy to Serve the Suffering." To learn more, visit www.alphaomegaalpha.org.

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