

Med School Watercooler

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

Thursday, October 6, 2011

October Med School Café - "Dramatically Improving Your Health with Bariatric Surgery"



The October Med School Café lecture will feature Dr. Sheetal Nijhawan, assistant professor of surgery at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine.

Her lecture, titled "Dramatically Improving Your Health with Bariatric Surgery" will take place Oct. 20, 2011, at the Mobile Museum of Art in Mobile. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m., and the presentation begins at noon.

Dr. Nijhawan, who serves as a laparoscopic and bariatric surgeon for the USA Physicians Group with special qualifications in robotic surgery, will discuss bariatric surgery, or weight loss surgery. She will explain the procedures available for those interested in weight loss surgery, as well as information on what you can expect from the procedure.

Dr. Nijhawan earned her medical degree from Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute in Bangalore, India. She completed a categorical surgery residency program at the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio. In addition, she completed a fellowship in minimally invasive, robotic and bariatric surgery with the University of California at San Diego.

The Mobile Museum of Art is located at 4850 Museum Drive in Mobile.

The Med School Café lecture and lunch are provided free of charge, but reservations are required. For more information or to make reservations, please call Kim Partridge at (251) 460-7770 or e-mail kepartridge@usouthal.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.


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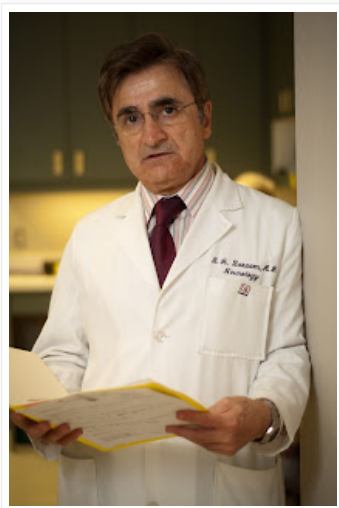
Feel free to email your ideas to lalyle@health.southalabama.edu

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Dr. Bassam Presents at AANEM Annual Meeting



Recently, Dr. Bassam Bassam, director of the neuromuscular program and professor of neurology, gave five talks and directed two workshops at the Association of Neuromuscular and Electrodiagnostic Medicine (AANEM) annual meeting held in San Francisco.

Electromyography is a technique for recording and evaluating electrical activity produced by skeletal muscles. Working in the field for 38 years, Dr. Bassam spoke on three areas of interest including motor nerve stimulation, nerve conduction pitfalls, and neuromuscular weakness.

Dr. Bassam said that the impact on patients in regards to neuromuscular weakness is especially important to those in intensive care. "I see patients that are critically ill, often with serious infections and organ failure." These patients are often ventilator dependent and given paralyzing agents for their conditions that consequently produce peripheral nerve and muscle tissue toxicity.


The technology of electromyography can also benefit the approximately 1 in 20 people affected by carpal tunnel syndrome in their lifetime.

Dr. Bassam stated that AANEM was a "great opportunity to share, update specialists on new treatment options and diagnostic studies in the field." He also said that the nature of the conference being international was poignant in relation to the University.

Highlighting the importance of international collaboration, Dr. Bassam said it's rewarding that as a part of the USA neuromuscular program, "we are a part of what's going on, and that's important to us."

Dr. Bassam has been with USA since 1985. He completed his training at Wayne State University in Detroit and the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., in neuromuscular disease and electromyography. Dr. Bassam is board certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology as well as the American Board of Neuromuscular Disease and Electrodiagnostic Medicine.

AANEM is a nonprofit membership association comprised of more than 5,000 members who share a common goal of improving the quality of care in nerve and muscle disorders.

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Our Story Told In "First Person"

This is the first installment of an ongoing series of vignettes, titled "First Person," that will provide an inside look into the lives of our patients, students, faculty and staff at the University of South Alabama Health System. Each narrative will be shared in their own words.

[Click here](#) to learn more about Courtney Robertson, an obstetrics patient who received her care within the USA Health System.

If you'd like to submit a story idea for a future "First Person," email agivens@usouthal.edu.

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Next Week's DSS - Dr. Bruce Chabner


The next Distinguished Scientist Seminar at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine will be presented by Dr. Bruce Chabner, professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and director of clinical research at the Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center.

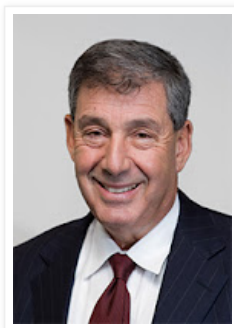
Dr. Chabner's talk, titled "Phase I Trials Guided by Molecular Profiling," will take place on Oct. 13, 2011, at 4 p.m. in the Medical Sciences Building auditorium.

Dr. Chabner's major research interests involve clinical testing, pharmacokinetics and biochemical pharmacology of new anticancer drugs, particularly natural products and signal transduction inhibitors.

He earned a medical degree from Harvard Medical School and completed his residency at Brigham & Women's Hospital. In addition, he completed postdoctoral fellowships at the National Cancer Institute and Yale New Haven Hospital.

For more information on Dr. Chabner's research, [click here](#).

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Medical Education Leadership Team Appointed

The University of South Alabama College of Medicine has embarked on a comprehensive project of curriculum renewal for its undergraduate medical education program leading to the M.D. degree. Change is fueled by the challenge in modern medical education of how best to move the matriculating medical student along the pathway to becoming a competent physician and life-long learner.

The Curriculum Committee began the process last May with a reframing of the educational objectives of the College of Medicine around the six core

competencies of medical practice endorsed by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. These competencies encompass patient care, medical knowledge, practice-based learning and improvement, interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism, and systems-based practice.

Beginning in 2012, students entering the USA College of Medicine will receive instruction in all competencies from the beginning of their educational experience. Milestones of achievement toward competency will be assessed and documented throughout the four-year continuum leading to graduation.

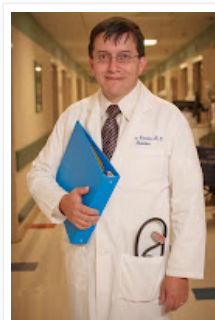
Further transforming the new curriculum is the adoption of an organ system-based sequence of study serving as the centerpiece of the educational program during the pre-clerkship years one and two. Entering students progress through a two-year sequence of modules, each devoted to an organ system incorporating the six core competencies of training as well as an integrated multidisciplinary program of instruction in the basic sciences.

To develop and implement the new curriculum, a division of medical education has been established within the College of Medicine. To lead the division, four administrative positions have been created to spearhead and facilitate the Curriculum Committee's role as the central curriculum authority within the College. USA faculty members appointed to these positions have received numerous teaching awards and are highly respected by students and fellow faculty as dedicated medical educators. They possess the leadership and vision needed to guide the renewal process toward success.

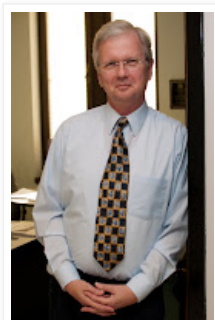


Susan LeDoux, Ph.D., professor and vice chair of cell biology and neuroscience, will now serve as associate dean for medical education. Dr. LeDoux joined the faculty in 1988. She has been actively involved in the curriculum effort within the College of Medicine for the past 15 years through her efforts as course director for medical gross anatomy, Curriculum Committee chair and assistant dean for curriculum. Currently, she also is a member of the Physiology and Cell Biology Item Writing Committee for the National Board of Medical Examiners. Her responsibilities will now focus on the overall design and implementation of the undergraduate medical educational program in accordance with national accreditation

standards.



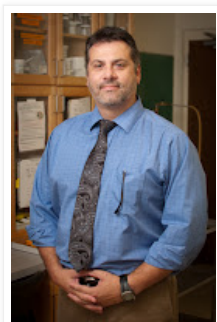
Benjamin Estrada, M.D., professor and vice chair of pediatrics, will serve as assistant dean for educational strategies and faculty development. Dr. Estrada joined the faculty in 1996. He currently chairs the Curriculum Committee and serves as clerkship director in pediatrics. Dr. Estrada received the Mitchell Clinical Scholar Award for his contributions in the development of electronic teaching tools in pediatrics. His duties will focus on the design and implementation of contemporary teaching methods and requisite faculty training for the new curriculum.




Anthony Gard, Ph.D., professor of cell biology and neuroscience, will serve as assistant dean for curriculum assessment and evaluation. Dr. Gard joined the faculty at USA in 1990. He piloted the first organ system-based course taught in the College – medical neuroscience, which he has directed since 2005. Consistently high USMLE Step 1 subscores achieved in neuroscience attest to the performance capability of USA medical students fully engaged in the new systems-based curriculum.

Dr. Gard will oversee programs for development of testing and student self-assessment, serving as the College's liaison to the National Board of Medical Examiners, and

evaluation of program effectiveness.



Jeffrey Sosnowski, M.D., Ph.D., assistant professor of pathology, will serve as assistant dean for curriculum integration. Dr. Sosnowski joined the faculty in 2005. He has successfully directed the medical pathology course and co-directed medical neuroscience. Dr. Sosnowski's teaching expertise is internationally recognized. He was one of the first lecturers for the Falcon USMLE Review Course and has also taught in the Kaplan Board Review series. He will chair the Curriculum Integration Subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee and assist the associate dean of medical education in the design and implementation of the integrated systems-based curriculum.

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