

Med School Watercooler

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

Thursday, October 13, 2011

Internal Medicine Interest Group Provides Mentoring Opportunities



A group of medical students and pre-medical students (above) recently participated in the first meeting of the Internal Medicine Interest Group's mentoring program. The program pairs first and second-year medical students with junior and senior undergraduate pre-medical students who are in the USA Early Acceptance Program.



Mentor and second-year medical student Amy Boone (left) meets with pre-medical students Jordan Spidle (center) and Sarah Dolbear (right).

The Internal Medicine Interest Group (IMIG) at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine recently started a mentoring program that pairs first and second-year medical students with junior and senior undergraduate pre-medical students who are in the USA Early Acceptance Program (EAP).

Dr. T.J. Hundley, assistant professor of internal medicine and faculty advisor of the IMIG at the USA College of Medicine, said the intention of the mentoring program is to foster a relationship. "My hope is for the program to establish relationships that will last through the years, wherever your career paths may take you."

The group recently met for the first time, and each EAP student was paired with a medical student who is two classes ahead of them. That way, when the EAP student enters medical school, they will still have a mentor that can give them in-depth advice and perspective.

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According to Caitlin Wainscott, a fourth-year medical student at the USA College of Medicine and president of the IMIG, 18 first and second-year medical students volunteered to be mentors for the 27 junior and senior EAP students.

"The first meeting turned out better than we could have imagined," she said. "It provided a laid back atmosphere where the students could mingle and get to know each other in a group setting."

Wainscott, who will be the first in her family to become a physician, said she had no idea what to expect upon entering medical school. "I think that a mentoring program between medical students and undergraduate pre-medical students will be very beneficial to help these students put their best foot forward as they study for the MCAT and prepare to apply and interview for medical school," said Wainscott, who has been involved with IMIG since her first year at the USA College of Medicine. "It will hopefully alleviate much of the anxiety and uncertainty in the process."

According to Dr. Hundley, the medical school mentors will provide advice in regards to professional development such as how to apply to medical school, as well as answer questions about the interview process. "The EAP students can even attend lectures with their mentor and see what medical school is really like," Dr. Hundley said.


"The mentoring program also provides leadership development for the mentors who supply their free time to spend with the pre-medical students," Dr. Hundley added. "It gives the medical students the skill set they need to become a great mentor. Mentoring, through teaching and giving advice, is the cornerstone of the medical profession."

Wainscott hopes that through this program, EAP students at USA will gain the confidence to become successful medical school candidates. "Perhaps just as important, it is our hope that these students will realize the benefit of the unique medical education at the USA College of Medicine and make the decision to stay here for medical school."

In addition to the meetings, the mentors will contact their students at least monthly to check in with them, and the EAP students are encouraged to contact their mentors at any time with questions they may have.

The EAP Program at USA is for qualified high school graduates interested in a career in medicine. Participants must maintain a specific grade-point average during college and meet all other requirements for entering medical school at USA. Fewer than 20 pre-medical students are accepted into the EAP program each year.

The IMIG is open to any medical student interested in internal medicine as a career choice. For more information on the IMIG, contact Caitlin Wainscott at ceg802@jaguar1.usouthal.edu.

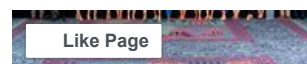
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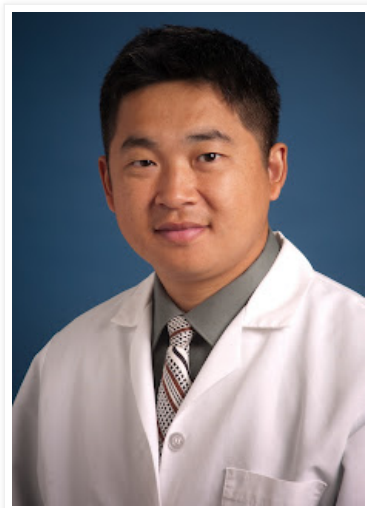


Progress has been made on Mobile Street leading to the University of South Alabama Medical Center. Although still under construction, the road is now accessible to patients, visitors and employees.

"Most of the construction is complete," said Elmer Sellers, assistant hospital administrator. "Once finished, the 3-lane road will provide convenient access for emergency vehicles as well as hospital visitors."

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College of Medicine Welcomes Dr. Zhiqing Xing



Orthopaedic oncologist Dr. Zhiqing Xing was recently appointed assistant professor in the department of orthopaedics at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine. He specializes in orthopaedic cancer trauma and adult reconstruction.


Prior to his appointment to USA, Dr. Xing completed a fellowship in musculoskeletal oncology with the University of Texas at the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas. He completed a fellowship in adult reconstruction in the department of orthopaedic surgery at the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond, Va. He also completed a fellowship in orthopaedic trauma at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, N.M.

Dr. Xing earned his medical degree from Beijing Medical University in Beijing, China, and his PhD from Peking University Health Science Center in Beijing, China. He completed residency training in orthopaedic surgery at the PUHSC in Beijing, China.

Dr. Xing is a member of the Musculoskeletal Tumor Society, Orthopaedic Research

Society and the International Chinese Hard Tissue Society (USA).

He is now accepting new patients. For appointments, call (251) 665-8200.

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COM Faculty Member Helps USA's Bass Fishing Team



Dr. Jack A. Di Palma, professor of medicine at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, is currently USA's Bass Fishing Team faculty advisor. While fishing has been a hobby of Dr. Di Palma's for years, he recently had the opportunity to help organize the team's first college series bass fishing championship.

"Fishing has been my favorite hobby during the last 20 years," said Dr. Di Palma, who also directs the USA Digestive Health Center and the division of gastroenterology. "I have fished locally and at various places across the country including Alaska, Colorado, the Great Smokey Mountains, Wyoming, Seattle, Cape Cod and Florida."

Although Dr. Di Palma enjoys fishing as a hobby and interacting with students, he feels privileged to have had the opportunity to help establish the USA Bass Fishing Team in 2008.


"I have been involved since the very beginning, helping with coordinating activities, administrative compliance and financial matters," Dr. Di Palma said. "Their tournament and championship this year is especially exciting because it is the first collegiate championship held in Mobile, Ala., and the first sponsored by a team affiliated with USA."

The team is holding its first College Fall Series fishing championship presented by Ono Performance Sunglasses. The three-event series kicked off August 27, 2011, at Lake Point Marina on Lake Eufaula, Ala. Teams that compete in two of the three events qualify for the year-end championship held on the Mobile Delta out of Chocolata Landing November 4th and 5th.

"I feel very fortunate to be a part of the club," Dr. Di Palma said. "Bass fishing was my first big introduction to fishing and I have enjoyed working with the students on the USA Bass Fishing Team."

Fishing also plays a part in Dr. Di Palma's life as a way to spend time with family.

"I am fortunate that my wife, Ann, is my favorite fishing partner," Dr. Di Palma said.

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Medical Student Lounge Renovations Completed



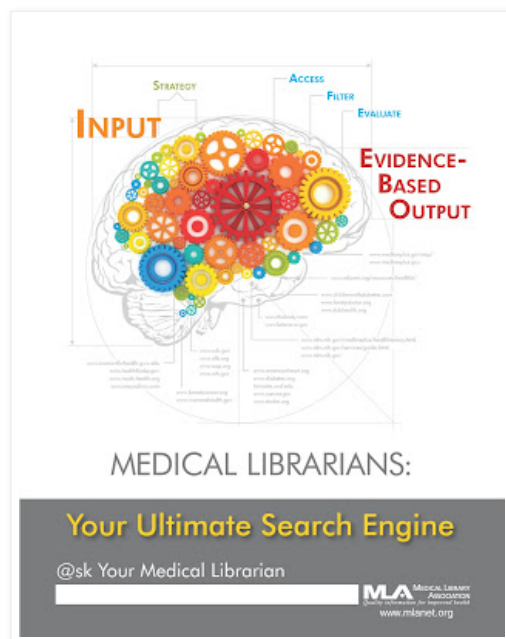
The University of South Alabama Medical Alumni Association recently completed renovations in the medical school student lounge located in the Medical Sciences Building on USA's main campus.

According to Melodie Robinson, assistant director of alumni affairs for the USA College of Medicine, the Medical Alumni Association supports projects that help enhance the education experience for medical students. "Last spring, several class leaders asked us to consider adopting a renovation project for the student lounge area," she said. "The work started this past summer and was completed the week before freshman orientation."

Robinson said the room was completely renovated with new cabinets, appliances, furniture, paint, and a large screen television. "We have received positive feedback from the students and hope they will enjoy the new facility."

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USA Biomedical Library to Host Activities for National Medical Libraries Month



Every October, the Biomedical Library celebrates National Medical Libraries Month. This year's event, themed "Medical Librarians: Your Ultimate Search Engine," will feature several activities.

A lunch and learn on the SciVerse resource will be held on Oct. 25, 2011, at 12 p.m. in the University of South Alabama Biomedical Library Room 222-A. At this workshop, participants will learn details on searching both Scopus and Science Direct with one quick search. RSVP to jli@jaguar1.usouthal.edu.

A primal pictures webinar is scheduled for Oct. 25, 2011, at 10 a.m. in the USA Biomedical Library Room 222-A. Participants will learn details on improving the study of anatomy with this resource.

In addition, several other webinars and workshops will take place during the month. To learn more and to receive updates on all events, "like" the Biomedical Library Facebook page [here](#) or visit their website [here](#).

Be sure to leave a comment on the Biomedical Library's Facebook page for a chance to win a USA Dining Card and e-mail your favorite Biomedical Library resource to medlib@bbl.usouthal.edu for a chance to win a gift bag of Biomedical Library swag.

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