

# Med School Watercooler

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

Friday, January 25, 2019

## New Members Elected into USA Chapter of GHHS



Ten University of South Alabama College of Medicine students, three residents and one USA College of Medicine faculty member recently were named to the USA Chapter of the Arnold P. Gold Humanism in Medicine Honor Society (GHHS) – a national society that celebrates compassionate, patient-centered care.

Each year, a select group of students, residents and faculty members are named to GHHS. Through a peer-nominated process, GHHS membership recognizes those who are exemplars of compassionate patient care and serve as a role model, mentor and leader in medicine.

Together, Christina Artz, Hilda Watkins, Trevor Stevens and Matthew Robson – fourth-year students at the USA College of Medicine and members of GHHS – assembled gold-themed

goodie bags containing hand-written notes from current GHHS members to distribute to the recently elected students, faculty and residents.

This year, to announce those elected, fourth-year members of the honor society decided to “tap” each new inductee in everyday places – such as the classroom or hospital hallways – to publicly recognize the recipient.

“I was waiting for our pediatrics lecture to start when I saw the current GHHS members walk into the room with gift bags,” said Maria Siow, a third-year student at the USA College of Medicine. “I was a little nervous at first as this was something I’ve aspired to participate in since freshman orientation.”

Each member of the Class of 2020 completed a ballot with statements such as “the classmates who have shown exceptional interest in service to those in need in our community” and “the classmates you would like to have work at your side during a medical emergency or unforeseen disaster,” among others. The students named two of their classmates who would best fit the situations described.

Tyler Kaelin, a third-year student at the USA College of Medicine, said he was surprised to hear his name called. “The honor has grown in meaning and value to me,” he said. “Practicing humanistic care is not done for recognition or esteem, but is for connecting with patients and their families to provide the best care we can offer. To be recognized for doing this as a student is nothing I expected, so it is all the more humbling to receive such an honor from my peers.”

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The following USA students, residents and faculty were selected:

- Erin Bouska – student
- Joseph Cortopassi – student
- Aaron Dinerman – student
- Bonnie Holley – student
- Tyler Kaelin – student
- Elisabeth Potts – student
- Maria Siow – student
- Destini Smith – student
- Patrick Steadman – student
- Jeremy Towns – student
- Dr. Gabriel Bolanos Guzman – resident, department of internal medicine
- Dr. Rajesh Paladugu – resident, department of obstetrics and gynecology
- Dr. Eli Fox – resident, department of pediatrics
- Dr. Spencer Liles – faculty, department of surgery

This year's GHHS class officers are Tyler Kaelin, president; Destini Smith, secretary/treasurer; and Joseph Cortopassi, social coordinator. New members will be officially inducted and pinned at the USA College of Medicine's annual White Coat Ceremony on June 15, 2019, at 10 a.m. at the USA Mitchell Center.

"I am so honored to have been chosen by my classmates as someone who displays the characteristics of a GHHS member," Siow said. "There are so many great compassionate students in the USA Class of 2020, so it means a lot to me to get to represent the class in this way."

The Arnold P. Gold Foundation sustains the commitment of health care professionals to provide compassionate, collaborative and scientifically excellent patient care. The society currently has approximately 30,000 members in training and practice.

Each year, the GHHS participates in Solidarity Week for Compassionate Patient Care to remind students and employees of the importance of compassion in medicine. This year, Solidarity Week will take place Feb. 11-15, as the GHHS Class of 2019 and 2020 will participate in several activities to remind students and employees of the importance of compassion in medicine.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [3:06 PM](#) 1 comment: 

## February Med School Café - "Personalized Medicine: The Future is Now"

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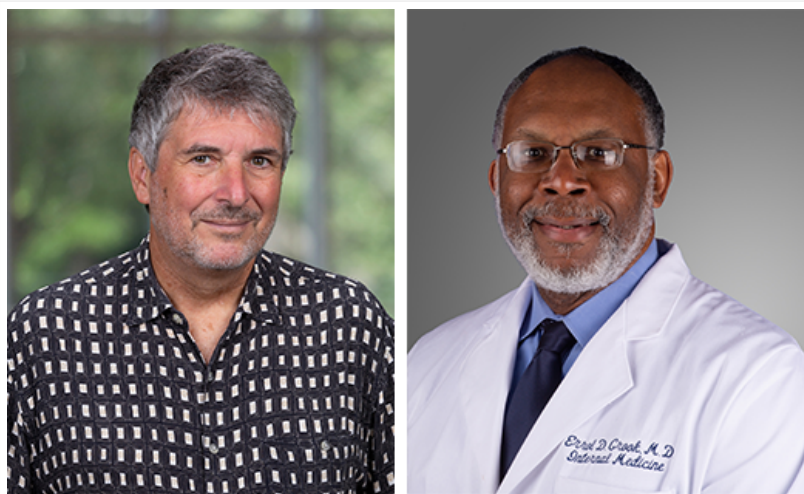
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Dr. Allen Perkins, left, and Dr. Errol Crook will present February's lecture.

The February Med School Café lecture will feature Dr. Allen Perkins, professor and chair of family medicine at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, and Dr. Errol Crook, Professor and Abraham Mitchell Chair of Internal Medicine at the USA College of Medicine and director of the USA Center for Healthy Communities.

Their lecture, titled "Personalized Medicine: The Future is Now," will be held Friday, Feb. 8, 2019 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.

In their talk, Drs. Perkins and Crook will discuss the importance of knowing your family history, controversies in practicing personalized medicine, and the importance of preconception care in having a healthy baby. They will also cover how precision medicine will impact you in the future and now.


Dr. Perkins earned his medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine in New Orleans. He completed his residency training in family medicine at USA.

Dr. Crook earned his medical degree from Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York. He then completed his residency training and a fellowship at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

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](mailto:kepartridge@health.southalabama.edu).

Med School Café is a free community lecture series sponsored by the USA Health 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.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [1:49 PM](#) No comments: 

## USA Health Expands Obstetrics and Gynecology Care





training in obstetrics and gynecology at USA, where he served as chief resident.

Prior to joining USA, Dr. Sansaricq served as an obstetrician and gynecologist in private practice in Mobile. He is a member of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and the American Medical Association. He is fluent in English, Spanish and French.

USA University OB-GYN, located at 524 Stanton Road, is now part of USA Health Physicians Group. Dr. Sansaricq is accepting new patients. To make an appointment, call (251) 479-0058.

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [10:54 AM](#) No comments:

**Thursday, January 24, 2019**

## Five USA Medical Students Match in Ophthalmology Residency Programs



Fourth-year medical students, from left, Fareed Rifai, John Morgan, Christopher Lasecki, Shivam Amin and William Gambla recently matched in ophthalmology residency programs.

Ophthalmology is one of the most competitive residency programs in which to match, but five fourth-year students at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine have risen to the challenge. Shivam Amin, William Gambla, Christopher Lasecki, John Morgan and Fareed Rifai recently learned they matched in ophthalmology residency programs.

While the majority of medical students will go through the National Resident Matching Program on March 15, students who wish to match in ophthalmology participate in a separate specialty match program.

"The fact that five of our students matched in ophthalmology is outstanding," said Dr. Susan LeDoux, associate dean of medical education and student affairs at USA. "It speaks to the quality of our students and of our educational program."

Amin, who matched at the University of Chicago, agreed. "I have had so many teachers and mentors who have genuinely done everything they can to help me become the best possible physician," he said. "I truly believe the graduates of our program can measure up to the best from any other medical school."

Amin said he became interested in the field after shadowing an ophthalmologist in his hometown of Gadsden, Ala., who performed cataract surgery on his grandfather. "My grandfather was thrilled afterwards because he was able to see clearly again for the first time in years," said Amin, who earned his bachelor's degree in biology and philosophy from USA. "I appreciate the mixture of surgery and medicine the field of ophthalmology affords and how dramatically you can improve someone's quality of life by restoring his or her vision."

Gambla, who earned his bachelor's degree in neuroscience at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., said he knew he wanted a hands-on, surgically oriented career that maintained a connection to neuroscience. Ophthalmology was high on his list of specialties to explore.

"I was exposed to the field by shadowing Dr. Christopher Semple and other ophthalmologists throughout Mobile who rose to the occasion to mentor interested students," Gambla said. "I was quickly drawn to the well-balanced mix of high-tech surgical and medical procedures and the ability to care for patients of all ages. The more time I spent learning about the field, the more I knew it was the specialty for me."

Gambla said he is pleased to have matched at the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center in Memphis, where he noted great camaraderie between the residents and faculty. "Their program is well rounded, providing a strong foundation in cataract surgery, retina, plastics and trauma," he said. "Tennessee also offers training in ocular oncology, which many programs do not have."

Lasecki earned his bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Alabama. Before starting medical school at USA, he saw his first cataract surgery during a summer position at the Mobile Surgery Center. Then, as a medical student he had the opportunity to shadow ophthalmologists at Premier Eye Group and Vision Partners, adding to his interest in the field.

"The faculty at USA are always willing to help students who are motivated," Lasecki said. "Dr. Jon Simmons, Dr. Sidney Brevard, Dr. Linda Ding, Dr. Michael Sternberg and others went to great lengths to help me become a more competitive applicant."

Lasecki said he is thrilled to have matched at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in New Orleans, where he and his wife "can't wait to live our best life," cooking gumbo and listening to brass music.

Morgan also matched at LSU, and he looks forward to honing his eye care and surgical skills with his classmate, Lasecki. He first became interested in ophthalmology through shadowing his father, Dr. John Morgan, a comprehensive ophthalmologist in Birmingham, Ala.

"My desire to become an ophthalmologist solidified after completing away rotations at Medical College of Georgia and the University of Alabama at Birmingham, which I really enjoyed," Morgan said. "I am drawn to this field by both the complexity and delicacy of the eye, and the desire to preserve and restore vision to those in need."

Morgan, who earned his bachelor's degree in biology from Furman University in Greenville, S.C., said USA has provided him a strong foundational knowledge of medicine and ample opportunity to refine clinical skills through patient care. "I believe these advantages have allowed me to succeed in medical school and will continue to serve me in ophthalmology residency and beyond," he said.


Rifai will join Lasecki and Morgan in New Orleans, as he matched at Tulane University. "I think Tulane will be an excellent place to train," Rifai said. "Lots of diverse pathology in the area, strong surgical experience for residents, and a great network of alumni, some of whom have come back to get involved in running the residency program."

Rifai's father, Dr. Aref Rifai, is a retina specialist in Pensacola, Fla., and serves a pediatric ophthalmologist with USA Physicians Group. However, it was Rifai's own research that cemented his decision to pursue ophthalmology.

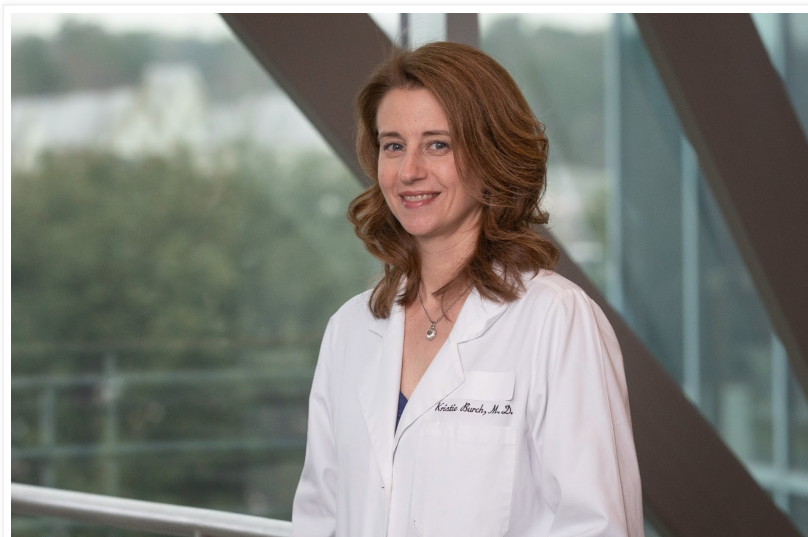


While an undergraduate studying biochemistry at the University of Miami, Rifai worked as a student researcher at the university's Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. Then, after his first year of medical school at USA, he spent the summer doing ophthalmology research at Tufts University in Boston.

"We have a strong network of alumni who have been in our shoes, who were able to offer guidance and advice throughout the whole process," Rifai said. "Not every school has upperclassmen willing to help the classes below, but USA has a strong tradition of trying to make each class better than the last; so having USA alumni in ophthalmology help us out really made the goal of matching in such a competitive specialty possible."

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [4:00 PM](#) No comments: 

## Dr. Kristie Burch Joins University Urology




University Urology – a newly established USA Health Physicians Group clinic – recently welcomed a new urologist, Dr. Kristie Burch.

Dr. Burch earned her medical degree from Louisiana State University School of Medicine in New Orleans in 2000. She then completed her residency training in general surgery at LSU Medical Center and a residency training in urology at LSU Alton Ochsner Urology Residence Training Program.

Prior to joining USA, Dr. Burch served as a urologist at Urology & Oncology Specialists, PC in Mobile.

She is a member of the American Urological Association, Alabama Urology Society and the Society for Women in Urology. She is also a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and is board-certified by the American Board of Urology.

University Urology is located at 3290 Dauphin St. in Suite 301. Dr. Burch is accepting new patients. To make an appointment, call (251) 660-5930.

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [8:26 AM](#) No comments: 

**Tuesday, January 22, 2019**

## USA Health Welcomes Gary Mans as Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications

Gary Mans was recently named associate vice president for marketing and communications for USA Health. As a seasoned communications professional, he has more than 30 years of experience in academic health care and higher



education.

"Gary brings a wealth of experience and tremendous knowledge to our organization," said Owen Bailey, chief executive officer and senior associate vice president for medical affairs at USA Health. "In this new position, he will provide a comprehensive and integrative approach for our marketing initiatives."

"We are excited to welcome Gary to USA Health," said Dr. John V. Marymont, vice president for medical affairs and dean of the University of South Alabama College of Medicine. "Gary will lead our communications program for our organization as we launch new marketing efforts that emphasize the unique role we play as the region's only academic health center."


In his new role, Mans will direct the marketing and communications efforts for USA Health, composed of University Hospital, USA Children's & Women's Hospital, USA Mitchell Cancer Institute, USA Physicians Group and the USA College of Medicine. He will also develop and implement visionary branding, marketing and communications strategies and tactics that build and sustain local, state and regional recognition of all components of USA Health.

"I am thrilled to be a part of USA Health," Mans said. "This is an exciting time for our health system as we grow, expand and raise the visibility of the many attributes of the academic health center. USA Health is poised for enormous success."

Prior to joining USA, Mans served as director of communications and marketing at the University of Louisville Health Sciences Center in Louisville, Ky., for nearly a decade. Among his accomplishments, he led the rebranding communications for the university's adult teaching hospital and cancer center, and provided communications support for the announcement of multiple significant philanthropic gifts to the university during its successful \$1 billion campaign. He also led communications efforts that resulted in international media interest while increasing patient volume and clinical trial participants.

Mans previously served as director of public relations for the University of Alabama at Birmingham. During his tenure at UAB, his department received the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education 2002 Gold Medal for the best overall media relations program in the nation.

Mans earned his Bachelor of Science in journalism from the University of Florida in Gainesville, Fla., and his Master of Public Administration from UAB.

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [10:51 AM](#) No comments: 

## USA Health Hosts Symposium on Pediatric Care



Dr. Russell Steele, a nationally known pediatric infectious disease specialist with Ochsner Health System, speaks at the pediatric symposium.


The University of South Alabama Department of Pediatrics and the Office of Continuing Medical Education recently hosted a symposium, "Be Better, Be Greater, Be Extraordinary in Pediatric Care."

The symposium brought together experts in sports participation in children, authorities in the care of children with chronic medical conditions, and experienced specialists in the care of children with metabolic and hormonal needs.

Dr. Russell Steele, a nationally known pediatric infectious disease specialist with Ochsner Health System, delivered the keynote presentation, "Ten Recent Infectious Disease Publications That Will Change Your Practice."



[View more photos from the symposium on Flickr.](#)

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [10:21 AM](#) No comments: 

**Monday, January 21, 2019**

## Laurie Wilson Named January Employee of the Month

Laurie Wilson, a billing/insurance clerk in the department of orthopaedic surgery, received the USA Physicians Group Employee of the Month Award for January.

Wilson was working at the front desk when a large crowd of her colleagues surprised her with the honor, all echoing the sentiment that no one is more deserving of the recognition than Wilson.

Beverly Donald, also a billing/insurance clerk in orthopaedic surgery, nominated Wilson for the award. "She is the light and joy of the department," Donald said. "She goes over and beyond for everyone and all the patients. She always has a smile on her face and loves, loves, loves her job and her patients. She is extraordinary and one of a kind."






Laurie Wilson, center, surrounded by her colleagues in orthopaedic surgery, is the USA Physicians Group Employee of the Month for January.

Wilson, whom Donald calls "an angel sent from God," has worked for USA Health and the department of orthopaedic surgery for five years.

The USA Physicians Group Employee of the Month Award recognizes employees who exhibit exceptional customer service, compassionate patient care, teamwork, and a willingness to go above and beyond their professional duties. To nominate an employee, fill out the [USA Physicians Group Employee of the Month Nomination Form](#).



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