

Med School Watercooler

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

Friday, December 6, 2019

Toldi presents at research conference in Canada

James Toldi, D.O., assistant professor of family medicine at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine and sports family medicine physician with USA Health, recently presented on USA Health's Comprehensive Concussion Awareness and Treatment Program at the 47th annual North American Primary Care Research Group Conference in Toronto.



The Comprehensive Concussion Awareness and Treatment Program, a cognitive and physical initiative designed to decrease the number of missed concussions and accelerate the recovery process for athletes, was chosen for the "Research in Progress" poster project at the conference. Toldi's poster outlines the research gathered from the educational portion of the program, which includes a pre-test, a video and a post-test about concussions, and how it has significantly increased an athlete's knowledge about concussions.

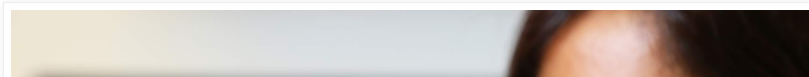
"This conference was a perfect opportunity for USA Health's research into concussion prevention and treatment to be highlighted," Toldi said. "The fact that another country is interested in hearing what USA Health is doing to educate athletes and create a safer environment for them shows that the work we are doing is making a difference."

USA Health's Comprehensive Concussion Awareness and Treatment Program was established in 2014 by Anthony Martino, M.D., a professor and chair of neurosurgery, and Ashley Marass, pediatric nurse practitioner with USA Health. Martino and Marass created the educational portion of the program. Toldi has since taken over the project, adding in tests for eye movement and vision as well as tests for cognitive and physical changes the athlete may suffer because of a concussion.

[Learn more about the Comprehensive Concussion and Treatment Program.](#)

Posted by Med School Watercooler at 1:03 PM No comments: 

Work by USA College of Medicine researchers selected as 'editor's choice'



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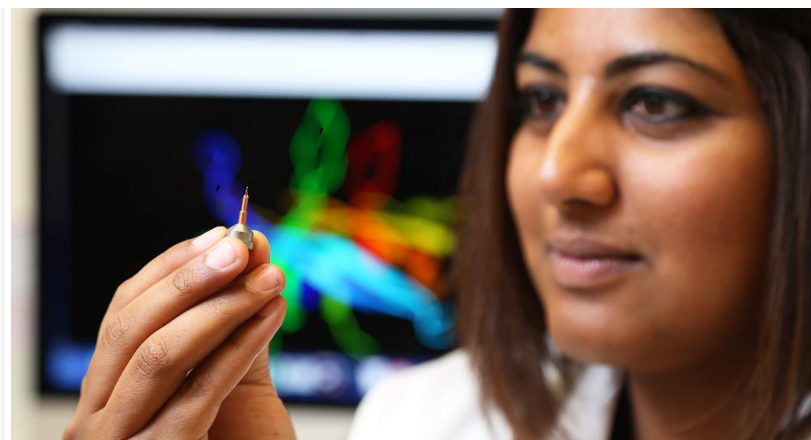
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DNA molecules, distinct from nuclear DNA.

In this review, Weinhouse said, Prakash and co-authors Nidhi Sharma and Monica S. Pasala summarize the existing data on mitochondrial replication, transcription and repair, including highlighting the subset of base excision repair-initiating DNA glycosylases present in mitochondria, which are critical for maintaining the integrity of DNA molecules that are situated so nearby the electron transport chain, which produces significant amounts of reactive oxygen species. Sharma is a postdoctoral fellow in Prakash's lab while Pasala was a student who previously worked with Prakash at the USA College of Medicine and MCI.

Notably, the authors discuss the controversial detection of covalent modifications to mitochondrial DNA, including 5-methylcytosine, the most common form of DNA methylation in mammalian nuclear DNA, and 6-methyladenine, a common modification of DNA in bacteria, including those ancestral to mitochondria, Weinhouse said.

The research article also details current evidence for other potential epigenetic mechanisms of mitochondrial gene regulation, including those that function via non-coding RNA or post-translational modifications to mitochondrial nucleoids, which are the mitochondrial structural, and perhaps functional, equivalent of nuclear nucleosomes. The review concludes by highlighting open questions on transcriptional regulation in mitochondria, as well as the presence and function of epigenetic modifications to mitochondrial DNA and associated proteins.

Prakash joined the USA College of Medicine and USA Health Mitchell Cancer Institute in 2016 as an assistant professor after completing post-doctoral research at the University of Vermont. Her work focuses on DNA repair mechanisms in the mitochondria. She earned a Ph.D. in cancer research at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and received specialized training in crystallography at Brookhaven National Labs in Long Island, N.Y.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [11:26 AM](#) No comments:

Thursday, December 5, 2019

Medicine grand rounds to address perioperative care




Richard Teplick, M.D., a primary care physician with the Mobile County Health Department, will present "A Potpourri of Perioperative Care" at the upcoming medicine grand rounds. His lecture is set for 8 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 12, at USA Health University Hospital in the second-floor conference center.

In his talk, Teplick will discuss what tests should be obtained postoperatively, whether preoperative hypertension should be controlled before surgery, how long patients should be NPO before surgery, and why context-sensitive half lives matter.

Medicine grand rounds take place Thursdays at 8 a.m. For more information, contact Linda Ching at (251) 471-7900 or lching@health.southalabama.edu.

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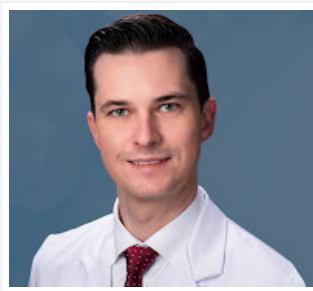
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Traumatic elbow instability topic of orthopaedic surgery grand rounds

Russell Goode, M.D., an orthopaedic traumatologist at Alabama Orthopaedic Clinic, will present at the upcoming orthopaedic surgery grand rounds. His lecture, "Traumatic Elbow Instability," is set for 7 a.m. Friday, Dec. 13, at the Strada Patient Care Center conference room.

In his talk, Goode will discuss operative and non-operative treatments for traumatic elbow instability.



Orthopaedic surgery grand rounds takes place weekly on Fridays. For more information, contact Rhonda Smith at (251) 665-8251 or rhondasmith@health.southalabama.edu.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [10:40 AM](#) No comments: 

Sugg to discuss cryptogenic stroke treatments at neurology grand rounds




Rebecca Sugg, M.D., associate professor of neurology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine and a neurologist with USA Health, will present at the next neurology grand rounds.

Her lecture, titled "Atrial Cardiopathy and Antithrombotic Drugs in Prevention After Cryptogenic Stroke – ARCADIA Protocol

Training" is set for 8 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 10, at USA Health University Hospital in the second-floor conference center.

Neurology grand rounds take place each Tuesday at 8 a.m. The lectures are open to USA faculty, staff and students. A light breakfast, coffee and beverages are provided.

For more information, call (251) 445-8262 or email scabral@health.southalabama.edu.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [10:32 AM](#) No comments: 

Pediatric lecture series to focus on first-time seizures



Isabel Kessler, PA-C, M.P.A.S., physician assistant in neurosciences at USA Health, will present on the evaluation of a first-time seizure, discussing the prognosis and



As part of the Pediatric Neurology Lecture Series, Kessler will present "First-time Seizure" on Monday, Dec. 16, at the USA Health Strada Patient Care Center. Lunch is at 11:30 a.m. with the lecture beginning at noon.

Kessler is a graduate of the MGH Institute of Health Professions in Boston, Massachusetts, and is certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. She is a member of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) and the American Academy of Neurology.

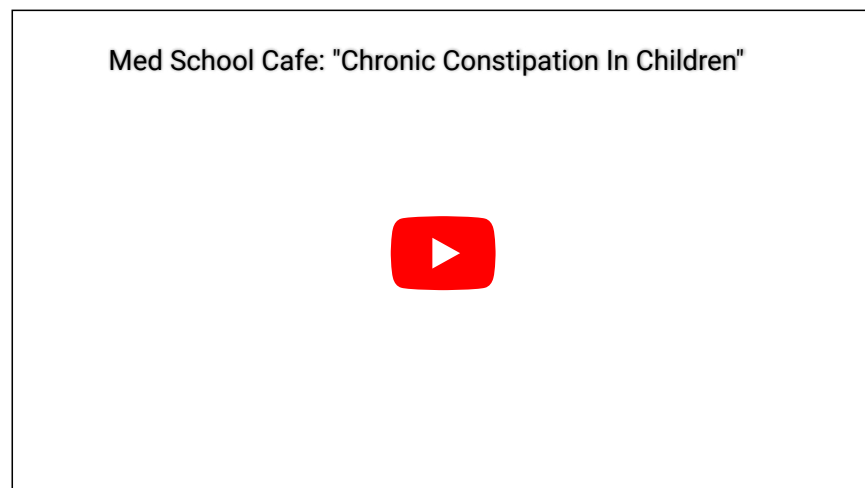
The event is free to the community, but please RSVP to cabral@health.southalabama.edu or by calling 251-445-8262.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [10:00AM](#) No comments:

Med School Café video online: 'Chronic Constipation in Children'

Ananthasekar Ponnambalam, M.D., professor of pediatrics at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine and a pediatric gastroenterologist with USA Health, presented the November Med School Café lecture. He discussed chronic constipation in children.

Watch [Med School Café: Chronic Constipation in Children](#) on YouTube or below.



Posted by Med School Watercooler at [9:37AM](#) No comments:

Monday, December 2, 2019

Bassam presents on neuromuscular therapies at national meeting

Bassam Bassam, M.D., professor of neurology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine and director of the neuromuscular program at USA Health, recently spoke at the American Association of Neuromuscular & Electromyography Medicine (AANEM) annual meeting in Austin, Texas.

During the event, Bassam was the course chair and faculty for a course titled "Emerging Neuromuscular Therapies and Controversies" and led two faculty workshops. He also serves on the AANEM Neuromuscular Update Committee, is a member of the AAN Neuromuscular Section, and is a AANEM Connect Team member, which means he is part of an expert team that answers EMG or neuromuscular questions raised by AANEM members online.

AANEM is the highest association for the neuromuscular diseases subspecialty. The annual meeting is an educational and scientific meeting providing CME credit



courses, poster presentations and so on. Bassam said that this year's annual meeting was the most successful so far with more than 1,100 physicians attending, which is 20 to 25 percent more than previous years.

Bassam has been a member of the AANEM since 1982 and has also served on the AANEM Neuromuscular Course Review Committee since 2009. He is regularly invited to be a speaker and/or course chair at the annual meetings.

Bassam has been with USA Health 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 and Diplomate in Neuromuscular Disease Subspecialty.

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [10:21 AM](#) 1 comment: 

A fresh perspective: Student appreciates the art and science of medicine



The path to medical school isn't always a straight line. Sometimes, it's more like a circle.

Even in high school, Zachary Lazzari anticipated a career in medicine. After graduation, he entered the pre-neuroscience program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"But, 18 years of age turns out to be an odd time to decide on career choices, so I jumped ship," Lazzari said.

He transferred to Auburn University, where he pursued a degree in philosophy. He embarked on adventures around the United States and Europe and surrounded himself with artists and musicians. After earning his Bachelor of Arts, Lazzari spent the next two years in Portland, Oregon.

"Only then did I realize my 'deviation' from the path I thought pre-medical students had to take was actually the best preparation for becoming a physician," he said.

Lazzari was accepted to master's programs in neuroscience and bioethics as well as medical school – all in the same year.

A native of Fairhope, Alabama, Lazzari and his wife, Peyton, decided they wanted to be close to home while Lazzari went to medical school. So, they settled into a little house on his family's farm on the Eastern Shore, and Lazzari started his medical education at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine in 2018.

When Lazzari interviewed at USA, he was impressed with the students' test scores and achievements, and he appreciated that the small class sizes nurtured close relationships with professors and peers. "With the combination of being near family and enjoying the culture of the USA College of Medicine, I was convinced I made the right choice," he said.

The most rewarding aspect of medical school, Lazzari said, has been progressing as a student, every day getting closer to his goal of becoming a physician. "I am enamored with medical science, so every subject reveals just a little bit more of the mystery of life – that is definitely rewarding," he said.

Like most medical students, Lazzari said it can be hard to find balance. "I try to prioritize spending time with my wife and our dog, making time for running, and taking small trips once in a while to feel like my social life is not paused because of school; but it is still a challenge," he said.

Lazzari combines his liberal arts background, love of the natural world and knack for science, making for a well-rounded medical student. As a member of the USA College of Medicine's Wellness Committee, Lazzari recently spearheaded an event – Arts in Medicine – that showcased the creative sides of medical students and faculty.

According to Lazzari, art is as fundamental to practicing medicine as science. "A physician is tasked with caring for any human who presents with a complaint, so we must develop culturally, emotionally and socially in order to treat the disease and care for the patient," he said. "I believe art allows one to grow in all these ways and more."

At this point Lazzari said he isn't sure which specialty he would like to pursue, but his 18-year-old self might have been on to something, after all.

"I know that I enjoy learning about the neurosciences," he said. "I am betting a specialty within that realm will catch my eye."

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