

Med School Watercooler

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

Thursday, September 10, 2020

Mark Your Calendar: Randall W. Powell Endowed Memorial Lectureship

The 2020 Randall W. Powell Endowed Memorial Lectureship in Pediatric Surgery, hosted by the University of South Alabama department of surgery, will feature Doruk Ozgediz, M.D., M.S.C., director of the Center of Global Surgery and Health Equity Department of Surgery and associate professor of pediatric surgery at the University of California San Francisco.



Ozgediz will present the first lecture, titled "Surgical Pearls and Pitfalls: Lessons in Partnerships to Serve Vulnerable Populations Globally" on Sept. 17 at 5 p.m. via Zoom. Link: <https://usahealthsystem.zoom.us/j/91522049196>. His second lecture titled "Global Surgery 2020: Where are we now and where are we going?" will take place on Sept. 18 at 7 a.m. via Zoom. Link: <https://usahealthsystem.zoom.us/j/97396325695>.

The lectureship is named in honor of Randall Powell, M.D., former professor of surgery and pediatrics at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, who passed away in 2017. As a pediatric surgeon, Powell belonged to a small group of surgeons who trained beyond general surgery residency in order to care for neonates and children with complex congenital defects with the understanding of the different physiology of the growing child. During his distinguished career at USA, Powell was a professor in the department of surgery and director of the division of pediatric surgery.

Both lectures are CME accredited. For more information, contact the USA department of surgery at 251-445-8230.

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Hernance publishes research on deer tick virus pathogenesis

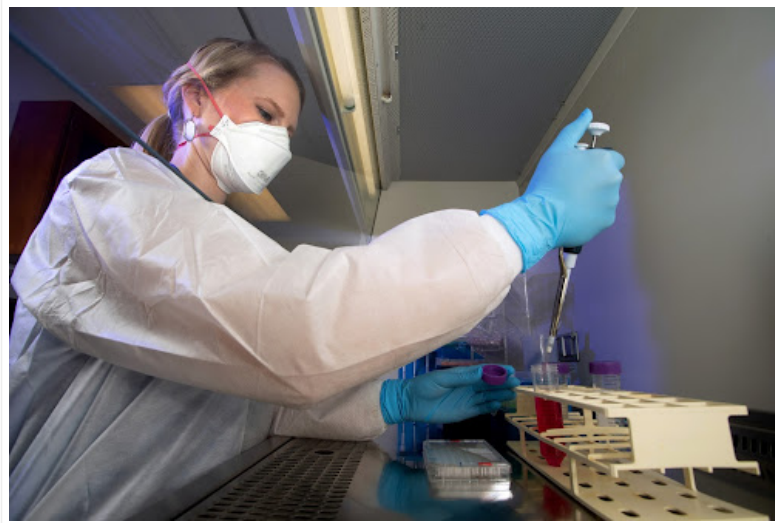
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Meghan Hermance, Ph.D., assistant professor of microbiology and immunology, conducts research examining arthropod-borne viruses.

Meghan E. Hermance, Ph.D., assistant professor of microbiology and immunology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, was the lead author on a recently published article in the journal *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* regarding deer tick virus pathogenesis.

Powassan virus is a tick-borne flavivirus that encompasses two genetic lineages, Powassan and deer tick virus. In recent years, the number of reported Powassan disease cases has increased, and the geographic range of the deer tick virus tick vector, *Ixodes scapularis*, has expanded. The two virus strains are serologically indistinguishable, according to the research, and it's not known if clinical manifestations, pathology, or disease outcome differ between the two.

This is the first study to comprehensively characterize the clinical disease outcome in a small pre-clinical model across a spectrum of Powassan/deer tick virus infection doses, according to the authors. The scientists used this model they developed for deer tick virus pathogenesis that mimics the manifestations of Powassan disease in humans.

Because it's not known if deer tick virus and Powassan differ in their capacity to cause human disease, the model detailed in the study could be utilized in future comparative pathogenesis studies, or as a platform for testing the efficacy of vaccines, and antivirals.

Compared to other blood-feeding arthropods, ticks transmit the largest variety of human and domestic animal pathogens, including bacteria, protozoa, and viruses. Tick-borne diseases accounted for more than 75% of human vector-borne disease cases reported to the United States National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System between 2004 to 2016. In recent decades, several tick-borne viruses have emerged as human and veterinary health concerns across the globe, Hermance noted.

The journal *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases* is devoted to the world's most neglected tropical diseases, publishing leading research and commentary on scientific, medical, political and public health aspects of forgotten diseases affecting the world's most neglected people. The scientific journal publishes research devoted to the pathology, epidemiology, prevention, treatment and control of neglected tropical diseases and relevant public policy.

Neglected tropical diseases are defined as a group of poverty-promoting chronic infectious diseases, which primarily occur in rural areas and poor urban areas of low-income and middle-income countries. Their impact on child health and development, pregnancy and worker productivity, as well as their stigmatizing features, can limit economic stability.

To read the full article, visit: <https://journals.plos.org/plosntds/article?id=10.1371/journal.pntd.0008359>

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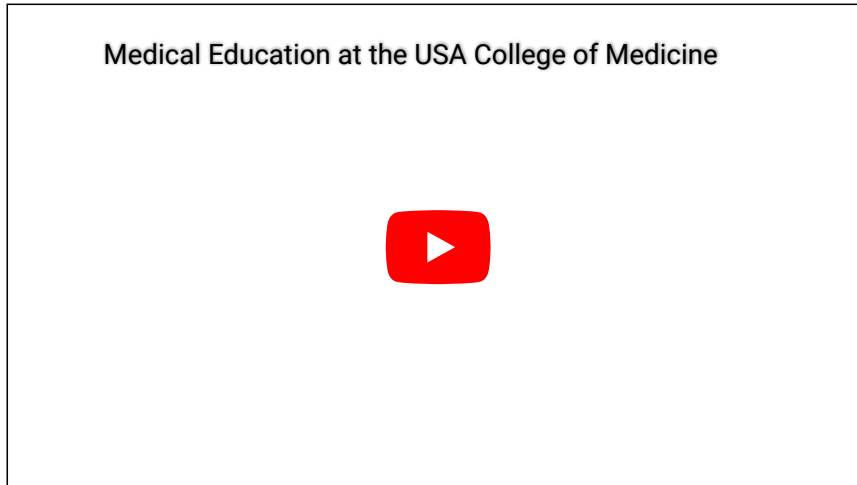
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Watch Now: USA COM creates recruitment video

This year, COVID-19 is affecting the way medical schools deliver education and also how they recruit students. With those changes in mind, the University of South Alabama College of Medicine created this recruitment video to tell its story through the eyes of current students.

Watch the video

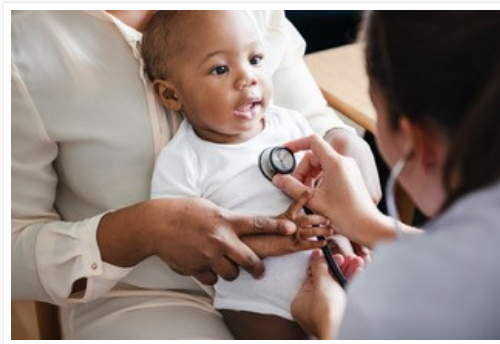
here: <https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/com/futurestudents/>



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Pediatric Grand Rounds: Integrated Care Delivery for Pediatric Aerodigestive Patients

The Sept. 18 pediatric grand rounds will feature a panel of physicians and other caregivers from Vanderbilt University School of Medicine delivered via the Zoom digital platform. The presentation will focus on integrated care delivery for pediatric aerodigestive patients.



Speakers for the meeting are Christopher T. Wootten, M.D., associate professor of

pediatric ENT; Lyndy Wilcox, M.D., assistant professor of pediatric ENT; Mohammad F. Fazili, M.D., associate professor of pediatric pulmonary medicine; Sari Acra, M.D., division chief, director of fellowship program and professor of pediatric gastroenterology; Elizabeth Vaughn, RN, patient care coordinator; and Gwen Provo-Bell, speech pathologist at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn.

Aerodigestive disorders include chronic conditions of the upper airway tract, lower airway tract and gastrointestinal tract, and are often associated with airway, breathing and swallowing dysfunction. Conditions treated include airway stenosis and aspiration.

Objectives of the presentation:

- Identifying diagnoses commonly evaluated and treated through aerodigestive centers;
- Recognizing line benefits of coordinated care for these complex patients from the provider's and patient's perspective;

- Comparing long-term costs of evaluation and treatment with traditional methods versus a multidisciplinary approach from the perspective of both hospital systems and third-party payers.

Those who plan to participate are asked to pre-register using this link:

https://southalabama.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEucOyoqj8uGNcZXbmCe2gx6vBNuW_6_IZU

Pediatric grand rounds is held the third Friday of each month from 8 until 9 a.m. for the physicians, advanced practice providers, residents, nurses, social workers, medical students and other members of the healthcare team who are interested in increasing their knowledge, addressing competence, performance, and improving patient outcomes in healthcare.

For more information, contact Jessica Petro at 251-415-8688 or jpetro@health.southalabama.edu.

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