

Med School Watercooler

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

Wednesday, September 23, 2020

USA College of Medicine CARES Fund supports students in need

In the wake of Hurricane Sally, the University of South Alabama College of Medicine acknowledges that this natural disaster may have introduced the emergent need for additional limited financial support for our medical and graduate students.



COM CARES is a Collaborative Access, Resources, and Emergency Support program

that provides financial assistance to any currently enrolled College of Medicine student that has experienced a financial hardship that poses a threat to their safety, well being, or successful completion of their academic endeavors. Examples of such challenges include: disaster relief, loss of income, and medical bills.

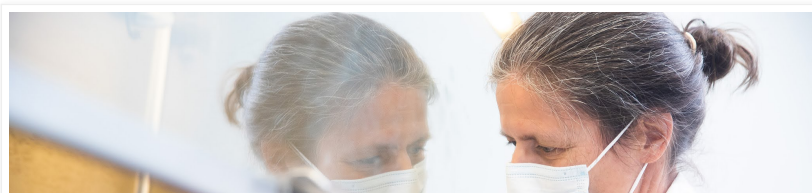
Any currently enrolled student in either the M.D. or Ph.D. program at the USA College of Medicine is eligible to apply for assistance through this program.

The USA College of Medicine has set up a [COM CARES website](#) that answers questions about the fund, provides an avenue to support the fund financially, and provides a portal that students may access to apply for assistance. Should you have additional questions, please contact Stephanie Roote, associate director of financial aid at the USA College of Medicine, at sroote@southalabama.edu.

Donations are welcome. To make a donation, visit <https://giving.southalabama.edu/comcares> or contact Kelly McCarron, associate vice president of medical affairs for USA Health Development, at kmccarron@southalabama.edu.

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Bander Award winner seeks to discover gender-based link in ARDS-related mortality



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Sarah Sayner, Ph.D., associate professor of physiology and cell biology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, recently received the 2020 USA Center for Lung Biology Murray Bander Faculty Development Award. Given each year, the award seeks to foster innovative discoveries in pulmonary research and promote faculty development.

As a member of the USA Center for Lung Biology, Sayner's research seeks to understand why men are more susceptible to acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) than women. Her work examines the endogenous soluble adenylyl cyclase isoform 10 (AC10), which regulates pulmonary endothelial permeability.

Bacterial and viral pneumonia are common causes of ARDS.

"Males have a 30 percent higher age-adjusted ARDS-related mortality rate compared to females," she said. "However, the etiology behind this gender disparity is unclear. Understanding these gender differences might help us to better treat patients with ARDS, which is important since there are still not targeted therapies to treat these patients."

Murray Bander, a World War II veteran who moved from New York to Mobile to operate a clothing shop, died from complications of pneumonia in 2001. He left his estate to the USA College of Medicine in 2003, and the Murray Bander Endowment for the Center for Lung Biology was established to support scholarly activities in lung biology.

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USA National Alumni Association recognizes outstanding COM faculty and staff



The University of South Alabama National Alumni Association awarded its Faculty Excellence Awards and Young Alumni Award during its annual membership meeting this month.

Natalie Gassman, Ph.D., assistant professor of physiology and cell biology at the USA College of Medicine and a cancer researcher at the USA Health Mitchell Cancer Institute, and Angie O'Neal, an academic advisor in the USA College of Medicine's Office of Research Education and Training, were among the five USA faculty and staff members recognized for their achievements.

Gassman received the National Alumni Association Endowed Award for Faculty Innovation, which recognizes USA faculty for outstanding achievement in research.

O'Neal received the Beth and Don Davis National Alumni Association Excellence in Advising Award, which acknowledges the importance of advising at USA by annually recognizing faculty and staff for their outstanding advising contributions.

"We have so many top-notch faculty and alumni at the University of South Alabama," said National Alumni Association president Jim Moore. "Each year we have the challenge and honor of selecting and recognizing these individuals who are making a difference at the University and around the world."



For a full list of honorees, visit

www.southalabama.edu/departments/publicrelations/pressreleases/091120outstandingfaculty.html

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