

# Med School Watercooler

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

Friday, November 13, 2020

## Video now online: 'Advances in Lung Cancer Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment'

Brian Persing, M.D., assistant professor of interdisciplinary clinical oncology and a medical oncologist with the USA Health Mitchell Cancer Institute, presented "Advances in Lung Cancer Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment" at Med School Café.

Persing discussed recent guidelines for lung cancer screening as well as the use of robotic bronchoscopy, now available at USA Health, for immediate lung cancer diagnosis. He also talked about treatments for lung cancer, including advances in immunotherapy, that have significantly improved the outlook for patients.

Watch the presentation on [YouTube](#) or below.

Med School Café - Advances in Lung Cancer Screening, Dia...



Thursday, November 12, 2020

## Pediatric grand rounds: Early hearing detection and intervention

Kari Bradham, D.O., assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine and a pediatrician with USA Health, will present November's pediatric grand rounds. The presentation, "Early Hearing Detection and Intervention," will be held at 8 a.m. Friday, Nov. 20, via Zoom.



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Bradham will discuss the causes of hearing loss, the importance of 1-3-6 guidelines, the role of the medical home in providing care to children who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH), and when to refer to specialists in otolaryngology, early intervention, genetics, and/or ophthalmology.

The presentation will also cover what automated auditory brainstem response (AABR) and otoacoustic emissions (OAE) are and the differences between the hearing screens, as well as which should be used for initial screening and why.

Register for the Zoom presentation at

<https://southalabama.zoom.us/join/9tUkceGqrz0tEtacBdc3GhOb5IPXLvvmq6HH>.

For questions or additional information about this month's pediatric grand rounds, contact Jessica Petro at [jpetro@health.southalabama.edu](mailto:jpetro@health.southalabama.edu) or by calling 251-415-8688.

Pediatric grand rounds are held on the third Friday of every month. Staff members can suggest future speakers by contacting Haidee Custodio at [hcustodio@health.southalabama.edu](mailto:hcustodio@health.southalabama.edu).

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## Students enjoy opening of COM Medical Student Center



Andy Hu, a second-year medical student, works on his laptop in the COM Medical Student Center.

A new 5,000-square foot space opened last week for students at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine to study, collaborate, exercise or simply take a break from the pressures of medical school.

Located on the first floor of the Medical Sciences Building, in suite 1200, the COM Medical Student Center features an open lounge area, small study rooms with floor-to-ceiling glass fronts, a room with exercise bikes, and a kitchenette break area. Medical students have 24-hour access to the center, and entry is controlled by an electronic fob system for security.

First-year medical student Carey Johnson, who serves as president of his class, eagerly anticipated the opening of the new space. "We're all really excited," he said. "We watched the construction progress, and now we're finally able to get into the space."

The Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the USA College of Medicine's



First-year medical student Carey Johnson studies in one room

- 2019 (245)
- 2018 (236)
- 2017 (231)
- 2016 (206)
- 2015 (205)
- 2014 (241)
- 2013 (232)
- 2012 (245)
- 2011 (262)
- 2010 (247)
- 2009 (88)

accreditation body, has a standard schools must provide sufficient space for study and relaxation. The previous space set aside for this purpose was about 800 square feet.

"This is a much larger space than we had upstairs," Johnson said. "It's definitely an upgrade."

John Marymont, M.D., MBA, vice president for medical affairs and dean of the USA College of Medicine, said the medical students now have a multipurpose space to call their own. "A lot of work has gone into the planning, construction and opening of the Medical Student Center, so we are pleased that the students are enjoying all the different aspects of the new space," he said.

Mary Townsley, Ph.D., senior associate dean at the USA College of Medicine, said the plan for opening the center for students had to be approved by the university's reopening committee to meet COVID-19 restrictions. Occupancy for each space was set to allow for social distancing, and the number of chairs in each space is limited to those occupancy numbers, she said. Masks are required, and plexiglass shields on the tables further enhance student safety.

Certain features of the center have not been implemented yet because of COVID safety precautions. For now, eating and drinking are prohibited in the center; so the coffee makers and microwaves are not in place, and the refrigerator is not in use.

"With everything going on, it just shows how much effort and thought went into making sure the students feel comfortable studying here," said Jordan Ingram, a first-year medical student, noting the safety measures.

Ingram said the pandemic has made her particularly appreciative of being able to come together with her peers. "Sometimes it can feel isolating, so being able to come in here and see people and study together is really nice," she said.



Second-year medical student Natalie Kidd tests out one of the exercise bikes with her classmate Baylee Edwards.

Sitting at one of the tables with Ingram, second-year medical student Andy Hu agreed: "It really shows that the school cares about us and our well-being."

Hu, who serves as class treasurer, said it's important that medical students have their own space. When he studies at Marx Library or even the biomedical sciences library, he rarely sees anyone he knows. "But, when we come in here now, we can see some of our classmates," he said. "If you get lost on a concept or want to ask them something, it's so much easier here, versus being by yourself."

Second-year medical students Natalie Kidd and Baylee Edwards occupied one of the study rooms.

Edwards looks forward to the collaboration that can now take place among first- and second-year medical students in the new center. "It will be a great opportunity for M1s to interact with M2s, because we have separate lecture halls, and we don't have a lot of time together otherwise," she said.

Kidd, who serves as her class president, took in the atmosphere of the center. "It's really calming, which is great because our lives are high-key," she said. "We have a lot on our plates, so it's nice to have one space where we can do everything."

## Ob-Gyn Interest Group hosts menstrual product drive

Women and girls at local shelters now have more of the products they need for their menstrual cycles thanks to the efforts of students at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine.

Inspired by the group's collaboration with Period the Menstrual Movement, members of the Ob-Gyn Interest Group hosted a period product drive for the women of Penelope House and McKemie Place. Period is a global nonprofit organization that aims to end period poverty and stigma through service, advocacy and education.

The group chose to support Penelope House, a shelter for women and their children escaping from domestic violence, and McKemie Place, a community shelter exclusively for women, because women and girls experiencing housing instability may not have access to or the resources to purchase feminine hygiene products.



Members of the Ob-Gyn Interest Group, from left, Annie Xu, Macy Vickers, Rennan Zaharias and Anna Woodham deliver menstrual products to local women's shelters.

"Our hearts go out to these women in imagining how difficult it would be to take care of one's menstrual cycle if their housing situation is not stable," said Rennan Zaharias, Period chapter liaison for the Ob-Gyn Interest Group. "The community at the USA College of Medicine really came together to provide for these women in Mobile."

Boxes placed in the Medical Sciences Building and the Mastin Patient Care Center collected about 200 packages of feminine hygiene products and reusable menstrual cups. Monetary donations of more than \$100 allowed the group to purchase additional products to donate to the two shelters.

The Ob-Gyn Interest Group started a Period chapter this past spring. The group's presidents, Macy Vickers and Annie Xu, appointed Anna Woodham and Zaharias to be the Period chapter liaisons.

"Some girls have to miss school because of their menstrual cycles, and some women miss work or miss out on potential job opportunities because of their cycles," Zaharias said. "We don't want women in our community to be hindered in their lives because of a natural physiologic process."

Zaharias said the drive was so successful that the Ob-Gyn Interest Group is planning to host the community service project annually.

"We hope that our drive met some of the needs of the women in Penelope House and McKemie Place," she said. "I speak for everyone when I say it was truly an honor to be a part of an organization working to stand up for and help women in this way."

**Tuesday, November 10, 2020**

## State health officer to speak at public health grand rounds

The University of South Alabama College of Medicine Public Health Interest Group and the USA Health Department of Policy and Network Development will host a virtual grand rounds with Scott Harris, M.D., Alabama state health officer. The presentation is set for noon to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 18, via Zoom.



Harris will discuss the state of Alabama's public health, its infrastructure and strategic plan, the COVID-19 response and vaccine efforts moving forward. CME/CEU credits will be provided.

Gisella Ward, MPH, a fourth-year student at the USA College of Medicine and president of the Public Health Interest Group, said she reached out to Harris in February about presenting a lecture.

"He responded with complete enthusiasm," she said. However, once the pandemic hit the United States, Harris's busy schedule necessitated delaying his presentation.

"Seeing firsthand how necessary an efficient and sustainable public health infrastructure is to controlling the current pandemic," Ward said, "we reached out to him again this academic year and continued the conversation."

Ward said she hopes students come away from the lecture with an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the public health system at the local and national level. Ideally, she said, students will feel educated and empowered to join public health efforts to help reduce and ultimately stop the spread of the virus.

"Public and population health are integral parts of the care that we provide as medical professionals. They shape how we care for our patients, the resources available to our communities, and so much more," Ward said. "We as the next generation of physicians have to stay informed so that we can better influence public policy and healthcare administration while addressing health disparities, social determinants of health and even the health efficacy of our patients."

Register for the presentation  
at <https://usahealthsystem.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEIf-uoqzstE9ISYtYjFV7NLQit3swUmkgs>.

If you are interested in mentoring or speaking to the Public Health Interest Group, email [phig\\_usacom@southalabama.edu](mailto:phig_usacom@southalabama.edu). Students can join PHIG on Facebook: "USACOM Public Health Interest Group." The group can also be found on Twitter and Instagram @phig\_usacom.