

# Med School Watercooler

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

Thursday, January 28, 2021

## Mark your calendar for upcoming grand rounds

### OB-GYN Grand Rounds

"Intraoperative Ureteral Trauma"

Lorie Fleck, M.D., urologist, University Urology

7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Friday, Jan. 29

Zoom: [https://southalabama.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUuf-Gsrz0oH9PNDQgKTE4Fh6h\\_j4keBDJL](https://southalabama.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUuf-Gsrz0oH9PNDQgKTE4Fh6h_j4keBDJL)

Contact: Heather Glass at 251-415-1492 or hglass@health.southalabama.edu

### Cardiology Grand Rounds

"Diagnostic Dilemma in a Patient Presenting with Typical Anginal Symptoms"

Nikky Bardia, M.D., cardiology resident, University Hospital

11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 29

Zoom: <https://usahealthsystem.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJApcGsrzMsHt2gFsBT02ShnccVZpx-dS3->

Contact: Donna Gregory at 251-471-7923 or dgregory@health.southalabama.edu

### Mental Health Grand Rounds

"Diversity"

Kimberly Pettway, MSW, MS, instructor of social work, USA

8 to 9 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3

Zoom: <https://southalabama.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcsf-isqjMiHtyYx3UlyuC-50kwISE7ai2f>

Contact: Sharrie Cranford at 251-414-8080 or scanford@southalabama.edu

### Neonatal Grand Rounds

"Lung Ultrasound in Neonates"

Dr. Fabien Eyal, professor of pediatrics, USA College of Medicine

Noon to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3

Zoom: TBA

Contact: Sharrie Cranford at 251-414-8080 or scanford@southalabama.edu

### Medicine Grand Rounds

"Nucleic Acid Vaccines"


Brian Fouty, M.D., professor of internal medicine, USA College of Medicine

8 to 9 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 4

Zoom: <https://usahealthsystem.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJckc-itrTotHdBBYxyHIzg8IzCOXCqkIFsV>

Contact: Linda Ching at 251-471-7900 or lching@health.southalabama.edu

See the full schedule of grand rounds on CME tracker.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [10:44 AM](#) No comments: 

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Blog Archive

- 2023 (11)
- 2022 (249)
- ▼ 2021 (269)
  - 12/12 - 12/19 (7)
  - 12/05 - 12/12 (6)
  - 11/28 - 12/05 (6)
  - 11/14 - 11/21 (4)
  - 11/07 - 11/14 (4)
  - 10/31 - 11/07 (10)
  - 10/24 - 10/31 (7)
  - 10/17 - 10/24 (5)
  - 10/10 - 10/17 (6)
  - 10/03 - 10/10 (8)
  - 09/26 - 10/03 (4)
  - 09/19 - 09/26 (4)
  - 09/12 - 09/19 (6)
  - 09/05 - 09/12 (7)
  - 08/29 - 09/05 (3)
  - 08/22 - 08/29 (7)
  - 08/15 - 08/22 (6)
  - 08/08 - 08/15 (4)
  - 08/01 - 08/08 (8)
  - 07/25 - 08/01 (6)
  - 07/18 - 07/25 (4)
  - 07/11 - 07/18 (4)
  - 07/04 - 07/11 (5)
  - 06/27 - 07/04 (6)
  - 06/20 - 06/27 (7)
  - 06/13 - 06/20 (4)
  - 06/06 - 06/13 (6)
  - 05/30 - 06/06 (5)
  - 05/23 - 05/30 (6)
  - 05/16 - 05/23 (4)

## Meet a Med Student: Jelani Bender

Jelani Bender

**Age:** 23**Class of:** 2024**Hometown:** Birmingham**Undergrad/grad institution:**

Birmingham Southern College

**Degrees earned:** Bachelor of Science in chemistry**Interests, hobbies:** Eating, going on hikes and other fun outdoor adventures; traveling to new places and experiencing new cultures, going to museums, sports, playing Xbox and bingeing Netflix**Something unique about me:** I was once the opening act of Cirque du Soleil. I am a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. I have a twin sister who also is going to medical school.**Three of my favorite things:** Marvel movies (especially "Black Panther"), Hibachi (with Yum Yum sauce, of course) and listening to music.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at 10:14 AM No comments:

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

## New trauma/critical care and burn surgeon joins surgery faculty



As a child growing up in Abia, a state in southeastern Nigeria, Maryann Mbaka, M.D., saw needs all around her. Diseases were ravaging those in her community. Visiting a doctor took an entire day; and if someone needed surgery, it was often considered a death sentence because of the distance required to travel to see a surgeon.

"These things opened up my eyes to the need and made the decision to pursue medicine and surgery an easy one," said Mbaka, who recently joined the USA College of Medicine as an assistant professor of surgery and USA Health as a trauma/critical care and burn surgeon.

► 05/09 - 05/16 (3)

► 05/02 - 05/09 (7)

► 04/25 - 05/02 (5)

► 04/18 - 04/25 (3)

► 04/11 - 04/18 (7)

► 04/04 - 04/11 (5)

► 03/28 - 04/04 (5)

► 03/21 - 03/28 (6)

► 03/14 - 03/21 (4)

► 03/07 - 03/14 (7)

► 02/28 - 03/07 (6)

► 02/21 - 02/28 (6)

► 02/14 - 02/21 (5)

► 02/07 - 02/14 (5)

► 01/31 - 02/07 (4)

▼ 01/24 - 01/31 (5)

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Meet a Med Student: Jelani Bender

New trauma/critical care and burn surgeon joins su...

Researcher studies when too much NAD+ can go rogue

Medical Alumni Association to host 'Social Determini...

► 01/17 - 01/24 (6)

► 01/10 - 01/17 (6)

► 01/03 - 01/10 (5)

► 2020 (191)

► 2019 (245)

► 2018 (236)

► 2017 (231)

► 2016 (206)

► 2015 (205)

► 2014 (241)

► 2013 (232)

► 2012 (245)

► 2011 (262)

► 2010 (247)

► 2009 (88)

At age 13, she and her family migrated to Houston. She lived there until she moved to Louisiana to attend Northwestern State University where she studied mathematics and biology and played soccer. After earning an undergraduate degree, she spent a year at Baylor College of Medicine (BCM), conducting research focused on the cardiovascular and cerebrovascular areas.

During medical school at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas, Mbaka realized that she thrived on the long hours and being in the operating theater.

"Going through medical education, I noticed that being at the hospital early and late didn't cause me to tire out but rather gave me an exhilarating feeling that I was making a difference," she said. "Knowing that patients were trusting me with their health with every encounter was a humbling experience."


She was elected to the Gold Humanism Honor Society during medical school, and the passion of a mentor during her surgical internship put her on the path to trauma/critical care and burn surgery. She then completed surgery residencies at the University of South Carolina and the University of California San Francisco as well as a trauma/surgical critical care fellowship at the University of Florida.

She now joins USA Health as part of the trauma team with a passion for quality of life outcomes for burn patients. She is also interested in abdominal wall reconstruction and pursuing cardiopulmonary trauma research.

"I wanted to be in a level 1 trauma center with a good relationship with the community, a track record of educating residents and students well, and in a place that was in close proximity to family," she said. "When I visited USA, my future colleagues felt like family, and the people in various leadership positions had a good vision for the future of USA as an institution."

She is married to an internist and created a non-profit organization Living Kings and Queens Inc. with a goal of improving the quality of life of those in her local community, an idea that was born from the needs she saw growing up in Nigeria.

Mbaka loves soccer, running, spending time with church family and spending time with her own family, especially her nephews. She loves to travel and has lived in five different states before moving to Alabama.

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [9:33 AM](#) No comments: 

**Monday, January 25, 2021**

## Researcher studies when too much NAD+ can go rogue

With an ultimate goal of improving the quality of life for our aging population, a postdoctoral researcher at the USA College of Medicine is seeking ways to better understand how a key component for cells to produce energy can prevent cell deterioration as patients get older.

Manoj Sonavane, Ph.D., a postdoctoral research fellow in the Department of Physiology and Cell Biology, is the lead author of a recently published article about the unexpected impact of boosting NAD+ levels using a newly characterized NAD+ supplement, dihydronicotinamide riboside (NRH).

Sonavane's research is focused on nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD+), a key component for cells to produce energy. NAD+ levels naturally decline with



age, and this decline contributes to diseases such as diabetes and Alzheimer's among older patients.

"People take NAD+ precursors, like vitamin B3 or niacin, to improve their quality of life. New supplements like NRH could increase NAD+ faster and more dramatically, but we don't understand if that will be beneficial or not," he said.

While examining NRH, Sonavane found that it increased NAD+ levels but damaged liver cell models. Kidney cell models were not impacted by NRH. This research shows NAD pools are carefully regulated by the body and that careful evaluation of supplements that boost NAD+ are needed to prevent potential side effects.

Sonavane has completed 11 research publications on topics including biotechnology, environmental science and toxicology. His work as a postdoctoral researcher includes examining the effects of voluntary and involuntary chemical exposure on human health.

The research was a collaborative effort between the labs of Natalie Gassman, Ph.D., assistant professor of physiology and cell biology, and Marie Migaud, Ph.D., professor of pharmacology.

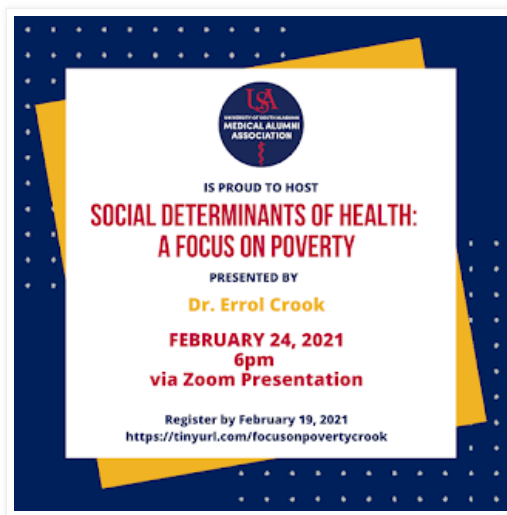
PLOS One is a nonprofit organization that publishes peer-reviewed articles of scientific findings in 219 research areas. Read Sonavane's full research article, titled "[Dihydronicotinamide riboside promotes cell-specific cytotoxicity by tipping the balance between metabolic regulation and oxidative stress](#)," on PLOS One's website.

Posted by [Med School Watercooler](#) at [4:03 PM](#) No comments: 


## Medical Alumni Association to host 'Social Determinants of Health: A Focus on Poverty'

The USA Medical Alumni Association will host the third and final course in its continuing medical education series. The presentation, "Social Determinants of Health: A Focus on Poverty," is set for 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 24, via Zoom.

Errol Crook, M.D., professor and chair of internal medicine at the USA College of Medicine and director of the Center for Healthy Communities, will offer an analysis of poverty and other determinants of a community's overall health.



Register by Feb. 19 at <https://medicalalumni.southalabama.edu/pages/social-determinants-of-health>.

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