

# Med School Watercooler

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

Friday, February 26, 2021

## Chang appointed to Mobile County Board of Health

Michael Chang, M.D., associate vice president for medical affairs at the USA College of Medicine and chief medical officer for USA Health, recently joined the Mobile County Board of Health. He was elected to serve as secretary for 2021.

Each year, the board includes six physicians serving on the Medical Society of Mobile County's Board of Censors and the current president of the Mobile County Commission. The Board of Health meets monthly to review Mobile County Health Department activities and to provide guidance to Alabama's oldest public health agency.

Other members for 2021 include Michael W. Meshad, M.D., who is chairman; C.M.A. "Max" Rogers IV, M.D.; Joseph Ewing Bornstein, M.D.; Desiree A. Soter-Pearsall, M.D.; and Stacey W. Wing, M.D. Mobile County Commission President Merceria Ludgood also is a member.



Posted by Med School Watercooler at 3:20 PM No comments:

## USA College of Medicine invited to AMA consortium meetings

The University of South Alabama College of Medicine has been invited to participate in virtual meetings hosted by the American Medical Association Accelerating Change in Medical Education consortium.

The consortium hosts multiple conferences each year for medical school members to discuss key innovations and challenges facing medical education such as assessing competency in health systems science, optimizing the transition from undergraduate to graduate medical education and combatting structural racism in medical education.



Medical student Benicia Harrison attends M1 orientation.

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The AMA has invited a select number of external institutions to send representatives to its virtual meetings.

"It is a great opportunity for the USA College of Medicine to network and collaborate with other institutions nationally in the discussion and development of solutions facing medical education today," said T.J. Hundley, M.D., associate dean for medical education at the USA College of Medicine. "We are looking forward to participating and contributing to change."

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [9:22 AM](#) No comments: 

Thursday, February 25, 2021

## Interest groups to host 'The Skin You're In' docufilm series and discussion



The USA College of Medicine's Public Health Interest Group and Family Medicine Interest Group will host a docufilm series, titled "The Skin You're In," at 6 p.m. Thursday, March 4, via Zoom. All USA faculty, staff, residents and students are welcome to join.

The film will be followed by a Q & A session with writer/director Thomas A. LaVeist, Ph.D., who is dean of Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.


Allen Perkins, M.D., M.P.H., professor and chair of family medicine at the USA College of Medicine, is one of the Public Health Interest Group's advisors. Through a grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration, Perkins helped to facilitate the film presentation and discussion with LaVeist.

"It has become apparent that poor health outcomes are inexorably tied to racism in our society. Dr LaVeist ties the history of racial discrimination to poor health outcomes in a direct fashion," Perkins said. "For those of us who work in Mobile, especially those who serve the Black community, and wonder why poor health outcomes are so prevalent, this movie is a must see."

Perkins said the Q & A session following the film "is an exceptional opportunity to learn why things are as they are and, more importantly, to learn how to move towards solutions."

Learn more about "The Skin You're In" at <https://www.tsyi.org/the-film>.

Zoom link: <https://southalabama.zoom.us/j/96528961737?pwd=U3FmMWtxajJsRTRuL0VYN1FqN08wdz09>

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [1:46 PM](#) No comments: 

## Students show that 'kindness rocks' during Solidarity Week

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Thomas A. LaVeist, Ph.D.



Members of the Gold Humanism in Medicine Honor Society hold kindness rocks they created as part of Solidarity Week.

Members of the University of South Alabama chapter of the Arnold P. Gold Humanism in Medicine Honor Society (GHHS) designed hand-painted rocks to spread encouraging messages as part of Solidarity Week, a national initiative designed to remind students and healthcare workers of the importance of compassion in medicine.

"Solidarity Week is all about connection and unity as a healthcare team in order to take the best possible care of our patients," said Jordan Smith, a fourth-year medical student who serves as treasurer of GHHS. "Each member of the team is valuable and important. We all depend on one another to be an effective team and, therefore, should take care of each other."



Jordan Smith, a fourth-year medical student and treasurer of GHHS, shows one of the kindness rocks outside the Fanny Meisler Trauma Center.

GHHS members and advisers painted river rocks in gold, white and red, adding messages such as "Be kind," "Love always," #KindnessRocks, #SolidarityWeek and "You are gold." They placed the rocks at a variety of locations near the USA College of Medicine Medical Sciences Building and USA Health facilities.

Smith said that she has already heard positive comments from a staff member who found a rock outside the Mastin Building near University Hospital. "She now keeps one of them on her desk and had given another one with the word 'hope' written on it to one of her co-workers who was having a really tough time," she said. "I was so happy to hear that the rocks had actually brightened peoples' day and made an impact."

In addition to distributing rocks, Smith delivered chocolates to clerkship coordinators who facilitate the medical students' third-year clinical rotations. The GHHS also submitted a letter to the staff at the USA College of Medicine expressing appreciation for their hard work during the pandemic. Members adjusted this year's activities to comply with COVID-19 social distancing guidelines, which limited student interaction with patients and others.

"We began to reflect on the principles Solidarity Week stands for. As we did, we realized that it's not always fun events or food products that bring people together. Sometimes words can be the most impactful," said W. Hamilton Moore, a fourth-year medical student and GHHS chapter president. "As we wrote the letter, we were hopeful that it would encourage and unite this great college of medicine."



The letter thanked faculty and staff for demonstrating the principles that Solidarity Week celebrates. "From the time we were granted admission to now, we have experienced kindness and compassion in the times that we needed it the most," it said.

The national Gold Humanism Honor Society established National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Care in 2011 to highlight the nationwide movement promoting provider-patient relationships based on caring, personalization and mutual respect. Solidarity Day was recognized as a day on the national calendar starting in 2013 and was expanded to Solidarity Week in 2016.

"Solidarity Week is important because it is an opportunity for medical students nationwide

to promote compassionate, personal and respectful provider-patient relationships," said T.J. Hundley, M.D., associate dean for medical education and a chapter adviser.

Each year a select group of students, residents and faculty members are chosen for GHHS membership through a peer-nominated process. Recently, 10 third-year medical students, three residents and one faculty member were selected for induction.

See all photos from Solidarity Week on Flickr.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at 12:44 PM No comments: 

Wednesday, February 24, 2021

## Meet a Med Student: Shrikar Iragavarapu

**Shrikar Iragavarapu**

**Age:** 23

**Class of:** 2023

**Hometown:** Huntsville, Ala.

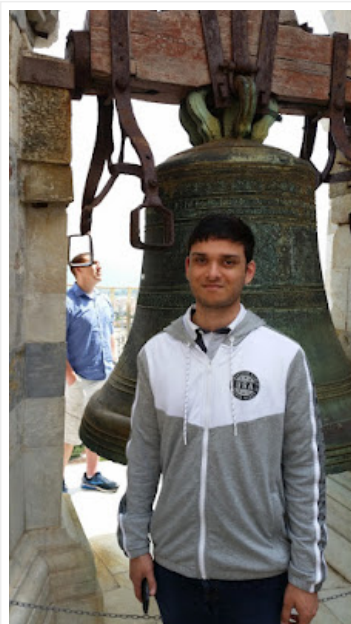
**Undergrad/grad institution:** Washington University in St. Louis

**Degrees earned:** Bachelor of Arts in biology with a concentration in genomics


**Interests, hobbies:** Watching TV and movies, playing video games, working out, cooking

**Something unique about me:** In seventh grade, I won my first school spelling bee. Ironically, they spelled my name wrong on the trophy. Also, not including English, I can speak three other languages.

**Three of my favorite things:** TV/movies, video games, family and friends





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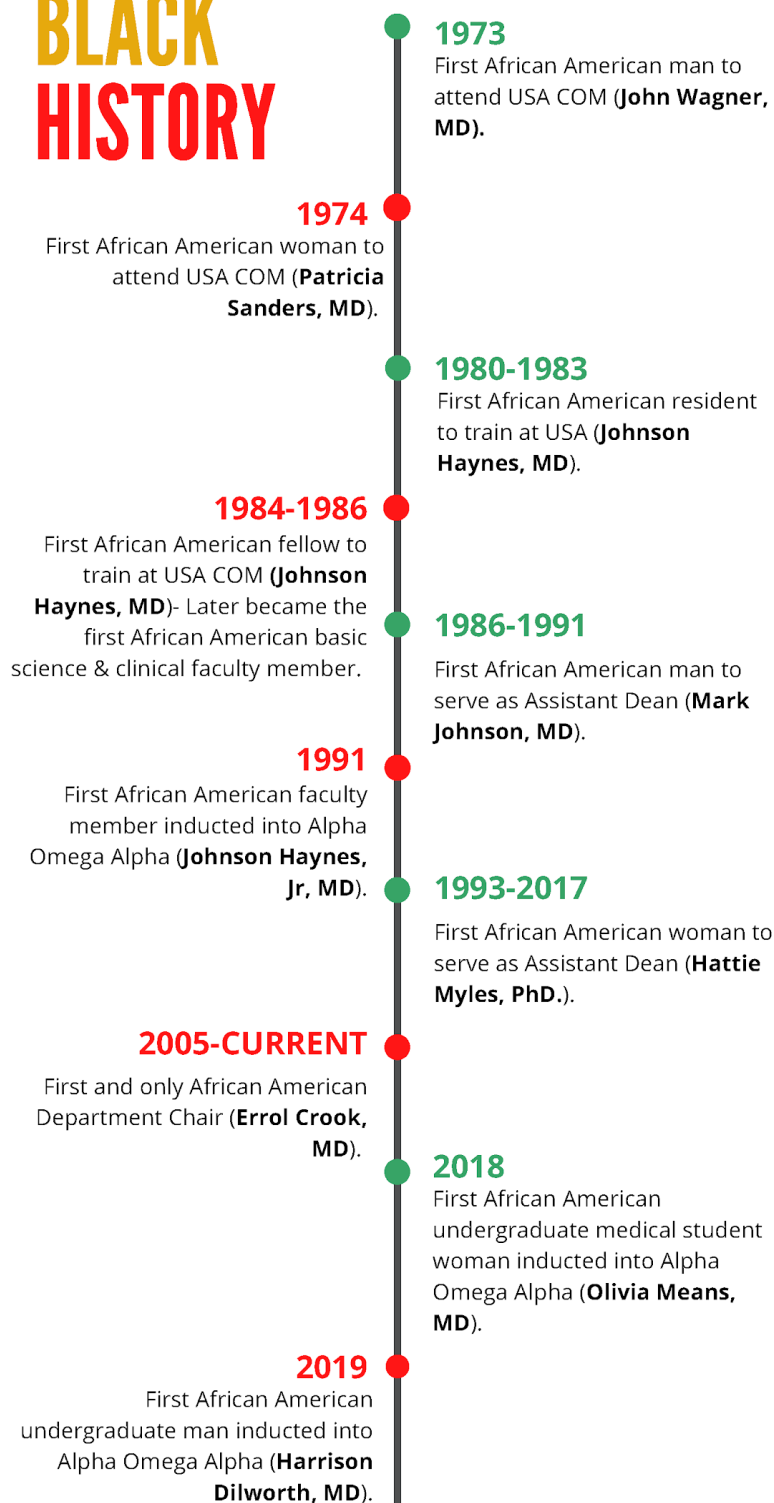
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## Honoring Black history makers at the USA College of Medicine

To celebrate the last week of Black History Month, the USA College of Medicine's Office of Diversity and Inclusion honors our very own history makers, going back to the medical school's charter class in 1973. This timeline has been compiled to celebrate the contributions of African Americans at the USA College of Medicine and USA Health while also acknowledging that we have a long way to go toward true inclusion and equity.


# HONORING BLACK HISTORY

Below is a condensed timeline outlining African American history makers within **USA College of Medicine** and **USA Health**.



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA  
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE  
OFFICE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



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