

Med School Watercooler

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

Friday, October 29, 2021

How much do you know about vaping?

Have you wondered what the big deal is when it comes to vaping? If so, join former and current USA College of Medicine faculty members for an honest conversation on the topic.



An upcoming free talk "Vaping: Separating Fact from Fiction," is planned for Thursday, Nov. 4, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Medical Sciences Building in the second floor auditorium.

Millions of people – including more than 6 million children – have taken up vaping as an alternative to smoking traditional tobacco cigarettes, but scientists and physicians say they are still inhaling a dangerous mixture of cancer-causing agents.

Speakers will include USA Health pediatrician Melody Petty, M.D., M.P.H., and Natalie R. Gassman, Ph.D., a former USA researcher who is now a scientist at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Petty, also an assistant professor of pediatrics at the College of Medicine, was selected as the 2020 e-cigarette chapter champion for the Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) where she served as an advocate for the prevention of childhood nicotine use of products such as e-cigarettes.

E-cigarettes are electronic devices that heat a liquid and produce an aerosol, or mix of small particles in the air that are then "vaped" by the user. Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, the addictive drug also found in regular cigarettes and other tobacco products. Estimates from the American Lung Association show that more than six million children are using tobacco products in the United States.

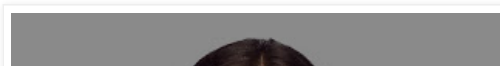
[Register here](#) to attend in person or by Zoom. A limited number of meals-to-go will be provided for the first 30 registrants.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [10:42 AM](#) No comments: 

Thursday, October 28, 2021

USA Health expands with addition of pediatric endocrinologist

Melissa Perez-Garcia, M.D., a pediatric endocrinologist,



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recently joined USA Health to diagnose disorders, including diabetes. As part of the health system, Perez also is an assistant professor of Pediatrics. She is passionate about the field of pediatric endocrinology.

Most hormonal conditions, such as diabetes, require regular visits to a pediatric endocrinologist. Perez has strong bonds with patients impacted by these conditions. She also is passionate about the field of pediatric endocrinology.


"Pediatrics was on my radar since I grew up with children," said Perez. "Childhood endocrinology, as a pediatric physician, this is very rewarding."

Perez attended the University of Alabama at Birmingham and earned a doctorate in medicine in 2010. She completed a residency at USA Health Children's & Women's Hospital in 2016. Her positive experience prompted her to return to the health system as a pediatric endocrinologist after completing a fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh this summer.

Perez's mentors at Children's & Women's Hospital played an instrumental role in her decision to pursue pediatric endocrinology. "I'm super excited to come back to work with my mentors," said Perez. "Dr. Anne-Marie Kaulfers has always been a role model for me, and I am honored to work as her colleague in this new position."

During her residency, Perez familiarized herself with the health issues impacting the Mobile area and is returning to the community with hopes of promoting healthy lifestyle habits. She also is looking forward to sharing with residents how rewarding a career in pediatric endocrinology can be.

Perez is a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Endocrine Society and the Pediatric Endocrine Society. She is fluent in Spanish and English.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at [11:55 AM](#) No comments: 

Mark your calendar for upcoming grand rounds

Orthopaedic Surgery Grand Rounds

"Imaging Characteristics of Musculoskeletal Tumors"

Derek Hansen, M.D., New York Presbyterian - Weill Cornell Medical Center
Friday, Oct. 29, at 7 a.m.

Zoom: <https://usahealthsystem.zoom.us/j/91854409584>

Contact: Rhonda Smith at (251) 665-8251 or
rhondasmith@health.southalabama.edu

OB-GYN Grand Rounds

"Promoting Professionalism"

Samuel McQuiston, M.D., associate professor of radiology, radiology residency program director, USA College of Medicine

Friday, Oct. 29, at 7:30 a.m.

Zoom registration:

https://southalabama.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwrcOyprTiiHNzEXgarNapK_VhLZDLeljL8o

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

Cardiology Grand Rounds

"Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy"

Bassam Omar, M.D., professor of internal medicine - cardiology, USA College of Medicine

Friday, Oct. 29, at 11:30 a.m.

Zoom registration:

<https://usahealthsystem.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJApceGsrzMsHt2gFsBT02ShnccVZpx-dS3->

Contact: Donna Gregory at (251) 332-3885 or
dgregory@health.southalabama.edu



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Neurology Grand Rounds

"Review of Genetic Stroke Syndromes"

Shant Afarian, M.D., PGY-4 neurology resident, USA Health

Tuesday, Nov. 2, at 8 a.m.

Zoom registration: <https://usahealthsystem.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUvcu-grDksHNRctLTeHvBRjItO2DsSEps3>

Contact: Tommye Mangrum at (251) 445-8292 or tmangrum@health.southalabama.edu

Mental Health Grand Rounds

"Why Can't I Just Do My Job? Negotiation Conflict-Handling Skills at Work"

Jeanne Maes, Ph.D., professor, Mitchell College of Business

Wednesday, Nov. 3, at 8 a.m.

Zoom registration: <https://southalabama.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcsf-isqjMiHtyYx3UlyuC-50kwlSE7ai2f>

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

Pediatric Grand Rounds

"Safe Sleep CW Champion Training"

Sherrinekia Fairley, manager, performance improvement, USA Health

Friday, Nov. 4, at 8 a.m.

NICU Conference Room

Contact: Sherrinekia Fairley at (251) 415-8728 or slfairley@health.southalabama.edu

Surgery Grand Rounds

"Updates for Safe Opioid Use in the Medical/Surgical Patient"


Elizabeth VandeWaa, Ph.D., professor, adult health nursing, USA College of Nursing

Friday, Nov. 5, at 7 a.m.

Zoom: <https://southalabama.zoom.us/j/96457019824>

Contact: Tyronda Rogers at 251-471-7992 or tmrogers@health.southalabama.edu

See the full schedule of grand rounds on CME tracker.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at 11:52 AM No comments: 

Wednesday, October 27, 2021

Meet a Med Student: Troupe Grimes

Troupe Grimes

Age: 25

Class of: 2024

Hometown: Monroeville, Ala.

Undergrad/grad institution: The University of Alabama

Degrees earned: Bachelor of Science in biology, Master of Science in population health sciences

Interests, hobbies: Playing tennis, reading and tutoring

Something unique about me: Vacuuming is my form of stress relief.


Three of my favorite things: Chocolate chip cookies, family and tennis

What I enjoy most about being a student at the USA College of Medicine:

USA COM faculty, staff and clinical preceptors are readily accessible to students and encourage interaction. As a result, I've developed meaningful personal and professional relationships, which have benefitted my growth and development as a medical student.





Posted by Med School Watercooler at [12:44 PM](#) No comments: 

Faculty Spotlight: Jin H. Kim, D.V.M, Ph.D.

Jin H. Kim, D.V.M, Ph.D.

Academic title: Assistant professor of microbiology and immunology

Joined the USA College of Medicine faculty: September 2017

What does your position in the USA COM entail?

I am building up a research program in virology. My lab is particularly interested in influenza virus, HIV and COVID-19.

What is your favorite or most rewarding part of your position?

The most rewarding part is having a successful experiment out of myriad failures and getting to know new ideas that have not been tested yet.



What research initiatives are you involved in?

- Influenza viruses can mix their genetic materials and make a brand new one. An example of such a case was the last 2010 swine flu pandemic. I'm interested in understanding how they can do this. Then, my ultimate goal is to develop an antiviral drug to block it. I envision that influenza viruses are less likely to tolerate and resist such a target.
- A bioluminescent influenza virus was generated recently in my lab. It allows us to trace where the virus grows in real-time mode in animal models. So, I will utilize it for pathological and immunological research. Ultimately, I will apply it for translational research for developing a universal influenza vaccine.
- Among the COVID-19 patients, about 30-40 percent of people didn't even know they caught COVID-19, but they were still spreading virus. These cases are called asymptomatic infections. We don't know why it happened yet. In my lab, I am investigating the mechanism behind it.


What is your advice for medical and graduate students?

The current COVID-19 pandemic reminds us how critical it is to control and prevent infectious diseases. Previous influenza pandemics also urge vigilance concerning infectious diseases. For example, although flu vaccine and antiviral drugs are available, seasonal flu vaccine effectiveness range averages 50 percent, and recurring drug-resistant strains highlight the demand for improving countermeasures for public health. I encourage you to look around for research opportunities and get involved in saving more lives.

What are your hobbies/interests outside of work?

I love skiing, but I can't find snow around here. I have a fishing kayak. I enjoy saltwater fishing, though I'm not a good fisherman yet.



Posted by Med School Watercooler at 12:43 PM No comments: 


USA Foundation approves \$30 million for College of Medicine renovation and expansion

The USA Foundation Board has approved \$30 million to the University of South Alabama for the renovation and expansion of the College of Medicine.



"We are extremely grateful to the USA Foundation for its commitment to the future of the University of South Alabama College of Medicine," said John Marymont, M.D., M.B.A., vice president for medical affairs and dean of the College of Medicine. "This \$30 million, combined with the \$50 million in funding provided by Gov. Kay Ivey and the state of Alabama, will allow us to construct a world-class facility that matches the quality of education provided by our faculty and the discoveries made by our researchers."

"All of us at the University of South Alabama are thankful to the USA Foundation for this generous support," said John Smith, interim president of the University of South Alabama. "This support, and that of Gov. Ivey and the state of Alabama, are investments in the well-being of all Alabamians."

Posted by Med School Watercooler at 12:39 PM No comments: 

Tuesday, October 26, 2021

Fields featured on Cancering Show podcast



For Phillip Fields, Ph.D., professor of anatomy at the USA College of Medicine, giving up running after his diagnosis with leukemia was not an option.

"When I'm out there running, even though it can be stressful, I feel like I'm staying ahead of the cancer," said Fields, who shared his

story recently on the Cancering Show podcast.

In episode 23, Fields talks with Cancering Show host Jennifer Young Pierce, M.D., M.P.H., about his cancer journey and about his memoir, "The Long Road Back to Boston: Marathon Running with Leukemia."


"An important aspect of the book is having that passion and allowing that passion to help you through difficult times," Fields said.

Following his diagnosis, Fields decided to run a marathon in every state and the District of Columbia between 2009 and December 2012, he told Pierce. Once that goal of 51 marathons in 47 months was accomplished, he set other goals – races in all Canadian provinces and then back to the U.S. to do the states a second time.

On the podcast, he relates how he refused to allow chronic lymphocytic leukemia to dictate his life and tells the story of his triumphant return to the Boston Marathon.

Fields also offers words of advice for other cancer survivors. "A cancer diagnosis is not the end of life. It's only the beginning," he said. "Find what your passion is that can help you through your hard times. It may be gardening. It could be reading or watching a sunset or sunrise – whatever you find that is enjoyable."

Fields is donating all royalties from the sale of his book to pediatric oncology, including at USA Health Children's & Women's Hospital. His book can be found on [Amazon](#) and [BookBaby](#).

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