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# Med School Watercooler

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

Thursday, January 27, 2022

## USA Center for Healthy Communities partnership develops advocates for community well-being

The USA College of Medicine's Center for Healthy Communities and the Mobile County Health Department have partnered to implement a Mobile County Community Health Worker Coalition, which aims to increase the number of community health workers who will help fight COVID-19 health disparities.



The partnership formed in response to a \$300 million national initiative by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to fund organizations that could bolster local community health worker capacity.

Community health workers support their peers in navigating negative social determinants of health experienced in underserved communities. An infusion of more community health workers would broaden the work of the Center for Healthy Communities' Community Health Advocates Program, which helps residents understand the healthcare system by providing individual assistance, outreach and education.

"Community health workers transcend real and perceived barriers and are said to have one foot in the community and the other in the health system," said Errol Crook, M.D., director of the Center for Healthy Communities and principal investigator. "They teach and advocate for the best health of their communities and can help individuals navigate the complexities of today's health systems."



The Mobile County Health Department, which also makes strides for community well-being, was aware of the Community Health Advocates Program at USA and believed their mission of creating healthier communities could be better accomplished together.

"To have a valued partnership with the region's most comprehensive healthcare organization and only academic health system helps build upon our vision of a healthy, safe and educated community," said Tokie Dunn, director of Community Prevention Programs at the Mobile County Health Department. "This important grant initiative will benefit the community on many levels from addressing health disparities to linking individuals to care and will have the capacity to be sustained for years to come."

Positions for community health workers will be posted on [USA's human resources page](#).

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As the COVID-19 pandemic rages throughout the world, the CDC saw a need for community health workers to join its COVID Response and Resilient Communities initiative.

The grant will fund 14 community health workers annually. The Center for Healthy Communities and the Mobile County Health Department, in partnership with USA Health, will host two workers each and other workers will operate within various community-based organizations located where COVID-19 disparities are most prevalent.

Leaders from the Center for Healthy Communities include Crook; Martha Arrieta, M.D., Ph.D., director of research for the Center for Healthy Communities; Roma Hanks, Ph.D., director of the Center for Healthy Communities' Community Health Advocates Program and professor and department chair in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work. In addition, Valerie Bryan, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work, will direct the project's evaluation unit.

The Center for Healthy Communities is the lead entity within the University of South Alabama for coordinating community education, research, public service and health activities. The center helps eliminate health disparities, fosters access to healthcare for underserved populations, and enhances the capacity of individuals to better make decisions about their health.

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## Faculty and alumni to perform in Doc Rock fundraising event

Three of the five bands selected to perform at USA Health's Doc Rock have USA College of Medicine faculty and alumni representation:

- John Hunter, M.D., assistant professor of surgery and a colorectal surgeon; Rachel Hunter, M.D., assistant professor of surgery and a breast surgical oncologist; and Johnson Hardy, M.D., a surgery resident and member of the Class of 2018, will perform with Dr. John and the Burning Sensations. They are raising funds for the Mitchell Cancer Institute.
- Reid McClenny, M.D., a member of the Class of 2021, and fellow internal medicine residents formed the band RL6. They are raising funds for University Hospital.
- Kai Rodning, M.D., a member of the Class of 2005, is medical director of anesthesiology at University Hospital. He will perform with his band Bearhead to raise funds for University Hospital.



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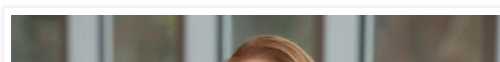
Doc Rock is a "battle of the bands" event in which at least one member of each band has an affiliation with USA Health or the USA College of Medicine. The fundraiser benefits research and critical clinical needs at University Hospital, Children's & Women's Hospital and the Mitchell Cancer Institute.

Join us for this inaugural event on Thursday, March 31, at the Soul Kitchen in downtown Mobile. Vote for your favorite band and buy tickets at [www.usahealthsystem.com/doc-rock](http://www.usahealthsystem.com/doc-rock).

Wednesday, January 26, 2022

## USA College of Medicine alumna returns to USA Health as otolaryngologist

USA Health is expanding with the return of a USA College of



Medicine alumna, Tiffany Baugh, M.D. Baugh is an otolaryngologist who sees pediatric and adult patients with ear, nose and throat diseases at USA Health Midtown.

Baugh's decision to return to the region's only academic health system is rooted in the positive experience she had as a medical student and a desire to see the College of Medicine continue to grow: "I received a great education at USA, and I wanted to expand the otolaryngology experience of the medical students as well as provide care for the community around us."

The conditions that otolaryngologists treat range from dizziness and balance issues to tumors found in the head and neck. Baugh will provide general otolaryngology care to patients along the Gulf Coast.

"I enjoy working with both children and adults," she said. "Otolaryngology allows me to see patients from every stage of life. We are required to have a diverse skill set, and I was attracted to the range of diseases that otolaryngologists treated."

Baugh is from Florence, Ala., and attended Vanderbilt University, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in human and organizational development in 2008. She earned her medical degree from the USA College of Medicine in 2013 and completed residency training in otolaryngology at the University of Missouri in 2018.

Baugh is accepting new patients at USA Health Midtown. To schedule an appointment, call 251-341-4094.

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## Meet a Med Student: Arcole Brandon

### **Arcole Brandon**

**Age:** 23

**Class of:** 2024

**Hometown:** Fairhope, Ala.

**Undergrad/grad institution:** Auburn University

**Degrees earned:** Bachelor of Science in biomedical sciences with a concentration in pre-medicine

**Interests, hobbies:** Exercising, going to the beach, traveling, listening to music and anything else outdoors.

**Something unique about me:** I never had flown on a plane until I was 20. I previously held my high school's discus throw record. I had about 30 pet ducks as a kid.

**Three of my favorite things:** Going on trips with my girlfriend, grilling out with friends, and going to Auburn football games.

**What I enjoy most about being a student at the USA College of Medicine:** I enjoy being around all of my classmates who make being a med student fun, and I also appreciate all of the professors who dedicate so much time to ensuring we have a great foundation for our future careers as physicians.





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