

Med School Watercooler

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

Thursday, March 31, 2022

Meet a Ph.D. Student: Griffin Wright

Featuring students in the Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program at the USA College of Medicine

Griffin Wright

Age: 26

Hometown: Trussville, Ala.

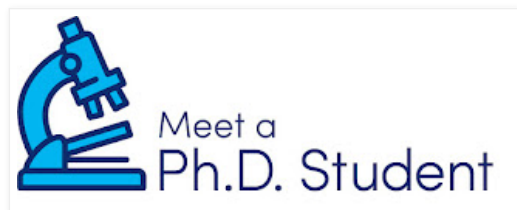
Undergraduate/graduate institutions and degrees earned:
Auburn University, Bachelor of Science in animal sciences

BMS program track and year of study: Cancer Biology, fourth year

What research are you involved in? I research transcriptional dysregulation of DNA repair proteins in cancer.

What do you enjoy most about being a doctoral student at the USA College of Medicine? The community. I enjoy the faculty and my classmates.

What are your interests and hobbies outside of school and work? Woodworking and playing with my dogs, Benny and Toulouse.



Wednesday, March 30, 2022

Interest group plans National Public Health Week events

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Got news to share?

Feel free to email your ideas to lalyle@health.southalabama.edu

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The American Public Health Association will host National Public Health Week on April 4-10. The 2022 theme is "Public Health Is Where You Are," and each day of the week will focus on a particular public health topic.

Every year, the USA College of Medicine's Public Health Interest Group (PHIG) plans events and activities around these themes. This year, the interest group is partnering with several organizations, including the USA Office of Diversity and Inclusion, AIDS Alabama South, Mobile Baykeeper, and Braided River Brewing Company.

Monday, April 4

Racism: A Public Health Crisis

PHIG, in conjunction with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, will host a panel on racism in healthcare and how it affects patients at 6 p.m. in the M2 auditorium and over Zoom. We invite you all to come join us for food and to engage in a discussion with four USA Health physicians: Johnson Haynes, M.D.; Maria Roca, M.D.; Phillip Almalouf, M.D.; and Myria Mack-Williams, M.D.

Zoom: <https://southalabama.zoom.us/j/99399831573>

Link for Anonymous Questions: <https://bit.ly/3JSJnAZ>

Tuesday, April 5

Public Health Workforce: Essential to our Future

Securing funding for public health infrastructure is critical to improving population health at a community and national level. Check out our [Facebook page](#) on Tuesday for an easy way to submit a letter to your congressman and advocate for public health funding. We also will share information about the recently appointed Mobile County public health officer, USA College of Medicine graduate Kevin P. Michaels, M.D., M.P.H.

Wednesday, April 6

Community: Collaboration and Resilience

Help Jag Pantry sort through donated food items to battle food insecurity at South Alabama.

Thursday, April 7

World Health Day: Health is a Human Right

Nearly half of the world's population is unable to access basic health services, such as seeing a doctor or getting vaccinated. PHIG will highlight three resources in our community on our [Facebook page](#) for those with poor access to care. Medical students can use these resources when seeing patients in clinic.

Friday, April 8

Accessibility: Closing the Health Equity Gap

PHIG is partnering with AIDS Alabama South to offer HIV/Hep-C testing, HRT consultations, and other services to the local transgender community. The event will be from 4 to 9 p.m. during the downtown LODA Artwalk. Four service learning hours are available for those who participate.

Saturday, April 9

Climate Change: Taking Action for Equity

Join PHIG as we partner with Mobile Baykeeper and Braided River Brewing Company for a night of climate-change-based trivia. Come by Braided River from 7 to 9 p.m. to support Mobile Baykeeper and win some prizes.

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Sunday, April 10

Mental Wellness: Redefining the Meaning of Health

Join us for a relaxing night of yoga at the Student Rec Center at 6 p.m. to close out NPHW. Namaste!

Tuesday, March 29, 2022

Give to the MAA Endowed Scholarship Fund on USA Giving Day

The USA Medical Alumni Association will match gifts to the MAA Endowed Scholarship Fund dollar-for-dollar up to \$5,000 on USA Giving Day on Wednesday, April 6.

The MAA Endowed Scholarship Fund is an investment made by the alumni association where the annual earnings provide tuition assistance for those students who have demonstrated high levels of scholastic excellence and commitment to the practice and study of medicine.



Together, we can make a \$10,000 impact on USA Giving Day. Visit southalabama.edu/givingday and select the MAA Endowed Scholarship.

USA announces new graduate program in biomedical sciences



The Department of Biomedical Sciences is pleased to announce a new, one-year Master of Science degree program. Students with bachelor degrees in biomedical sciences or other related STEM disciplines are encouraged to apply.

It is especially ideal for students who either are considering a gap year before applying to a professional health program, such as medicine, physician assistant or pharmacy, or for students who may be interested in a biomedical research career, but are unsure about committing to a longer graduate program, such as a Ph.D.

For more information, visit the [Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences](#) page or contact Brad Swiger, Ph.D., graduate program coordinator, at bswiger@southalabama.edu.

Monday, March 28, 2022

Medical student finds nonprofit devoted to vision care

Third-year medical student Donovan Dahmer was inspired by scripture to create an organization aimed at helping people better understand the importance of vision care. The quote was from the Book of Luke in the New Testament of the Bible: "Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light; but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness."

The Lamp Project is a nonprofit organization founded in 2021 dedicated to the education and awareness of eye diseases in communities that are disproportionately affected by such illnesses.

Currently, eye diseases are among the top 10 causes of disability in the United States with African American communities being one of the most deeply impacted. Dahmer, who is the founder and president of the foundation, said that after multiple members of his family were diagnosed with eye diseases, he decided to combine his faith, love of people and his passion for eye care to create The Lamp Project.

"Vision is precious and taken for granted all the time," Dahmer said. "Most do not expect to lose it; therefore, it can be devastating for patients to learn that they are at risk."

Dahmer's website offers information on the most common eye diseases and how to prevent them. While there are genetic variables that can make a person more likely to have any of these diseases, there are other causes that can be prevented by early intervention eye exams.

"My hope is that by equipping individuals with the basic knowledge of protecting their eye health, they are able to make informed decisions in the future to protect their vision long-term," Dahmer said.

He hopes this project will educate and begin to assist in building trust between minority communities and those who practice medicine. For more information, visit www.thelampproject.org.



