

Med School Watercooler

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

Thursday, November 3, 2022

Alumna welcomes patients to new pediatrics clinic on Eastern Shore



This week, USA Health Pediatrics welcomed its first patient at the newly established clinic located in Spanish Fort. The space, which is also home to a number of USA Health OB-GYN providers, is conveniently housed at the Eastern Shore Centre.

Perrin Windham, M.D., a 2019 alumna of the Frederick P. Whiddon College of Medicine, is a pediatrician at the new clinic.

A native of Baldwin County, Windham said she is excited to help fill the healthcare gap and give back to both the community and institution that were integral to her becoming a physician. "I was born in Fairhope and lived in Daphne until I left for college," she said. "When I started medical school, I thought I wanted to become an oncologist. However, after completing my clinical rotations, I soon realized that pediatrics was where I found the most enjoyment and fulfillment. I found that partnering with parents to give their children the best life possible is really rewarding. Getting to watch children grow and reach their milestones is unlike anything else!"

In 2018, Windham was selected as one of three Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama scholarship recipients – an initiative aimed at expanding access to quality healthcare for all Alabamians. Recipients of the scholarship commit to practicing as a primary care physician for a minimum of three years in a medically under-served area of Alabama.

Windham completed her pediatric residency training at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga/Erlanger, where she served as a resident educator to medical students, visiting junior interns and fellow residents. "We enjoyed our time in the mountains of Chattanooga but are so excited to be back in Baldwin County," she said.

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Windham and her husband, Brandon, married last year at the History Museum of Mobile. They have an energetic Australian Shepherd named Milo and three cats, Rou, Alice and Lily. In her free time, Windham enjoys traveling, playing with her animals, cooking and working on do-it-yourself projects with her husband, and spending time with family and friends.

Windham is accepting new patients at USA Health Pediatrics, located at 30500 Highway 181, Suite 200, in Spanish Fort. To make an appointment, call 251-410-5437.

Help us celebrate 50 years of medical education

The USA Medical Alumni Association is calling all alumni, past and current faculty and staff, and past and current residents to help us celebrate 50 years of medical education by creating a page in our 50th anniversary celebration book: <https://southalabama.brightcrowd.com/maa-50th/>

Also, nominate someone who you think is deserving to be named one of our 50 people of influence. We will be honoring alumni, past and present faculty and staff, and friends of the Frederick P. Whiddon College of Medicine for the impact they have made on the college! Fill out the nomination form: <https://forms.gle/HrA7tKsL9t2W59J16>

See an example of a Brightcrowd page in the 50th anniversary celebration book below:

USA Whiddon College of Medicine - 50th Anniversary

My PageDirectoryPhotos

Hala Ali Ibrahim

Pediatric Urgent Care Attending at Harvard Vanguard.
Living in Boston, MA.

Education

University of South Alabama, BS '15
University of South Alabama College of Medicine, MD '19

Partner/Spouse

Awab Ali Ibrahim

Where do you have experience/specialty?

Healthcare, Pediatrics

My journey...

Hala (Al-Safarjalani) Ali Ibrahim

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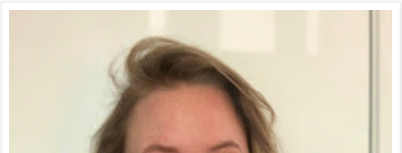
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Meet a Med Student: Natalie Simpkins

Natalie Simpkins

Age: 23

Class of: 2025



Hometown: Opelika, Alabama

Undergraduate institution and degree earned: University of Alabama at Birmingham, Bachelor of Science in neuroscience

What do you enjoy most about being a medical student at the Whiddon College of Medicine?

The people. Everyone is so kind and so supportive of any endeavor I may have conjured up that day.

Are you involved in any research, organizations or other initiatives at the College of Medicine?

I'm a part of the Primary Care Pathway program and did quality improvement research on colorectal cancer. I'm the founder and president of the Family Planning and Reproductive Health Interest Group.

What are your interests and hobbies?

I love playing volleyball, watching anything surrounding Game of Thrones, and listening to audiobooks.

What is something unique about you?

I do nails!



Wednesday, November 2, 2022

Borchert named 2022 Scholar of the Year by Phi Kappa Phi chapter



The University of South Alabama Chapter of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi named Glen Borchert, Ph.D., associate professor of pharmacology at the Frederick P. Whiddon College of Medicine, the 2022 Scholar of the Year. He was presented the award at the Phi Kappa Phi new member initiation ceremony on Tuesday, Nov. 1, in the Student Center Ballroom.

Borchert earned his Ph.D. in genetics from the University of Iowa and completed two post-doctoral research appointments in internationally renowned labs investigating structural aspects of microRNAs. With a dual appointment in the department of biology, he joined the faculty at the University of South Alabama in 2012.

Since his appointment at USA, Borchert has published 60 scientific papers in well-regarded journals and has had numerous external grants awarded, totaling more than \$2.7 million. In August, he was awarded two National Science Foundation grants – one for \$1 million to study *Salmonella* survival during cellular stress and the other for \$425,000 to study the role of enhancer DNA sequences in gene expression. Borchert's work in noncoding RNAs and in G-quadruplex (G4) structures has been recognized at national levels with several prestigious awards. In 2015 he was conferred NSF's Genetics Mechanisms Career Award; and this year, he was an invited member of the NSF Ideas Lab, a select group of expert participants in a think tank advancing research ideas focused on noncoding RNAs.

In addition to his achievements in the lab, Borchert has demonstrated teaching excellence and generous mentoring. He has been selected by students for Mortar

Board's Top Prof recognition four times. Borchert has engaged with undergraduate researchers annually, and several members of his lab have been recognized. His student mentees have won thesis awards, undergraduate research awards, and Goldwater Scholar funding.

Clinical education coordinator recalls long recovery after accident



LaToya Gamble doesn't remember much about the night in 2013 when she almost lost her life.

She recalls waking up in University Hospital to the news that she had been in a terrible car accident. "The doctor came in and said, 'You sustained a lot of injuries that most people wouldn't make it through,'" said Gamble, who recently became the clinical education coordinator at the Frederick P. Whiddon College of Medicine.

Gamble works with medical students as they complete their clinical rotations during their third and fourth years of medical school. Her office is located in the Mastin Building, next door to the hospital that saved her life. "I'm happy to be a part of these students' lives who are going out and being great," she said.

On the night of the accident, she had been riding with her then-boyfriend in his burgundy Corvette when he lost control of the car, slamming into a parked vehicle at an auto dealership. The passenger side – and Gamble's body – took the brunt of the impact.

She sustained eight broken ribs, a broken pelvis, a skull fracture and damage to her spinal cord, and was placed in a medically induced coma for two weeks.

"There are two plates and four screws holding my pelvis together," Gamble said. "My parents were told I'd be bedridden."

At the time of the accident, she was employed in the payroll department at the University of South Alabama and had just re-enrolled in courses to work toward an MBA. But that dream had to be put on hold.

"I moved back in with my parents," she said. "I couldn't get around or go anywhere. It was kind of depressing at times."

Confined to a wheelchair and unable to move one of her legs, Gamble began the slow process of rehab. Occupational therapists came to the house to teach her ways to function more independently. She didn't realize at the time that few people expected her to walk again.

"In my mind, I thought, 'I'll get out of this wheelchair,'" she recalled. "But one day we were watching TV, and my leg jumped. I moved it again to make sure, and my mom was so shocked."

It wasn't long before she was defying the odds and was on her way to walking. In 2016, she earned her MBA from Columbia Southern University. Although she had to have surgery on her wrist and still suffers from chronic pain, she is grateful for her recovery.

"I don't take any credit for getting better," she said. "I give all the glory to God."

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