

Med School Watercooler

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

Friday, February 3, 2023

Kognito training offered for faculty and staff

Kognito At-Risk for Faculty and Staff is an interactive role-play simulation that builds awareness, knowledge and skills about mental health and suicide prevention. The training prepares users to lead real-life conversations with students that build resilience, strengthen relationships and connect them with support.



Binata Mukherjee, M.D., M.B.A., assistant dean of faculty and professional development at the Frederick P. Whiddon College of Medicine, completed the training. "Kognito provides simple tools for providing a psychologically safe space for learners, especially those who may have mental health concerns. The simulations are well done and easy to learn," said Mukherjee, who also is an associate professor of internal medicine.

[Watch this video](#) for more information on Kognito training.

Several training sessions will be offered:

Innovation in Learning Center

Multipurpose Room

Wednesday, Feb. 15, 9 to 10:30 a.m.

or

Thursday, Feb. 16, 2:30 to 4 p.m.

[Register for one of the on-campus training sessions hosted by the ILC.](#)

Strada Patient Care Center

First-Floor Conference Room

Tuesday, March 14, noon to 2 p.m.

Lunch to be provided at noon

1.5 CME credits offered

Registration limited to 25 participants

[Register for the session hosted by Dr. Binata Mukherjee.](#)

Rogers selected as at-large member of the Association of Residency Administrators in Surgery

Tyronda Rogers recently was selected as one of three in the nation to serve as an at-large member of the Association of Residency Administrators (ARAS), the first position of its kind in the organization's history. Rogers serves as a program coordinator for the general surgery residency and critical care fellowship at the Frederick P. Whiddon College of Medicine.



"I am so grateful to be selected to serve in this position," Rogers said. "My goal is to be supportive of other incoming coordinators and bring sound, merited recognition to our general surgery and fellowship program at the Whiddon College of Medicine."

In this role, Rogers is responsible for coordinating town hall meetings with the executive committee of ARAS, establishing relationships with administrators in the region, and providing reports to the organization as a whole.

Brianne Nickel, president of ARAS, said, "We were enthusiastic to see Tyronda's application to the position. She was highly recommended, and we look forward to seeing her contributions to our organization."

Thursday, February 2, 2023

Four medical students match in military residency programs



Four fourth-year students at the Frederick P. Whiddon College of Medicine – Meg Lyons, Jesse Stutzman, Mary Vansant and Alexander Williams – recently matched in early match residency programs in the military.

The majority of medical students go through the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) to find out where they will be doing their residency training following graduation, but students who wish to match in the military participate in a specialty match program that takes place months before Match Day in March.

Lyons was originally drawn to joining the military as a way to "pay it forward" to the multitude of people in her life who were in the military. "Each person went above and beyond to invest in me even when they didn't have to, and I want to be able to help others in the same way," she said.

Lyons is a second-generation physician in her family. Her dad serves as a physician in the U.S. Air Force. Through the U.S. Army, she matched in

orthopaedic surgery at Eisenhower Army Medical Center at Fort Gordon in Augusta, Georgia. She looks forward to being a part of a small, personal program and working with the team.

Though he has always been interested in serving in the military, Stutzman didn't think it was possible to join due to his career goals of working in medical missions. Growing up in war-torn Burma, Stutzman saw firsthand the need for physicians in areas of conflict and gained a passion to serve overseas as a physician. It wasn't until after speaking with U.S. Air Force physicians that he realized he could be in the military and meet his long-term goals.

Stutzman is a first-generation military member and serves with the U.S. Air Force. He matched in the family medicine residency program at Fort Belvoir Community Hospital in the greater metro Washington, D.C., area. "While the program is fantastic, I'm also excited to be closer to family," he said.

Vansant, a native of Auburn, Alabama, has wanted to join the military since she was in middle school. "When I was accepted into medical school, I was excited I had the opportunity to pursue a military career and applied for the military scholarship program," she said. She pursued her dream and joined the U.S. Navy.

Vansant matched in the internal medicine residency program at the Naval Medical Center San Diego in California. During a rotation at the Naval Medical Center, she found the hospital to be a great learning environment in a great location. She is looking forward to living in San Diego and experiencing all of the outdoor activities the city has to offer.

During Honors Convocation in May, Lyons, Stutzman, Vansant and Williams will take the military oath of office and receive their new military rank, coinciding with completion of their medical degrees.

The remainder of the Whiddon College of Medicine Class of 2023 will find out where they matched on Match Day, March 17. The event will take place at the Mobile Convention Center in downtown Mobile.

Faculty grand rounds to focus on 'Design Thinking Methodology in Action'

The Whiddon College of Medicine's Office of Faculty Affairs and Faculty Development continues Faculty Fridays: Faculty Development Grand Rounds.

Kristen Noles, M.S.N., D.N.P., performance improvement manager at USA Health, will present "Design Thinking Methodology in Action" at noon Friday, Feb. 10, via Zoom.

[Register for the Zoom meeting.](#)



Wednesday, February 1, 2023

Sternberg appointed to local medical leadership positions

Michael Sternberg, M.D., recently was appointed to two medical leadership positions in Mobile. He is an emergency medicine physician at USA Health University Hospital and serves as a professor and director of medical education in the department of emergency medicine at the Frederick P. Whiddon College of Medicine.



Sternberg was elected chairman of the Mobile County Board of Health, which meets monthly to review Mobile County Health Department activities and to provide guidance to Alabama's oldest public health agency.

He also was appointed vice president of the Mobile County Medical Society, of which he has been a member since 1992. Comprising physicians practicing medicine in Mobile County, the society's purpose is to promote and develop the science of medicine, conserve and protect public health, and promote the betterment of the medical profession.

"It is an honor to serve alongside the most dedicated physicians in Mobile. I think it is important for physicians to get involved in medical societies to promote quality care for our patients," said Sternberg, who has held positions in the Medical Association of the State of Alabama and is a past president and long-term board member of the Alabama chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians.

"Congrats to Dr. Sternberg for these important local positions that reflect both respect for him as a prominent local physician and his extensive history of service to our professional community," said Edward A. Panacek, M.D., M.P.H., professor and chair of emergency medicine at the Whiddon College of Medicine.

Sternberg earned his medical degree from the Louisiana State University School of Medicine in New Orleans. He completed residency training at USA before joining the emergency medicine faculty at the Whiddon College of Medicine in 1992. He is board certified in emergency medicine and internal medicine.

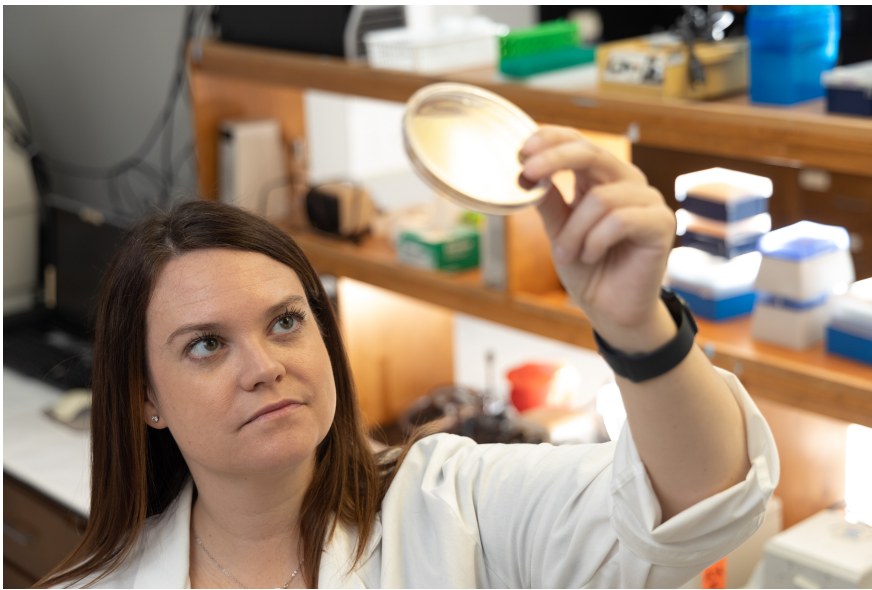
Tuesday, January 31, 2023

Watch video: USA Milestones

As we approach the University of South Alabama's 60th anniversary, we celebrate our milestones and are reminded of the many individuals – students, faculty, staff, alumni and donors – who have helped us fulfill our mission of promoting discovery, health and learning. As we move forward, we will build on our past success to strengthen South as the Flagship of the Gulf Coast.

Monday, January 30, 2023

Shea joins department of microbiology and immunology



A lifelong interest in science led Allyson E. Shea, Ph.D., to study marine science before switching gears to pursue a doctoral degree in biomedical sciences. Shea recently joined the Frederick P. Whiddon College of Medicine, where she will further her research into the pathogens associated with urinary tract infections (UTIs), one of the most common types of infections worldwide.

Urinary tract infections occur when microbes such as bacteria from the skin or rectum infect the urethra, then ascend to the bladder and/or kidneys. If left untreated, a UTI can lead to sepsis, a life-threatening condition.

“Half of all women will have at least one UTI by the age of 35,” said Shea, an assistant professor in the department of microbiology and immunology. “Bacterial resistance to antibiotics is becoming a problem, so we have to find new strategies for tackling UTIs.”

Women are more likely to develop urinary tract infections because their urethra is shorter, making it easier for bacteria to reach the bladder.

“Dr. Shea brings to our university a distinct but complementary area of research in a field with a recognized need for advancement of scientific knowledge,” said Kevin R. Macaluso, Ph.D., professor and Locke Distinguished Chair of Microbiology and Immunology at the Whiddon College of Medicine.

Shea works primarily with Uropathogenic *E. coli*, which causes the majority of UTIs. “We delete genes in the bacteria with the hopes of decreasing their ability to colonize the host and cause infection,” she said. “Using a mouse model, we assess the bacterial pathogenesis mechanisms and how the bladder and kidney cells respond to the bacteria.”

She also examines protein signaling pathways in host urinary tract cells to identify which are important for the spread of infection. Such research could ultimately lead to new treatments for UTIs.

Shea said she was attracted to the Whiddon College of Medicine by the department’s capability to conduct single-cell sorting and gene expression analyses, and the expertise in that field held by researcher Robert A. Barrington, Ph.D., who has more than 20 years of experience in flow cytometry.

This technology will provide new, and more detailed, insight into the host cell’s reaction to bacterial infection. “We will be able to measure the unique response of each individual cell type in the urinary tract,” Shea said. “This is particularly interesting in complex organs, such as the kidneys, which consist of multiple unique epithelial cell types.”

Shea earned her doctoral degree in biomedical sciences at the University of Florida, with an emphasis in cellular and molecular biology. She then completed

her postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Michigan under Harry Mobley, Ph.D., an expert in Gram-negative bacterial pathogenesis research. "Now, the goal is a combination of the two – looking at both the host and bacterial response in urinary tract infections, to understand mechanisms at the host-pathogen interface," she said.