

# Med School Watercooler

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

Thursday, April 4, 2024

## Medical students explore career paths at mixer



Medical students participate in speed-interview-style rotations with physicians at the MAA Student Career Exploration Mixer.

The USA Medical Alumni Association hosted more than 45 Whiddon College of Medicine students and 24 physicians, representing 18 unique specialties, at the MAA Student Career Exploration Mixer. The event, held for the first time since 2019, took place Tuesday, April 2, at the Strada Patient Care Center.

The mixer provided a valuable opportunity for Whiddon College of Medicine students to engage with medical alumni and area physicians, explore different career paths in medicine, and build meaningful connections. The evening featured speed-interview-style rotations as medical students visited physician tables representing a variety of medical specialties, as requested by the students.

Physicians who are interested in representing a specialty at the next mixer may email [medalum@southalabama.edu](mailto:medalum@southalabama.edu).

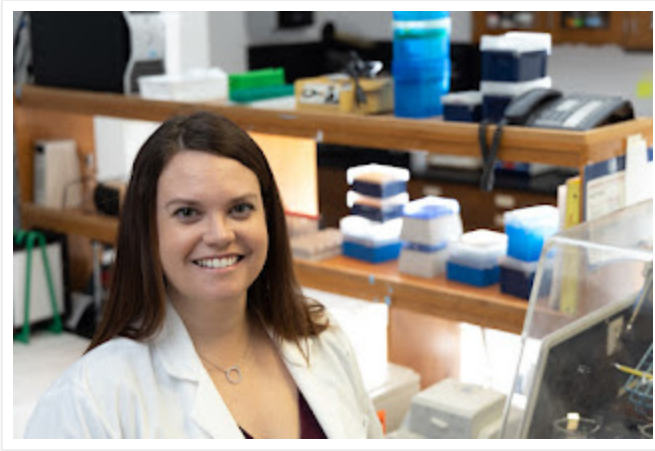


Posted by Med School Watercooler at 2:15 PM



## Shea receives early career award from national society

Allyson E. Shea, Ph.D., an assistant professor of microbiology and immunology at the Whiddon College of Medicine, recently received an award for early career branch members from the American Society for Microbiology (ASM).



The Peggy Cotter Awards for Early Career Branch Members are given to support attendance at the ASM's annual conference – Microbe 2024 – planned for June in Atlanta. They are named for ASM past president Peggy Cotter, Ph.D., who is known for her commitment to mentoring early career scientists.

"We're delighted Dr. Shea has been recognized with this early career award," said Kevin Macaluso, Ph.D., Locke Distinguished Chair in the Department of Microbiology, and Immunology. "Attending national conferences allows researchers to expand upon specific interests and share their exciting scientific data. Dr. Shea is also taking trainees to the conference, which is fitting for the award she is receiving."

Shea joined the Whiddon College of Medicine in 2023 as a faculty member of the Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program. Her laboratory's research focuses on urinary tract infections (UTI) – specifically, characterizing the nutrient exchange mechanisms at the host-pathogen interface during UTI.

She received bachelor's degrees in biological sciences and marine sciences from the University of South Carolina in Columbia, and her Ph.D. in molecular biology from the University of Florida. She conducted postdoctoral fellowship training at the University of Michigan that focused on the characterization of pathogen nutrient acquisition and transport systems required during urinary tract infection.

Established in 1899, the American Society for Microbiology is a group that connects more than 36,000 microbial scientist members from around the globe to foster learning, discovery, and preparation for the future. From climate change, antimicrobial resistance, industrial, basic, and applied microbiology, ASM is a leader in scientific publishing, stands for open science and advocates for evidence-based public policies.

Posted by Med School Watercooler at 2:00 PM



## Meet a Med Student: Paras Ahuja

**Paras Ahuja**

**Age:** 24

**Class:** 2027

**Hometown:** Birmingham, Alabama

**Undergraduate education:** B.S. in biomedical science, University of Alabama at Birmingham

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

I enjoy being amongst students who are so helpful, honest and dedicated to learning to help others.

Furthermore, one of the best things I have experienced is that the faculty and staff at South make this feel like home from the first day. I couldn't have asked for a

more welcoming place to be studying medicine amongst some of the best students from many different places.

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

I am part of the Surgery Interest Group and a volunteer at the Mobile Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. Additionally, I am planning to get involved in clinical research this summer.

**What are your interests and hobbies?**

My interests outside of medicine include spending time with my family during my time off and lifting weights. I am not a very big fellow, but I certainly enjoy having the opportunity to unwind with a workout.

**What is something unique about you?**

Something unique about me is that I have never drunk coffee, and something funny about me is that I get called ma'am very often over drive-thru intercoms since my voice is a bit less deep. :)



Posted by Med School Watercooler at [10:10 AM](#)



## Pathology research seminar to focus on metastatic ovarian cancer

Mythreye Karthikeyan, Ph.D., an associate professor of molecular and cellular pathology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and a member of the Cancer Cell Biology Program at the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center, is April's guest speaker for the Department of Pathology's Research Seminar Series.

She will present "At the Crossroads of Growth Factor Signaling and Stress

Response in Metastatic Ovarian Cancer” at noon on Thursday, April 11, in the Strada Patient Care Center conference room.

For more information, contact Patrick Carlisle at 251-471-7116 or [pcarlisle@health.southalabama.edu](mailto:pcarlisle@health.southalabama.edu).



Posted by Med School Watercooler at 9:55 AM 

## MAA kicks off membership campaign

All M.D., Ph.D., and resident alumni of the Whiddon College of Medicine and USA Health are invited to become members of the USA Medical Alumni Association. The MAA not only provides education and engagement for our alumni but also supports student scholarships and programming for the next generation of physicians.



New this year, alumni can become lifetime members for just \$200 annually for five years. Visit the membership page to learn more and become a member today: [www.southalabama.edu/colleges/com/alumni/membership.html](http://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/com/alumni/membership.html)