

**2000-2001
SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES
OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH**

I. ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN BOOKS AND JOURNALS

A. Full-length published articles.

R.M. Benjamin. Primary Care Medicine for the American Physician. Editorial Board. Br. Med. J. USA. (Monthly) (2001).

R.M. Benjamin. Editorial Advisory Board. Healthology. (2001).

R.M. Benjamin. Council Member. COGME 15th Report Council on Graduate Medical Education Financing Graduate Medical Education in a Changing Healthcare Environment. (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Council on Graduate Medical Education Resource Paper Compendium. Update on the Physician Workforce. (2000).

B. Articles in press.

None.

II. PUBLISHED ABSTRACTS

None.

III. BOOKS PUBLISHED

R.M. Benjamin. Collaborative Education to Ensure Patient Safety. Council on Graduate Medical Education and National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice. HRSA (2000).

IV. PRESENTATIONS

R.M. Benjamin. Keynote Presentation. Physicians for Human Rights West Coast Conference, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA (2001).

R.M. Benjamin. Plenary Speaker. All Aboard for Healthy Communities. Arkansas Public Health Assoc. 53rd Annu. Conv., Hot Springs, AR (2001).

R.M. Benjamin. Luncheon Presentation to Rural Medical Student Leadership Association. University of Arkansas Medical School, Little Rock, AR (2001).

R.M. Benjamin. Distinguished Lecturer Series. Arkansas Center for Health Improvement, Little Rock, AR (2001).

R.M. Benjamin Chair of AHEC Grant Review. HRSA Grant Application Peer Review, Rockville, MD (2001).

R.M. Benjamin. Plenary Speaker. Partnering in Communities to Reduce Health Disparities. Priester Extension Health Conf., Dallas, TX (2001).

R.M. Benjamin. Panel Participant. Federation State Medical Boards and Center for Substance Abuse Treatment Work Group, Dallas, TX (2001).

R.M. Benjamin. Feature and Interview Format. CNN Feature for Black History Month (2001)

R.M. Benjamin. Plenary and Breakout Session Speaker. Dartmouth COOP Clinical Improvement System Annual Meeting, Dix Notch, NH (2001)

R.M. Benjamin. Panel Participant. National Center for Bioethics In Research and Healthcare, Tuskegee, AL (2001).

R.M. Benjamin. Symposium Participant. Today's Vision, Tomorrow's Reality. Federation of State Licensing Boards, Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA (2001).

R.M. Benjamin Participant, Office of Advanced Telehealth. Annual Grantees Meeting, Rockville, MD (2001).

R.M. Benjamin. Feature Story and Interview. Medicine in the Bayou. Discovery Channel (2000)

R.M. Benjamin. Expert Panelist. Developing the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). Research Agenda on Low Income Populations, Rockville, MD (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Awardee Acceptance Speech. Year 2000 National Caring Award. The Frederick Douglas Museum and Hall of Fame for Caring Americans, Washington, DC (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Breakout Session, Rural Health Issues. Robert Wood Johnson Southern Rural Access Program Grantees Meeting, Charlotte, NC (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Participant, Institute of Medicine, Annual Meeting, Washington, DC (2000).

R.M. Benjamin, T.S. Trainor and D. Hicks. USA Telemedicine Presentation to Medical Staff. (1) Evergreen Medical Center, Evergreen, AL; and (2) DW McMillan Hospital, Brewton, AL (2001).

D. Hicks. Distance Learning: A Guide to Video Conferencing Training Workshop. (1) DW McMillan Hospital, Brewton, AL; (2) North Baldwin Hospital, Bay Minette, AL; (3) Thomas Hospital, Fairhope, AL; and (4) Thomasville Infirmary, Thomasville, AL (2001).

L. O'Connor and D. Hicks. USA Office of Rural Health Exhibit. MASA Annu. Mtg., Destin, FL (2001).

T.S. Trainor. The Electronic Radiology Department: Telemedicine – A Field of Dreams (If You Build It, Will They Come?). Gulf Coast Soc. Radiol. Technol., Mobile, AL (2000).

T.S. Trainor. Reducing Infant Mortality: Strategies that Work: Grant Writing Tips. Ala. State Perinatal Conf., Gulf Shores, AL (2001).

V. NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

Dr. Regina Benjamin, Associate Dean for Rural Health, received the following honors: Appointed by Governor Jeb Bush to Board of Trustees of Florida A&M University; Board of Trustees, Birmingham Southern University; President-Elect Medical Association State of AL; AL Board of Medical Examiners; State Committee of Public Health; and the Federation State Medical Licensing Boards; Member Board Physicians for Human Rights; Member Institute of Medicine, National Academies of Science; Member Council on Graduate Medical Education (COGME); Member United States Medical Licensing Exam Step 3 Committee; Commissioner, Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured; Member Governor's Task Force on Children's Health; Member National Advisory Committee Robert Wood Johnson Southern Rural Access Program; Member Advisory Committee, National Center for Bioethics, Tuskegee; Member Advisory Committee, UAB School of Public Health; Member Rural Medical Scholars Program Third-Year Review Team; University of Alabama School of Medicine; Also member of the boards of Mercy Medical; Catholic Health East; Leadership Alabama; and Alabama Primary Care Association.

VI. BRIEF SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS

The Office of Rural Health provides support for medical education and health delivery for Southern Alabama which includes medical education, health professions students, medical residency training, and continuing medical education. The Office of Rural Health also provides support for rural and/or isolated clinicians, patient access to health education, patient access to specialty care, and communities' access to the medical information resources of the USA Baugh Biomedical Library.

In pursuit of these activities, the Office of Rural Health managed and oversaw five grant programs during FY2000: (1) Alabama AHEC Program – \$1.3 million per year; [Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Bureau of Health Professions with approval for three-year grant period]; (2) USA Telemedicine – \$2.2 million [HRSA Office for the Advancement of Telehealth]; (3) Alabama Family Practice Rural Health Board – \$10,000; (4) DeltaNet Practice-Based Research Network – \$15,000 [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality to establish a Practice-Based Research Network in southwest Alabama, in partnership with Dartmouth Medical School]; (5) CME Video Library – \$8,700 [Charles E. DeBakey Foundation to establish a CME Video Library to serve physicians and other health providers throughout the state.]

The Alabama AHEC Program

The Alabama Area Health Education Center Program (AHEC) is a system of community-academic partnerships designed to provide the following services: rural residency training, multidisciplinary training, learning resource centers, professional recruitment and retention, primary care preceptorships, continuing medical education, community health education, and the encouragement of students, (particularly minority and rural) to pursue health careers.

The Alabama AHEC Program provides leadership and oversight to the Area Health Education Centers throughout the state which includes Southwest Alabama AHEC (SWAHEC) in Saraland, Southeast Alabama AHEC (SEAHEC) in Troy, Rural Alabama AHEC (RAAHEC) in Tuscaloosa, and Tuskegee Area Health Education Center (TAAHEC). The AHEC serves forty-four (44) counties in west, southwest, southeast, and the blackbelt counties of Alabama. Expansion is planned to the remaining northern Alabama counties within the next year.

During the 2000-2001 program year, the Alabama AHEC Program Office and Centers sponsored or provided the following: (1) 552 continuing education programs; (2) 12,665 providers participated in the programs; (3) 291 distance learning programs; (4) 263 community based training sites; (5) 453 medical students rotated in underserved sites; (6) 1211 health professions students rotated in underserved sites; and (7) 428 preceptors volunteered as the community based training sites.

The Alabama AHEC Program maintains cooperative agreements for programming with the following Alabama institutions to achieve the above listed objectives: (1) USA: College of Medicine, College of Nursing, College of Allied Health Professions; Charles M. Baugh Biomedical Library, and Biomedical Enrichment and Recruitment Program; (2) Auburn University: School of Pharmacy; (3) University of Alabama: College of Community Health Sciences, School of Library Information Sciences, School of Medicine, and School of Nursing; (4) Troy State University: School of Nursing; and (5) University of Mobile: School of Nursing.

USA Telemedicine

Telemedicine is the delivery and integration of medical education and specialty healthcare services to patients and clinicians in rural and medically underserved areas through the use of advanced telecommunications technology. USA Telemedicine serves three primary groups: underserved patients, health care professionals, and health profession students. The USA Telemedicine Program supports seven hub sites and ten spoke sites.

USA Telemedicine hub sites include: (1) USA Computer Services Center; (2) USA COM Medical Sciences Building; (3) USA Health Services Building; (4) USA Medical Center; (5) USA Children's and Women's Hospital; (6) USA Springhill Avenue Campus; and (7) USA Knollwood Park Hospital.

Spoke sites include: (1) Mobile County Health Department - Gorgas Clinic; (2) Mobile County Health Department - Calcedaever Clinic; (3) Mostellar Medical Center; (4) Southwest Alabama Health Services; (5) Jackson Medical Center; (6) Evergreen Medical Center; (7) Thomas Hospital; (8) Thomasville Infirmary; (9) North Baldwin Hospital; and (10) DW McMillan Hospital.

USA Telemedicine distance learning accomplishments for FY2000 include: (1) 250 distance learning opportunities offered to healthcare professionals in spoke sites; (2) 5087 participants; (3) 130 programs conducted; (4) Continuation of the Ernest G. DeBakey CME Video Library. Videotapes have been provided to one hundred seventy six (176) healthcare professionals in rural areas across southwest Alabama; (5) Seven Patient Education workshops conducted; (6) Satellite capabilities added to the USA Telemedicine program providing educational opportunities from such programs as the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH); (7) Ophthalmology Grand Rounds - Weekly residency training program collaborated with Oschner Clinic held through April 2001; and (8) One Holiday Diabetic Cooking School provided to patients in remote sites (2000).

USA Telemedicine clinical developments for FY2000 include: (1) linkage of Jackson Hospital, Evergreen Medical Center and Thomasville Hospital to the USA Telemedicine Program in the provision of Teleradiology; (2) implemented a bi-weekly HIV Telemedicine Clinic to the Mobile County Health Department Gorgas Clinic, Southwest Alabama Health Services, and USACOM Infectious Disease Division; (3) telemedicine consults for FY2001 include Teleradiology (17,483), HIV (31), Diabetes (7), Surgery (3), and Pediatrics (1).

Effective August 2001, the Telemedicine portion of the Office of Rural Health was out-sourced to an outside management consulting firm, Immediate Care.