The Fall brings yet another start of an academic year and we are very pleased with both the quality and quantity of our students, both new and continuing. The College enjoyed one of the highest percentage increases in enrollment in the University this Fall, and the high quality of our students is evidenced by their high grade point averages as well as their scores on national entrance examinations. Last year the first time pass rate on the national qualifying exams of our graduates was the highest ever and is continuing testimony to the outstanding job of our faculty and the quality of our students.

These are exciting times for the future of the College. The University has approved a change in the administrative model for health related fields in the university. The Dean’s of the Colleges of Allied Health Professions, Medicine, and Nursing will all report to a newly created Vice President for Health Sciences. A search for an outstanding leader in the health sciences arena is ongoing and will continue until the position is filled. The faculty of our college are excited by the opportunities for increased collaboration in our educational, clinical, and research endeavors and applaud the leadership of the President Gordon Moulton and Dr. Pat Covey, Sr. VP for Academic Affairs, for their vision and leadership.

The architects have completed their work, and bids for the new Allied Health and Nursing building will take place after the first of the year. The new building will occupy a prominent location on the north corner of the campus and will provide state of the art teaching and research facilities for faculty and students. There are several naming opportunities available for the building, and your consideration of contributing to this effort will greatly help us maintain the high quality of education into the future. For information regarding contributions to the new building, please contact my office or the USA Development Office.

Best wishes for the holiday season, and as always, I urge you to keep in touch, and please give us the opportunity to meet with you should your sojourns bring you to the campus.

Dr. Richard E. Talbott, Dean
Message from the Associate Dean
Online surveys, PDFs and other topics

As I mentioned to you in a previous version of the Crucible, one of the mechanisms for improving the quality of our programs in the College of Allied Health Professions, is to receive feedback from our graduates. In order to increase the participation of our graduates in providing this feedback, we have moved our surveys on line, and will no longer mail them. Starting this Fall, the College of Allied Health Professions has implemented an on-line survey which will be easy to answer.

Your comments are very important to us and to our students and gives you a voice when we discuss improvements to our programs.

The Crucible is also available in PDF format. If you want to receive it via email, or if you want an extra copy to share with others on line, just send me an email.

Finally, let us know if you are a new address or if you know the address of any classmates not currently receiving the Crucible. We want this newsletter to reach as many graduates as possible.

Dr. Julio F. Turrens, Associate Dean
jturrens@usouthal.edu

Department of Biomedical Sciences

Message from W. Brad Davis, Chairman, Biomedical Sciences

The Department has had a particularly eventful summer. Dr. Azin Agah, has been appointed as an Assistant Professor and will teach the molecular component of biochemistry beginning Fall 2007. Dr. Agah received her Ph.D. from Kansas State University, did postdoctoral research at Harvard Medical School, and served as an instructor in the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Washington School of Medicine. She is currently on board and establishing a research program to study the role of tissue transglutaminases in scleroderma. Dr. Cindy Stanfield is moving into the role of pre-health professions advisor for the University to be fully effective January 2007, and has now opened an advising office in the BMD Annex. This is in addition to her continuing to teach in the areas of physiology and neurosciences. Dr. Stephen Kayes, Dr. Ronald D. Balczon, and Dr. Y Mohan Bhatnager, all in the Department of Cell Biology and Neuroscience of the College of Medicine, are teaching the lecture and laboratories for microanatomy. Dr. Gretchen Bradley, a family practice physician and graduate of the University of Florida Medical School, has recently joined the department as an instructor. Dr. Bradley is teaching human anatomy.

In continuing to strive for the future, a faculty search is also underway for an additional biomedical scientist to assist in teaching and to contribute to the research infrastructure of the BMD Program. Alumni, please contact us at BMDdept@usouthal.edu. Let us know what you are doing and a way to contact you. THANKS!

Recent Faculty Publications:

Student News
In student news, congratulations to the ten 2006 BMD graduates who have now been accepted to medical school. Also, the program enjoys the privilege and challenge of having almost one-third of the 107 University Honors Program students as BMD majors.

2006 Graduates accepted to medical school
Sejal R. Amin, UAB
Christopher R. Bailey, USA
Jamie B. Caudill, USA
Jennifer E. Harris, USA
Bryan J. Jordan, USA
Rashmi S. Rajendra, USA
Daniel R. Robinson, USA
Christina R. Stallworth, UAB
Jumin Sunde, UAB
Andres Gonzalo Zuleta, American University of the Caribbean

Honors and Awards:
Dr. Zarrintaj Aliabadi received the award for the Outstanding Didactic Instruc tor by the graduating Physician Assistant students for 2006.

BMD senior students, Cathy Ho, Beau Hagler, and Will Hundley, have each received the T. G. Jackson scholarship.
Professor Bill Pruitt at the University of Alabama.

Research is being done in collaboration with the chemistry departments at USA on the up-regulation of the sodium channel in response to ionic liquids. This inhibition may provide a novel way to inhibit pain transmission. Ionic liquids may confer new chemical/physical properties on sodium channels function. Sodium channels are important in neuronal pain transmission. Ionic liquids may confer new chemical/physical properties on molecules known to block these channels. Thus ionic liquids may provide a novel way to inhibit pain sensation as well as by providing probes for studying regulatory processes in the sodium channel that may be associated with this inhibition. A cell-based assay system has been developed to assess the process of up-regulation of the sodium channel in response to ionic liquids. This research is being done in collaboration with the chemistry departments at USA and at the University of Alabama.

Dr. Rick Carliss is continuing research in evaluating ionic liquids in regulating sodium channels function. Sodium channels are important in neuronal pain transmission. Ionic liquids may confer new chemical/physical properties on molecules known to block these channels. Thus ionic liquids may provide a novel way to inhibit pain sensation as well as by providing probes for studying regulatory processes in the sodium channel that may be associated with this inhibition. A cell-based assay system has been developed to assess the process of up-regulation of the sodium channel in response to ionic liquids. This research is being done in collaboration with the chemistry departments at USA and at the University of Alabama.

In October, Bill Pruitt was invited to present a videoconference lecture to the VHA West Coast Hospital Alliance. The 1.5-hour presentation was part of the ICU Improvement Network Session with the title “Achieving Excellence in the Care of Patients on Ventilators: Practice Delivery of the Healthcare Team.” That is all the latest news for now. Feel free to get in touch with any of us. We would like to hear from you once in awhile.

Greetings Alumni,

A record size class of 28 students has begun the professional phase this fall semester. The Department has also expanded its clinical affiliations to include hospitals in Baldwin County, Atmore, and Pensacola. We anticipate this increased enrollment to be a start of a trend, as we will continue to aggressively promote the program.

In August, Fred Hill was appointed Chairman of the Tri-State Respiratory Therapy Conference. In September, the Alabama Society for Respiratory Care held its fall meeting in Birmingham at the Hill University Center. During that meeting, Fred Hill was honored by being awarded lifetime membership in the ASRC. He also gave a lecture to the attendants on the topic of Neonatal Mechanical Ventilation.

Bill Pruitt was invited to participate in the review of the Clinical Practice Guidelines concerning Long-Term Mechanical Ventilation in the Home, Suctioning of the Patient in the Home, and Intermittent Positive Pressure Breathing. Bill is conducting this work through the American Association of Respiratory Care.

The faculty and staff have started an active effort to recruit new CLS preprofessional students both at the USA campus and from other transfer college and high school campuses. During this Fall Semester, faculty will share CLS career and curriculum information with all sessions of the new course, Freshman Seminar in Allied Health Professions (AHP 101), on the USA main campus. Additionally, we will attend recruitment sessions at the Mobile County College and Career Program, and other visits to community colleges in Jackson county (MS) and Escambia county (FL) are planned.

Please support our recruitment efforts by sharing the USA-CLS career information with your contacts, ask potential students to contact the CLS office at 251-434-3461, or view the website at http://www.southalabama.edu/alliedhealth/cls/. We know that you can assist us with this recruitment effort!

Dr. George Harwell, gharwell@usouthal.edu

Faculty News

Prof. Vicki Barrett conducted at three-day assessment of USAMC transfusion service activities at the request of hospital administration. This assessment is directed to identify improvement opportunities in processes, standard operating procedures, and training. She has worked on the Expanding Your Horizons Organizing Committee with Dr. Cindy Stanfield and other women faculty. The 2006 EYH Conference was held on Saturday, October 28 at USA.

Dr. Wesley Denny and Prof. Vicki Barrett are currently conducting research on the familial relationships of migratory Selasphorus rufus hummingbirds that winter along the Gulf Coast (real snowbirds!). The project involves the isolation and PCR amplification of mitochondrial DNA from feathers collected from migrating birds that have been captured for banding by the Hummingbird Study Group. DNA sequence comparison of the mitochondrial control region from each bird is then utilized to establish both familial relationships between individual birds and broader phylogenetic relationships between closely related species like the common ruby-throated hummingbird (Archilochus colubris).

Dr. Terry Ravine was appointed as CAHP Biosafety Officer. He serves as a consultant for biosafety issues, which includes measures preventing exposure to infectious agents. The Biosafety Committee recently approved new postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) policy. PEP guidelines contain real time procedures and followup actions after exposure to blood or other potentially
infectious materials. Specific PEP measures are now summarized for students, clinical site supervisors, and academic instructors whether exposure occurred at a USA training site or an affiliate site outside local area. Each at risk individual has been provided a pink wallet-sized PEP card. Currently updating college-wide Exposure Control Plan (ECP) in conjunction with Biosafety Committee members to meet latest Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) model plan recommendations. Dr. Ravine is conducting research using flow cytometry to analyze horseshoe crab (Limulus polyphemus) leukocyte surface proteins for potential similarities with human-like leukocyte proteins. Limulus leukocytes, also known as amebocytes, function similar to human leukocytes (white blood cells) in protecting horseshoe crabs from bacterial and fungal infections. Studies of this cell type and others are ongoing and being performed at the USA Medical Center Flow Cytometry Lab and CLS Research Lab facility.

### CLS Student/Alumni News

Two of the senior CLS students have begun their clinical preceptorships at Singing River Hospital (SRH) Laboratory, Pascagoula, MS. This laboratory was recently approved as a new clinical affiliate of the USA-CLS Department by USA administrators, SRH administrators, and by the national accrediting agency, NAACLS.

Ms. Becky Walton, a USA-CLS alumnus, serves as the Director of this lab, and Ms. Paula Holland, serves as their Education Coordinator. Prof. Vicki Barrett, in her role as USA-CLS Clinical Director, looks forward to many other students completing their clinical experiences at this quality laboratory. We are excited and proud to have SRH and their CLS laboratory professionals as part of USA-CLS.

National board examination scores of the graduates of the May 2006 CLS Class averaged over 60 points higher than the national average. Three CLS graduates of May 2006 Class achieved USA academic honors at the level of cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude. These recent graduates have reported employment at laboratories at USA Children’s and Women’s Hospital (Mobile, AL), Springhill Medical Center (Mobile, AL), Forrest General Hospital (Hattiesburg, MS), and Singing River Hospital (Pascagoula, MS).

Deborah Stults, graduate 1983, is an active candidate for a Ph.D. in Marine Sciences at USA. Brenda Baggett Pendergrass, graduate 1983, is currently teaching Science at Atmore Elementary School in an effort to help with their teacher shortage.

### Department of Occupational Therapy

#### Message from the Chair, Dr. Marjorie Scaffa

This is my last letter in the College newsletter. As of January 2007, I will be resigning my position as Chair and taking on a faculty role in the department. I have served as Chair for the past 13 years and have enjoyed the many opportunities I have had to initiate the development and participate in the enhancement of the Occupational Therapy program. In my faculty role, I am looking forward to focusing more on my teaching and pursuing my research interests in mental health, disaster response, and community practice, as well as completing a new textbook on occupational therapy's role in health promotion.

As I leave the administrative role, the department is very fortunate to be acquiring the services of Dr. Rebecca Estes, who will take over as Chair. There is a short article introducing Dr. Estes in this issue.

As you can see from these short articles, faculty and students have been busy again with several projects and have received recognition for their work. I hope you enjoy reading this issue, and the Department of Occupational Therapy wishes you Happy Holidays and a wonderful 2007.

#### Occupational Therapy Students Participate In Backpack Awareness Event

**By Sarah Norris, OTS & Katie Wyatt, OTS**

September is the American Occupational Therapy Association’s backpack awareness month. To celebrate and increase the awareness of backpack safety, third-year master’s student’s in the occupational therapy program organized and led a backpack awareness event at Elsie Collier Elementary School in Mobile, Alabama on October 3, 2006. The event was held in the school’s gymnasium. Over 500 children in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades participated.

The occupational therapy students taught the children basic backpack safety techniques and principles. They also taught the children a variety of stretches to prevent neck and back injuries related to heavy backpack use. The event concluded with a relay race where the children had the opportunity to practice the backpack safety techniques in a fun and competitive way.

The student leaders for this event were Kim Courchesne, Leigh Ann Kittrell, and Katie Wyatt. A total of 15 occupational therapy students participated in the event. The event was held to promote the occupational therapy profession and to prevent back injuries related to improper backpack use in elementary age students for Occupational Therapy: A Feasibility Study’ and the authors are: Courtney Bains, Ashley Christian, Loren Day, Natasha Kimble and Lisa Parnell.

Congratulations to all of these students for a job well done!

#### Change in the OT Department Leadership, Dr. Rebecca Estes

The new Chairperson, Dr. Rebecca Estes, comes from Texas Woman’s University where she served as the PhD Program Coordinator and the Coordinator for the Center for Assistive Technology in Denton, Texas. Dr. Estes has a Master of Arts in adapted physical education and a Masters in Occupational Therapy, both from Texas Woman’s University. Her doctorate is in neuroscience from the University of Texas at Dallas. She was a certified occupational therapy assistant before becoming an occupational therapist. She has worked in rehabilitation, pediatrics, and home health. Her expertise in neurological disorders and assistive technology will greatly enhance our occupational therapy program.
Senior Wellness Fair By Kathy Lemcool
The first year students in the Master of Science in Occupational Therapy Program participated in the Mobile Seniors Wellness Fair held October 18 at the Colonial Bel-Air Mall. The theme of the students’ booth was “Fishing for O.T.” They had a simulated fishing pond where Wellness Fair participants “fished” for tips and information on the value of occupation in their daily lives. The students gave each participant home safety tips and ideas for adapting daily activities to meet their needs as they age. Small prizes were given away to the seniors, as well as a door prize at the end of the day. The students had opportunities to visit all the vendor booths at the fair to learn about the many services available to senior citizens in the Mobile area. This activity was a component of their Occupational Development course this fall.

Other Faculty News
Casey Van Huysen has joined the faculty on a part-time basis. Ms. Van Huysen is a 2004 graduate of the occupational therapy program, and has worked in the school system, outpatient pediatrics, and as needed in outpatient adult rehabilitation, acute care and home health. Casey is currently the Treasurer of the Alabama Occupational Therapy Association and previously served as the South District Co-Chair. She is teaching professional development seminar and the history and philosophy course this fall semester.

Student Research Recognition
Three research groups in the graduating Class of 2006 have received wonderful news! One group has had an article accepted for publication in the Occupational Therapy in Health Care journal. The article is titled “The Future of Mental Health Occupational Therapy” and the authors are: Sarah Norris, Theresa Bunger, Kim Courchesne, Katie Smith, and Marie Willoughby.

Two other research groups had poster presentations accepted for the American Occupational Therapy Association’s annual conference. The conference will be held in St. Louis in April 2007. One poster is titled ‘The Use of Evidence-Based and Client-Centered Practice in Occupational Therapy’ and the authors are: Angela Busbee, Alicia Eder, Ashleigh Evans, Leigh Ann Kittrell and Katie Wyatt. The second poster is titled “Achieving the 2017 Centennial Vision for Occupational Therapy: A feasibility Study” and the authors are: Courtney Bains, Ashley Christian, Loren Day, Natasha Kimble and Lisa Parnell.

Congratulations to all of these students for a job well done!

Department of Physician Assistant Studies

Message from the Chair, Mr. Rich Nenstiel
It has been our custom to ask a graduate to write an article for the Crucible. Unfortunately, we did not have an article submitted in time for this edition’s deadline so you’ll have to put up with a letter from Rich!

July 28, 2006 was the occasion for the graduation of the 9th class of students from the University of South Alabama, Department of Physician Assistant Studies. For the faculty it is hard to believe how quickly the time passes. Matriculation of the first class seems like yesterday, until we look at pictures of ourselves and realize a few years have passed since then! The class of 2006 brings our total number of graduates to 296, 98% of whom have maintained their PA certification. Currently, USA graduates are working in about 35 states and several foreign countries. We just found out last week that one of our graduates, Tyre Conrey from the Class of 2002, will be leaving for Scotland soon to work in the town of Dundee. She is participating in the AAPA sponsored program to introduce PAs to the health care workforce in the UK.

The Class of 2006 is now going through the process of certification, licensure, credentialing, and other paperwork associated with their new careers. As of this writing, the class has an excellent pass rate of 97% on the PANCE with several graduates who have not yet taken the exam. They have obtained employment in a variety of specialties and in the following states – Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Texas, Colorado, and Utah.

The Class of 2007 is working hard on their initial clinical rotations. Three students (Cassie Bullock, Amy Hall, Jennifer Hewitt) in this class received scholarships from the PA Foundation. Their pictures were displayed along with the 37 other scholarship recipients from across the country at the AAPA annual meeting in San Francisco.

Speaking of the AAPA conference, about 50 USA graduates met one evening at the conference and had a great time reliving memories and visiting with each other. One USA graduate (Danny York, 99) was on the faculty of the conference and one (Julie Smith, 99) serves on the Conference Education Program Committee (CEPC) which plans the entire event. Other graduates are involved in their profession in many ways. Jon Adams, 98, currently serves as President of the Alabama Society of Physician Assistants (ASPA) and Nicole Miller, 03, is planning the Fall 2006 ASPA CME conference in Mobile. Rustin Sorenson, 00 and Tracy Fox Nelson, 02 both serve as regional representatives for the Florida Academy of PAs. Dan Vetrosky of the faculty is currently serving as President of the American Association of Surgical Physician Assistants. Undoubtedly, other USA graduates are actively involved in the profession in their locations.

Our newest group of students matriculated in May of this year and they are doing well in their second semester. As usual, they are a fine group of people who are still excited about being here. In other words, they are still on the upper curve of ‘the graph’ (you graduates will know what this means!)
Message from the Chair, Dr. Dennis Fell

The PT Dept is rockin’ as you’ll see in all the info below. A lot is happening with many new developments. The third DPT class (class of 2009) began on August 21st. This photo shows that faculty and students had a great time at the Beach Welcome Splash at Gulf Shores during their first week. In addition to starting the third year of the entry-level DPT curriculum, the fully web-based DPT program for licensed physical therapists (tDPT) has been implemented and is starting strong and expanding quickly. In its first year we now have 29 students in the tDPT program, with 15 of those admitted this semester, and have offered a total of 8 fully web-based courses so far. This will be the first year to run all three years of the entry-level DPT curriculum concurrently (with the MPT curriculum, we had at most two years of students running concurrently); its pretty hectic these days. Scheduling has been a great challenge.

Finally, the first Doctor of Physical Therapy Class will graduate in May 2007 (they’ll be in black regalia with the teal velvet trim on the hood and doctoral gown).

New PT Faculty Member

The department is very pleased to announce a new faculty member who joined in September filling a brand new faculty position to cover the additional curricular load as we start the third year of the DPT curriculum. Dr. Elisa Kennedy (PT, PhD, PCS) has her BSPT degree from Georgia State Univ; MMSc (Maternal Child Health) from Emory University; and a PhD in Early Childhood Special Education from the University of Georgia. She has over 25 years of experience in pediatric physical therapy, particularly early intervention and program development for NICU services. She has earned her Pediatric Clinical Specialist (PCS) certification through the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties and has participated in numerous related consortia and committees. She is active in the APTA Section on Pediatrics, including leadership positions, and has taught CEU courses related to early intervention around the country. We are very glad to have her join our PT team!

Recent Faculty Presentations/Publications:

- Dr. Barry Dale gave an invited presentation at the National Athletic Trainers Association conference in Atlanta in June 2006.
- Dr. Dennis Fell gave two invited presentations at APTA Orlando in June 2006.
- Dr. Jean Irion was invited to present a APTA Section on Women’s Health regional course at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore in September 2006.

Recent Awards

- Dr. Dennis Fell, 2006 USA College of Allied Health Service Award
- Prof. John Jefferson, 2006 USA College of Allied Health Teaching Award

Alumni Updates

Send us your news; we’ll include it in the next issue!

- Patrick Benefield (2005) has moved to Denver Colorado to work in private practice. He looks forward to “urban living.”
- Heidi Yurcisin Cohan (1996) practices in stroke rehab in Gulfport, MS. Her two children are ages 2 and 6.
- Tracey Coale (1996) has completed her tDPT degree through Boston University.
- Amy Walsh Forsythe (1998) and her husband Van are proud parents of Conner, born June 15th. Amy is currently the President of MAPTO.
- Stjani Fridriksson (1988) is a certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist (OCS) and is owner of Grelot Road Physical Therapy in Mobile. He is currently serving as MAPTO Secretary.
- Denise Griffin (1986) is the Chair of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at South College in Knoxville, TN and is working on her tDPT.
- Jennifer Montgomery Hodges (2002) is happily married and the mother of a 2 year old daughter. She is now Clinical Manager, PT for the Sacred Heart Rehab Center at Panama City Beach.
- Anna Howard (2000) has earned her Pediatric Clinical Specialist (PCS) certification through the APTA American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties. She practices at Baton Rouge General Pediatric Rehabilitation Center.
- Francis Ng (1992) married Terri Milhollin of Atlanta on July 8, 2006. Francis met Terri on the mission field while serving in East Asia between 2001 and 2006. Currently, Francis is working with a team of medical...
professionals to utilize a Community Transformation approach to help rural people in East Asia to improve their basic health knowledge and personal hygiene while seeking and making use of abundant opportunities to share his personal Christian faith. Meanwhile, contact Francis at pop@pobox.com if you are interested in sharing time (from a few days to long-term assignments) to come and to make a real difference in the lives of these people.

**USAPT Offers a Web-based DPT Program for Licensed Physical Therapists**

Check out our Doctor of Physical Therapy Program for licensed physical therapists (tDPT) program. We now have 29 PTs enrolled in this fully web-based program. Physical Therapists can now advance their degree to the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) under the guidance of experienced and encouraging faculty at South. The web-based program consists of a minimum 20 semester credits of online courses, completed at your own pace. Proof of completion of an entry-level physical therapy degree, current licensure in the US, and submission of an application and portfolio are also required. Portfolio analysis is used to grant credit for professional life-experience, clinical expertise and graduate coursework beyond your PT degree.

**USA PT Alumni Society**

Dr. Charles Gray now serves as the Faculty Coordinator for the PT Alumni Society. As part of this growing initiative, the department is starting an Alumni Advisory Group to facilitate alumni activities and advise the department. If you would like to be a part, contact Dr. Gray at cgray@jaguar1.usouthal.edu. We also want to begin to plan regional alumni events in different portions of the state.

In conjunction with the ALAPTA Conference at Orange Beach (May 5-7), we are considering a Sunday afternoon beach reception. How many of you will be around? We want to encourage you to put the conference on your schedule now, come to the conference for the fine CEUs the Chapter offers, and then join us for a fun afternoon of visiting and catching up. Sunday afternoon is not ideal, but this year we can’t do Saturday afternoon because of the University graduation that weekend. Please call us if you plan to join us for Sunday afternoon, and if you’ll be there we’ll be there. Help us establish contact with alumni for whom we have lost contact. We want to keep you informed about these events, so send us your updated home and work contact info or if you have updated contact information for other individuals in your graduating class, please call (251)434-3575 or email ptdept@jaguar1.usouthal.edu.

We encourage each of you to join the USA Alumni Association http://www.southalabama.edu/alumni and automatically become a member of the PT Alumni Society (no extra fee) – be sure to specify this request. This will help to support our alumni events. Finally, is anyone planning to attend APTA Combined Sections Meeting in Boston February 2007, or APTA Annual Conference in Denver June 2007. Let us know so we can get together!

**Dr. Fell Mission to Belize**

Dr. Fell participated in a Presbyterian Church in America 7 day mission to Orange Walk, Belize in June. His two children, Nathan (18) and Hannah (13) accompanied him with the team. The trip completed painting interior walls of the church building (the first time ever), digging a 6 x10 foot pit for septic system installation, and building two mahogany church pews (doubling their number of pews). Possibilities for future medical/rehab mission trips were also investigated. The final day of the trip was a relaxation day at the city of San Pedro on the island of Ambergris Caye, including snorkeling on the barrier reef (longest barrier reef in the western hemisphere) and swimming with nurse sharks (not Dr. Fell).

**Department of Radiological Sciences**

**Message from the Chair, Dr. Charles Newell**

The 2006-07 academic year is well underway. Forty-three first-year students were admitted to the Certificate program, and will join the thirty-four second-year students who, like you, are already looking forward to graduation. Our B.S. program continues to grow each year. Our current enrollment in the B.S. program is as follows: MRI (22), Ultrasound (3), Radiation Therapy (14), CT (22), Mammography (3), and Cardio-Vascular (4). While Hurricane Katrina had a significant impact on some of our students last year, none left the program. We are still grateful to the University for assisting these students through tuition deferrals, and Springhill Memorial Hospital who donated uniforms and shoes to students in need. Our thoughts remain with all of the students and recent graduates who experienced significant difficulties arising from Katrina. On a brighter note, one of these students, along with 34 other students, graduated from the Certificate program on July 27, 2006.
Student Spotlight
The chairperson has always held equipment manufactured by General Electric in high regard. However, I can honestly say that regardless of any influence I may have upon students, this opinion has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that six of our former graduates of the Radiologic Sciences program, are now employed by General Electric Healthcare Technologies! All are members of what General Electric terms “the Local Customer Team.” Given the large number of former graduates associated with General Electric, I thought the alumni would be interested in learning more about a group of graduates that I now refer to as the “GE Connection.”

Heading up the team is Kenny Breal (1988), who is the Regional Sales Manager, Gulf Coast Region, for General Electric Healthcare Technologies. Kenny received his bachelors degree in 1993 from the University of South Alabama, and held various supervisor and management positions while working in the clinical area of Radiology. He transitioned to the commercial side of the industry with Berlex Laboratories in 1996 and later worked with Picker/Marconi Medical Systems in Birmingham as a full line Account Manager. He also held the position of X-Ray/Vascular Sales Specialist with GE. Kenny was recognized as the top Regional Sales Manager in the United States for 2005 as well as receiving several other awards within GE. He, and his wife Toy of 14 years, live in Mobile along with their three sons, Greyson-12, Chandler-7, and Jackson-5. Kenny’s hobbies are golf, going to the beach, water sports, and coaching his kids in sports. He is also a volunteer for the Sports Outreach Ministry at Cottage Hill Baptist Church.

Joey Jefferson (1994) is currently employed by General Electric Healthcare as the X-ray/Vascular Modality Sales Specialist for the Gulf Coast Zone. Prior to the 18 months in his current position, Joey was a lead Clinical Applications Specialist for the X-ray and Cardiovascular modalities for GE Healthcare. Prior to his employment with GE, Joey was employed by the Mobile Infirmary Medical Center as a special procedures radiographer. Joey received his bachelor of science degree from the University of South Alabama in 1996. Joey was also a Sgt. in the US Army and is a veteran of the Desert Storm Gulf War.

Derek Bonner (1992) grew up in southeast Alabama before moving to Mobile in 1990 where he pursued a career in Allied Health. He currently resides in Fairhope, AL. Derek completed his bachelor of science degree from USA in 1996 while working full-time as a staff radiographer at Springhill Medical Center. Derek later went to work for CPSI in Mobile as an Ancillary Support Representative in 1997. Two years later, he landed his first sales position with Berlex Laboratories as a Professional Sales Consultant selling iodinated contrast and paramagnetic pharmaceuticals. For the past six and a half years, Derek has been managing GE Healthcare’s CT portfolio in the Gulf Coast Region as their CT Business Manager.

Mike Burroughs (1992) began his career as a staff radiographer and special procedures radiographer at Providence Hospital. He is presently in the process of completing his degree at Faulkner University. He later became an MRI technologist, and was affiliated with Signal Medical, and Baptist Hospital in Pensacola, FL. Mike entered the sales field as a Sales Consultant with Berlex Laboratories in Jacksonville, FL. Three years later he moved to Capitol Sales as an Account Manager with Picker/Philips. After five years, he accepted a position as an Account Executive with Siemens where he quickly became one of the first five Cardiology Account Executives in the country with Siemens. According to Mike, the competition between Siemens and General Electric was such that he decided it was in his best interest to accept a position as an Account Manager with GE Healthcare in Jackson, MS where he no longer has to worry about competing with GE.

Brad Dombroski (1993) completed his bachelors degree at USA in 1996. He began his career in sales at Wiaetsee Medical in Mobile. He later accepted a position as a Clinical Applications Specialist with Liebel-Flarsheim (LF) supporting installations of Cysto Suites and Contrast Injectors. He was promoted to Territory Sales Manager: Pacific-Northwest Region with Libel-Flarsheim and moved to Sacramento, California in 1996. When the opportunity to get back to the South East became available, he transferred to Orlando, FL and assumed the Southeast Territory Sales Manager position with LF. Following the birth of his second daughter, Brad returned to Mobile to be closer to family. In 1999, he accepted a position as a Clinical Sales Specialist with Visualization Technology, Inc. VTI manufactured and sold Image Guided Surgery systems, a computer aided navigation unit for surgeons. It was a new product that was rapidly growing in acceptance amongst neuro, orthopedic and EMT surgeons. In 2002, VTI was acquired by the Surgical Division of GE Healthcare: OEC, a manufacturer of C-arms and Cysto Suites had previously established a corporate partnership with VTI to promote the Spinal Navigation Systems for use with their C-Arms. Due to the amount of travel involved, Brad accepted a position with General Electric as a Clinical Technical Support Specialist, and now fields telephone calls from surgeons, nurses, and imaging technologists whenever they need Technical or Service Support. According to Brad, all of his services are provided from the comfort of his home-office.

The final member of the GE Health Care team is Matthew Tures (1992). Matthew’s current position, which he has held for the past two years, is a PACS/Radworks Applications Specialist for GE’s Southeast Zone. Prior to this position, Matthew was an applications specialist for the cardiology division of General Electric where he provided training in a physician reporting system. Before joining General Electric, Matthew was employed as a Special Procedures Radiographer at Mobile Infirmary Medical Center and also worked part time as a contractor for GE Medical Systems, providing training in cardiac and special procedures units located in catheter labs. As part of his earlier professional development, Matthew was the lead Special Procedures Radiographer at Springhill Memorial Hospital, and Providence Hospital. Matthew completed his Bachelor of Science in July of 1998 at USA.

Like all alumni, the members of the “GE Connection” began as staff radiographers, and have steadily advanced in their respective fields of interest. While the grouping of former graduates as associates of a company in the private sector is an interesting development, their personal achievement stands as a positive role model for present and future graduates. The faculty and I are proud to have been associated with them, and we wish them the best in the years to follow.

Other News
The members of the Department’s Advisory Committee for the 2006-2007 academic year are as follows:

Jack Dempsey, Administrative Director
Springhill Medical Center

Anthony Mosley, Administrative Director
Infirmary Health Systems

Joseph Thompson, Administrative Director
Providence Hospital

Misty Davis, Teaching Technologist
Radiologic Sciences

Lesley Fearn, Supervisor
USA Medical Center

Kathy Linam, Administrative Director
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Cathy Naylor (Murphy), Faculty
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The Alabama Society of Radiation Oncologists recently voted to award an annual scholarship of $2,500 to the Department of Radiologic Sciences. The scholarship will be awarded to a deserving student in our Radiation Therapy program.

As alumni, please remember, you are cordially invited to visit our web site at www.southalabama.edu/alliedhealth/radiologicsciences. As always, we encourage you to consider assisting other students in our program through donations to our scholarship program. Arrangements to make donations to the Department of Radiologic Sciences Scholarship Fund can be made by contacting Ms. Ginny Turner, Associate Director of Development, at (251) 460-7032. Regardless of the amount, your support will be sincerely appreciated.

Alumni are encouraged to submit items of interest for publication in the Crucible. Please direct your submissions to: Dr. Charles Newell, Department of Radiologic Sciences, 1504 Springhill Ave., Suite 2515, Mobile, AL 36604-3273. Let us hear from you!

Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology

Message from the Chair, Dr. Paul Dagenais

In the Fall, the Department admitted our fourth and largest class of Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) students to date. With 12 students to this class and a cohort of 21 new Masters Speech-Language Pathology students, we currently have the largest number of graduate students ever pursuing clinical training. Our Ph.D. students are composed of three Au.D./Ph.D. students, two SLP post-masters Ph.D. students, and two SLP post-bachelors Ph.D. students. We are eagerly anticipating the graduation of our first group of Au.D. students who began with us in August 2003. During the graduation ceremony in May, they will be wearing sage green hoods. We are very pleased with the progress of these students and feel that their training has more than adequately prepared them for their continued clinical journey. We continue to enrich our students’ experience and provide a service to the community through the Speech and Hearing Center. The combination of clinical service, with teaching instruction and independent research in the same facility keep our knowledge in the forefront and our practices in line with the latest advances in the fields. With the ground breaking for our new building anticipated in Spring 2007, we have begun to look for benefactors for our Clinic. Any alumni, individuals, organizations, or corporations interested in contributing or obtaining more information about our new facility are encouraged to contact the Clinic.

Faculty News

In June Dr. Brenda Beverly presented a one-day seminar as part of our re-initiation of the Azalea Conference. Her talk was entitled “Balancing Reading Instruction: The Role of the SLP”. With over 50 attendees; the presentation was deemed a success. Our Azalea Confer-ence Committee, chaired by Ms. Kendra Hudson, is currently discussing options for future conferences. Another Confer-ence is tentatively set for early Novem-ber 2007.

New Faculty Member in Speech Pathology and Audiology

In August Dr. Elizabeth M. Adams joined the Department as an Assistant Professor in Audiology. Dr. Adams, a native Mobilian, graduated with a Bachelors degree in Psychology from Spring Hill College then earned her Ph.D. from USA. Following her graduation, she worked as a Clinical Audiologist in a busy ENT practice in Mobile. She is currently teaching graduate level classes in the areas of hearing aid amplification and cochlear implant technology while pursuing research lines with amplification and speech intelligibility in degraded and noisy listening environments.

Alumni News

The Department’s Alumni Association was approved by USA’s National Alumni Association in June. The USA Speech and Hearing Alumni Association was initiated by the Department and will be maintained strictly by alumni involvement. Initial gatherings were promising and those of you who indicated interest in becoming officers will be contacted in the near future.

NAFDA News

NAFDA (National Association of Future Doctors of Audiology) completed its first year as a recognized student organization on campus. Current membership consists of all Au.D. and Au.D./Ph.D. students. The group successfully completed a Thanksgiving food drive, adopted a boy and a girl from the Angel Tree Program to help them have a happy Christmas, and held their first annual White Coat ceremony for 3rd year Au.D. students preparing to begin their clinical externships. NAFDA meets monthly to discuss and plan upcoming events, as well as pertinent professional issues within the field.

For 2006-2007, the NAFDA chapter will again participate in a Thanksgiving food drive, adopt an Angel Tree child from the Salvation Army, participate in the Speech and Hearing Association of Alabama’s annual conference, and host the second annual White Coat Ceremony. Other goals for the year include a fundraiser, acquiring funds from SGA for members to attend professional conference, obtaining sponsorship from the Audiology Foundation of America for the White Coat Ceremony, and actively helping out our Department’s Speech and Hearing Center.
NSSLHA News

The 2005-2006 year was highly successful for NSSLHA (National Student Speech Language Hearing Association). The organization donated school supplies to the Waveland school district in Mississippi following Hurricane Katrina. This contribution helped provide every student with needed school supplies when classes resumed this Fall. NSSLHA students also volunteered at the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind (AIDB) during their Fall Festival and graduation ceremony. Additionally, NSSLHA members raised enough money through their fundraising efforts to purchase a copy machine for student use, which has been placed in the student computer lab in the Speech and Hearing Sciences Department. NSSLHA also contributed, as they do yearly, to the Marjorie Faircloth Scholarship fund.

For 2006-2007, NSSLHA started the year with an effective week-long membership drive during September. This year, NSSLHA plans to focus on autism through educational speakers, involvement with local organizations, and service opportunities. The members will continue to volunteer at the AIDB’s Fall Festival and provide Halloween treats to the pediatric clients at the Speech and Hearing Clinic. NSSLHA is also collecting drink tabs for the Aluminum Tab Top Recycling Program at the Ronald McDonald House in Mobile.