Hello from the University of South Alabama’s Pat Capps Covey College of Allied Health Professions. I am hopeful that, with the coming of the fall weather, everyone’s new academic year is off to a smooth start and happy to report that we are enjoying the annual excitement of welcoming new students and greeting returning students. The information I hear from our colleagues across the country is consistent with our experience here in Mobile, that is, that the health professions are enjoying ever increasing application numbers to our programs and thus an ever increasing quality of our student population. While obviously of benefit to our institutional bottom lines, it more importantly bodes well for the quality of care that future individuals requiring our services will receive and the quality of the scholarship of our graduates.

As you can see from the reports from the departments, our faculty continue to provide excellent educational and clinical preparation for our students and we are very pleased with the almost 100% employment rates of our graduates. This, of course, is due to the quality of the graduates and their top percentile scores on national and state qualifying exams. Our alumni have been very generous and supportive of our programs through scholarship endowments and other development support of the College. We appreciate all you do to maintain the high quality of programs at South Alabama.

We are pleased to bring you the updates included herein from our departments and offer our best wishes for the coming year. We appreciate any opportunities to hear from our graduates and colleagues across the country and would invite your contact if we can be of any service. We would especially appreciate the opportunity to welcome you to our campus and building should your travels bring you to Mobile. Best wishes for a prosperous and healthful year.

Rick Talbott, Ph.D., rtalbott@southalabama.edu

As you know, my office oversees all areas of academic affairs in the college, advising and graduate programs. I am pleased to inform you that in all these areas the college is in excellent shape. A high proportion of our graduates pass their professional exams in the first attempt. Furthermore, the average score in the professional exam for all our programs is higher than the national average.

The total number of students in the College of Allied Health Professions continues to increase. This fall we had 2,126 students pursuing degrees in our programs.

We recently made substantial improvements in the way students make appointments with the advising office. When they need to see an advisor, students make appointments on line. The system sends them a reminder via email prior to the meeting. Students may also cancel their appointments and reschedule them without having to call our office.

Finally, I am pleased to inform you that up to five qualifying students in three of our programs (Cardiorespiratory Care, EMS Paramedic and Radiologic Sciences) are now eligible to receive a subsidy through the Workforce Investment Act. The funds are up to $10,000 per year for a total of two years and are awarded based on the financial need of the applicant. For more information, contact the chairperson in each of those three programs.

As always, feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments.

Julio F. Turrens, Ph.D., jturrens@southalabama.edu
New Development Officer for Allied Health Professions

Over the past year I have enjoyed working with the faculty and staff within the Pat Capps Covey College of Allied Health. Their commitment to provide outstanding education and training to students was truly evident in the enthusiasm and generosity of the alumni I had the pleasure of meeting throughout the year. I am pleased to share that this expression of overwhelming support from our alumni, faculty, and friends resulted in the creation of the first named endowed scholarship within the Physician Assistant Studies program, as well as the first named endowed professorship within the Occupational Therapy program. Generous gifts such as these are essential in attracting the best students, rewarding them for high academic achievement while in the program, and relieving the financial burden upon graduation.

In order to continue this tradition and better equip our graduates for their future career it is essential that our alumni support and invest in our programs. Your involvement and participation can further enrich the College’s current programs, ensure increased education opportunities for our students, and assist many individuals in realizing their dream of becoming a healthcare professional.

For more information regarding how you can support the Pat Capps Covey College of Allied Health Professions in the form of a private gift contribution please contact me directly at robertson@southalabama.edu or 251.414.8065.

Jennifer Robertson

Biomedical Sciences

Message from the Chair, Dr. William B. Davis

We are well into the fall semester 2013 and the BMD program continues to be a solid major for the University.

As of fall 2013, the program has over 500 students for the 4th year in a row including 186 freshmen enrollees. Biomedical Science majors currently make up about 30% of all prehealth students across the institution. Out of 65 Medical School Early Acceptance Program students, there are 45 Biomedical Science majors. At least 29 of the 2013 spring BMD graduates who applied have entered post baccalaureate health programs. It is also noted that of the 178 University Honors students, 43 are BMD Majors. Of those 43, there are 13 senior BMD majors completing an Honors Research Thesis this year.

We welcome a new addition to the faculty, Dr. Jim Henderson. Dr. Henderson comes to us from the Physician Assistant Studies program. He is an Associate Professor and will be teaching Pathophysiology in the spring for the BMD Department, as well as Pharmacology and Pathophysiology for the Physical Therapy Department and Physician Assistant Studies Graduate programs during the fall, spring and summer semesters.

William B. Davis; wbdavis@southalabama.edu

IN THE NEWS

Pat Capps Covey Biomedical Sciences Scholarship

The recipients of the Pat Capps Covey Biomedical Sciences Scholarship are Cathey Ho, Emma Mitchell, and T. Holt Stuart for the 2013-14 academic year. All of these students are upper division Biomedical Science majors. Applications for this scholarship are accepted during the spring and are awarded the following fall semester. The award is allocated toward tuition and fees.

Two BMD majors received research funding this summer. Alyssa Stagner and Sana Ozair (Dr. Spector) received Summer Research grants from the UCUR Summer Research Program.

Congratulations are also in order to Dr. Robin J. Mockett for his recent promotion to Associate Professor.

T.G. Jackson – AED Scholarship:
The following BMD students have received the T.G. Jackson - AED Scholarship:
Shivam Amin, Mercy Blalock, Jenimah Chen, Amy Chiou, An Huang, Justin Jong, Payal Patel, Lam Pham, Sriharsha Rallapalle, Kang Rui Xiang. Information on the T.G. Jackson - AED Scholarship can be obtained from Dr. Stanfield’s office in HAHN 4004.

Congratulations to Emma Mitchell (left), Cathey Ho (center) and T. Holt Stuart (right).
FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS
Dr. Mockett, Dr. Dugger, and Dr. Shokolenko all authored publications this year:


FACULTY PRESENTATIONS
Dr. Cindy L. Stanfield gave presentations at two workshops:

Dr. Thulasiraman had a poster presentation:
- Altering the expression levels of CRABPII and FABP5 by curcumin sensitizes MDA-MB231 mammary carcinoma cells to retinoic acid mediated growth suppression at the American Association for Cancer Research, Washington, D.C, April 2013.

Dr. Inna Shokolenko had two poster presentations:
- Targeting Mitochondrial DNA for Damage and Degradation with DNA Repair Enzymes. Inna N. Shokolenko, Glenn L. Wilson, Mikhail F. Alexeyev. NHLBI Mitochondrial Biology Symposium, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD, May 6-7, 2013.

Dr. Julio Turrens gave two presentations:
- Responsible Conduct of Research and Professional Ethics in Science, ACS presentation to chemistry faculty and students at Hendrix College, Conway, AR, October 2012.
- Workshop on Professionalism and Responsible Conduct of Research. Center for NanoBiotechnology and Life Sciences Research, Alabama State University, October 2012. Member of the Executive Board of the Council for Undergraduate Research.

AWARDS AND HONORS
Dr. Henderson was awarded the Didactic Instructor of the Year honor by the Physician Assistant Studies Class of 2013 at their graduation ceremony in July 2013.

The following faculty members were designated by a student sponsor for the “Top Prof” award by the Mortar Board Honor Society for 2012-2013:

Robin J. Mockett; Cindy L. Stanfield; Julio F. Turrens

Dr. Stanfield was the site coordinator again this year for the 26th Annual Alabama Coastal Cleanup at Municipal Park on September 21st.

Cardiorespiratory Care

Message from the Chair, Mr. William Wojciechowski
Greetings Alumni,

Well, another academic year is upon us. Actually, this semester is well along the way. The CRC program is happy to announce that it is undergoing terrific growth. In fact, since the Department has moved to campus almost four years ago, it has experienced a 41% enrollment increase. Currently, the program has a combined total of 52 junior and senior students. In an effort to keep pace with this expanded enrollment, the program has added Singing River Hospital, Ocean Springs Hospital, and Gulfport Memorial Hospital, bringing its total clinical affiliates to 14 hospitals.

Despite our happiness concerning the enrollment explosion, we are lamenting the retirement of Deanna Winn in January 2013 after 31 years of service above and beyond the call of duty. She raised the bar for this position to an unachievable level. At the same time, we are pleased to announce that Shunda Fakaha, who served as Dr. Luterman’s secretary for 13 years at USAMC, has joined us.
THE CRUCIBLE

Cardiorespiratory Care continued ...

The Department has accomplished another milestone. Thomas Lamey, class of 2008, became the first person to graduate from the Master’s degree program that we developed in conjunction with the College of Education. This program teaches RRTs who desire to teach at the university or community college level to acquire the educational tools to do so. Congratulations, Thomas, good luck with your future pursuits.

The faculty remain as busy as ever. Tim Op’t Holt now serves on the credentialing board of the Association of Asthma Educators (AAE). It is the AAE’s equivalent to the NBRC. Bill Pruitt is the chair of the AAE national program committee for their meeting in Orlando in the spring. David Chang will be traveling to China in November to speak at a conference in Beijing. I will be heading to Najran, Saudi Arabia to speak at an EMT/Respiratory Care conference sponsored by Najran University in late October.

I hope that you are following the progress of Jaguar football. This is the school’s first year in the Sun Belt Conference for football. The Jags won their inaugural Sun Belt Conference game in September by defeating Western Kentucky University 31-24. If you attend any Jag home games, you can find your former professors tailgating in the Ladd-Peebles Stadium parking lot on the front row behind the scoreboard on the south end of the field.

Please keep us informed of developments in your lives and careers. We are always happy to hear from you folks.

Regards, Bill

Bill Wojciechowski: wwojciec@southalabama.edu

Emergency Medical Services

Message from the Chair, Mr. Charles Erwin

Glad to be on Main Campus: After forty years on the USA Brookley campus, in January of this year, the Department of EMS has been relocated to the 4th floor of the former Cancer Center/Clinical Building. We wish to thank Dr. Franks and Dr. Talbott for everything in accomplishing this move. Our faculty and staff are excited to join our colleagues on the main campus and to be more accessible to all USA students. An open house will be announced in the very near future.

BS / EMS Degree Program: As the program continues to grow, we are pleased to announce that this degree program has now been fully implemented and the first cohort took their national certification examinations in December and accomplished a 100% first time pass rate. Information on the program is located at www.southalabama.edu/alliedhealth/ems or contact Ronald Morgan, BS Program Director rmorgan@southalabama.edu

EMS Certificate Program: Our certificate programs continue to grow. The three certificate programs include: EMT (one semester), AEMT (one semester), and Paramedic (three semesters). The National EMS Education Standards have now been fully implemented and the first cohort took their national certification examinations in December and accomplished a 100% first time pass rate.

Information on the program is located at www.southalabama.edu/alliedhealth/ems or contact Jason Brooks, Program Director jbrooks@southalabama.edu

Alabama Gulf EMS System (ADPH EMS Region 6): AGEMSS has been awarded our eighth contract with the Alabama Department of Public Health to serve as the regional agency for the seven southwest counties: Baldwin, Clarke, Conecuh, Escambia, Mobile, Monroe, and Washington. This year’s contract is $222,622 with the eight year total of $1,881,575.00. The region must continue to maintain the trauma system; establish a stroke and STEMI system, provide trauma system orientation; assist with primary education, updates, and evaluation; maintain the Medical Director’s Accountability Committee and Plan, maintain the Regional Trauma Advisory Council and maintain the regional quality improvement plan. Information on the program is located at www.southalabama.edu/alliedhealth/ems or contact David Garmon, Executive Director dgarmon@southalabama.edu or agemss@southalabama.edu

Department of EMS’s continued commitment to Service: Our commitment to the University and the local community continues to be very strong as we have four of our faculty who serve as Paramedics for the Jaguar Football team, which has saved the athletic department thousands of dollars by donating our expertise in emergency service to the team during summer camps and during football games. We also continue to offer free CPR classes to local school teachers, most recently we have provided education and certification to Allen Town Elementary School and Baldwin County Christian School, and we also offer an annual free CPR class to the staff and faculty of the University.

Charles O. Erwin; cerwin@southalabama.edu
Occupational Therapy

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

This has been an exciting time of growth and transition for the occupational therapy program. This year we welcomed three new faculty members. We are very excited to have these talented individuals join the team. You can learn more about them by reading the information presented below.

Two occupational therapy students, Lauren Brown and Maria Dallas, received scholarships this year, several faculty members presented at state and national conferences, and two faculty members have been invited to present at the 2014 Congress of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists in Yokohama, Japan.

Recently we received approval to search for an additional full-time faculty member. The applicant is required to have a doctoral degree; it can be a PhD, EdD or OTD. Please get the word out, and if you or someone you know is interested, please contact me at 251-445-9222 or mscaffa@southalabama.edu

The Department of Occupational Therapy continues to fulfill its mission by providing quality education in occupational therapy, contributing to the scholarship of the profession and improving the health and quality of life of people in the community through service.

Dr. Marjorie Scaffa; mscaffa@southalabama.edu

**NEW OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY FACULTY**

We were very happy to welcome three new occupational therapy faculty members in January 2013. Some of the faces may be recognizable as they are USA graduates and local practitioners.

**Katie Bufford, MS, OTR/L**

Assistant Professor and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator

Ms. Bufford is a graduate of USA’s Master of Science in OT program and has been working in the clinic since graduation. She began a pediatric practice within an outpatient rehab clinic, and it quickly grew to include three disciplines of pediatric therapy. During her clinic work she often supervised fieldwork students, both Level I and Level II. Ms. Bufford’s research interests include a variety of pediatric and adolescent neurological and mental health disorders, etiology and intervention strategies, modalities and education, in order for children and adolescents facing dysfunction to achieve the highest quality of life and opportunity for independent functioning.

**Courtney S. Sasse, MA EDL, MS, OTR/L**

Assistant Professor

Ms. Sasse is a graduate of USA’s Master of Science in OT program and has worked primarily in skilled nursing facilities. She is currently enrolled in a doctoral program at Pacifica Graduate Institute in Depth Psychology and Somatic Studies. Prior to becoming an occupational therapist, she worked in a variety of settings as an educator, grant writer and administrator. Ms. Sasse has written a number of occupational therapy textbook chapters and has presented research at several national and international professional conferences. Her research interests include occupational therapy and the arts, community-based practice, aging populations, and neuropsychology.

**Amy Woodward, MS, OTR/L**

Assistant Professor

Ms. Woodward is a graduate of the University of Alabama-Birmingham’s Master of Science in OT program. She has practice experience in a variety of settings including pediatric outpatient clinics, school systems, early intervention, acute care hospitals, inpatient rehabilitation, adult outpatient clinics, skilled nursing facilities, and home health. Ms. Woodward also has experience and particular interest in the use of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities. She is interested in knowledge translation regarding policies and procedures for access, funding, collaborative evaluation measures, and dissemination of assistive technologies for individuals with disabilities. Ms. Woodward is currently the Vice President of the Alabama Occupational Therapy Association.
SPECIAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Lauren Brown, a student in the Class of 2014, was recently selected to receive the South Baldwin Health Foundation scholarship. This scholarship is available to a student in occupational therapy, physical therapy or physician assistant studies who has at least a 3.5 GPA in the graduate program. Congratulations to Lauren!

Dr. Donna Wooster is teaching halftime for fall and spring semesters and working on scholarship halftime to further her research on toilet training for children with autism. She presented the results of her research on parent perspectives on toilet training children with disabilities at the 2013 American Occupational Therapy Association Conference in San Diego. In addition, Dr. Wooster served as a chapter reviewer for the 12th edition of the textbook, Willard & Spackman’s Occupational Therapy.

Dr. Marjorie Scaffa and Courtney Sasse presented a poster, a short course and an institute at the 2013 American Occupational Therapy Association Annual Conference in San Diego. The workshop and institute focused on interventions for problems of emotion regulation experienced by clients, and the poster depicted a model of resilience and recovery from disaster.

The 2014 edition of a classic text in occupational therapy, Willard & Spackman’s Occupational Therapy, 12th Ed., has our own Dr. Marjorie Scaffa as one of three new editors! In addition to co-editing the text, Dr. Scaffa wrote or co-authored seven chapters including chapters on emotion regulation, group process and group intervention, community-and population-based interventions, and occupational therapy for survivors of disasters. The textbook was highlighted at the American Occupational Therapy Association conference in San Diego.

Alabama Occupational Therapy Association (ALOTA) Fall Conference

The OT program was well represented at the 2013 ALOTA conference. All faculty members attended, as well as many current students and alumni. Amy Woodward, Vice President of ALOTA and a new faculty member in the OT department at USA, was responsible for developing, implementing and managing the conference. The three-day conference is held annually at Orange Beach, AL. With a record attendance of 233, a broad array of speakers from the national and local stage, and cutting edge topics, the ALOTA Fall Conference was a huge success. This year there were several speakers from the USA OT Faculty, including Dr. Donna Wooster, Dr. Marjorie Scaffa, and Courtney Sasse. We are also pleased to announce that one of our second-year Master’s students, Maria Dallas, received one of two scholarships awarded to students from all OT programs in the state of Alabama. USA OT alumnus, Renee Hall, who practices at USA Orthopedics, was both a presenter at the conference on “Ergonomic Assessment and Repetitive Stress Injuries” and the recipient of this year’s OTR Award of Excellence. In addition, the USA OT program received the award for the highest percentage of student members in ALOTA for the third year in a row. Congratulations to all!

Comments from a Pre-OT Student who attended the ALOTA Conference

As a pre-OT student, being given the chance to attend the conference was a wonderful opportunity and a great experience for me. It was clear that the keynote speaker, Jewell Dickson, was very passionate about what she does. She discussed her trip to Uganda and one thing that stuck out to me was this was proof that occupational therapy can take you to many places and put you in situations that really make you use your knowledge and be inventive. The conference reassured me (as if I had any doubt) that OT is the field for me. Being surrounded by such motivated and passionate people that weekend made it a wonderful experience for me.

Giang Nguyen
South Alabama Student Occupational Therapy Association (SASOTA)

SASOTA has been very active this past year. We have donated our time and talents to many charitable organizations and events including the Goodwill-Easter Seals build a playground for children with disabilities, the Martin Luther King Day event with USA, the autism walk, activities with clients from VIA, providing dinner at the Ronald McDonald house, and creating sensory boxes for children with autism. SASOTA hosted their first 5K in spring 2013 and now they are gearing up for another one in February 2014 that will include the wearing of costumes. People of all abilities will be invited to participate in the event. SASOTA had a very strong presence at the ALOTA Fall Conference. Two student research groups presented posters. In addition, students staffed a booth in the exhibit area. SASOTA will continue its efforts to promote occupational therapy both on campus and in the community. We are working on a plan to honor our colleagues in physical therapy as October is Physical Therapy Month.

Pi Theta Epsilon

USA’s Occupational Therapy honor society, Pi Theta Epsilon (PTE), has been providing service to the OT department and the local community through leadership, and scholarly activities. PTE members participated in fall orientation of incoming occupational therapy students, presenting study tips and conducting team-building activities. PTE members also volunteered at Camp Odyssey, a bereavement camp for children who have suffered the loss of a loved one. PTE members and their paired buddies shared stories, participated in games, and encouraged engagement in camp activities such as fishing, swimming and a drum circle. Members represented USA’s OT department through attendance at the Alabama Occupational Therapy Association fall conference at Orange Beach, AL. Presentations to USA’s Pre-OT club will be given throughout the fall and spring semesters on various occupational therapy topics, such as sensory integration and adaptive equipment, to increase curiosity and awareness of the field of OT.

By Andreana Cunha, OTS, PTE President at USA
Message from the Chair, Dr. Dennis Fell

The DPT Class of 2016 recently started their first semester. We admitted 40 students (from over 400 applicants and 300 qualified applicants) with a record average cumulative GPA of 3.80!! average science GPA of 3.67 and average GRE score of 303 (on the new scoring system). As part of the grueling orientation schedule, we of course took the students for orientation to the beach :-) at Gulf Shores on the first Tuesday afternoon, and had an afternoon full of sun with no rain! Now they are fully-focused on Anatomy, PT Skills and Ex Phys.

I had the great pleasure to be part of a new department initiative with CMMSA taking a group of 9 PT students on a mission/service trip to the Dominican Republic to provide PT services and care for the people there. You can read more details about that fabulous trip, including photos, below.

Please join us as we continue our USAPT Class Reunions, especially if you graduated in the one of the anniversary years listed below!!! We will facilitate Class Reunions for the highlight classes achieving major milestones, in conjunction with the Alabama APTA Spring Conference at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, AL, April 11 – 13, 2014. You can register for the conference and get your CEUs, and of course, enjoy the great beaches. This time we will highlight graduates from 1979 (35 yr), 1984 (30yr), 1989 (25yr), 1994 (20yr), 1999 (15yr), 2004 (10yr), and 2009 (5 yr), and any other particular classes that want to get together (let us know) with some specific activities for each class that participates. If you are interested or would help coordinate contacts with your class, please contact Dr. Dennis Fell, 251-445-9330 or email ptdept@southalabama.edu.

As you serve in this great profession, I pray that life continues to bring you all the best things in life, including great satisfaction in what you do as a physical therapist. We love seeing the news on Facebook about weddings and babies, and even more if I get a specific email with great joys that happen in your lives (so I can include it in our alumni updates – see our website)! It gives us, as faculty, a great sense of satisfaction thinking of all the graduates out there who are very positively impacting the lives of others and making an impact, bringing "motion to life"!

Be sure to check out the new faculty/student group photo on our website: http://www.southalabama.edu/alliedhealth/pt/studentinformation.html

Hope to see you soon!

Dr. Dennis Fell
dfell@southalabama.edu;
http://www.southalabama.edu/alliedhealth/pt/

DR. JOHN JEFFERSON TO RETIRE

After nearly 20 years on the PT faculty at USA, Dr. John Jefferson will be retiring at the end of 2013 to move closer to family in Oklahoma. Following his education at Dalhousie University, University of Toronto, and University of Waterloo, Dr. Jefferson joined the PT faculty at Dalhousie University and completed his certification in manual therapy. He was then recruited to join USA PT and simultaneously worked to complete his PhD through Rocky Mountain University of Health Sciences. "JJ", as most students have known him, has had a tremendous impact on the program and particularly in advancing the musculoskeletal and manual therapy curriculum. His practical skills and gift with teaching have equipped hundreds of students to provide optimal care to patients with musculoskeletal injury, particularly spine conditions with related neck and low-back pain. He will be missed greatly, but we wish him tremendous success in his next ventures! We are working to establish a John "JJ" Jefferson PT Scholarship in his honor. I would like to challenge each class that he has taught to honor him with a perpetual gift by helping to establish this scholarship in his name. Would you be a champion to help encourage others in your class to donate? Special recognition will be given to the class that donates the largest amount. If six people from each class would donate $100, or 12 people from each class donate $50, we could fund this scholarship now. Please contribute to the Dr. John "JJ" Jefferson PT Scholarship! You can send your tax deductible donation, payable to USA, to Dr. Fell for processing: USA Dept. of Physical Therapy, 5721 USA Drive N, HAHN 2011, Mobile, AL 36688.
Physical Therapy continued ...

Alumni Open House December 4th, 6:30 p.m.—Dr. Jefferson Retirement Reception

Mark your calendar now! The Department will host an Alumni Reception and Open House on Wednesday Dec 4th at 6:30pm, 2nd floor of the Health Sciences Building on the USA Campus, (5721 USA Drive North). Come visit with former classmates and faculty. We’ll have some food to share. It will also be a time for you to wish Dr. Jefferson well as he retires from the department. Please respond to this Doodle poll by November 25th, 2013, to RSVP so we can plan for enough food: http://www.doodle.com/33vrmwmc64hc5iu

Welcome Two New PT Faculty

We are so happy to welcome two new PT faculty to our team, both with PhDs and clinical specialist certification! Dr. J. Matt Day (PT, PhD, OCS) an ABPTS Orthopedic Clinical Specialist, joins us to teach biomechanics and orthopedics (replacing Dr. Liu who now teaches in the kinesiology program at Auburn). With his initial PT degree from University of Kentucky, he recently completed his PhD in Rehab Sciences also from UK and moves to Mobile with his wife and two children. Dr. Day will be taking unpaid leave of absence for a 5-month commitment to serve as a PT in Ecuador starting January 2014. Dr. Maureen Whitford (PT, PhD, NCS), filling a newly created faculty position in our department, is an ABPTS Neurologic Clinical Specialist, and will teach neurologic physical therapy and kinesiology. She joins us after teaching at Walsh University DPT program. After her PT degree from Ohio State University, she completed graduate degrees at the University of Indianapolis, University of Southern California, and her PhD at the University of Minnesota.

USAPT Physical Therapy Alumni “Facebook” Group

Dr. Fell started the "USA Physical Therapy Alumni" Facebook group in fall 2008 as an opportunity to enhance social networking and reconnection among USA PT graduates. Now there are nearly 350 of the 986 PT alumni (let's find all the others) who are part of the online networking group, including at least one person from the very first PT class. If you have a Facebook account and we haven't located you yet, please sign up and request to join the group. It'll be a fun way to keep in touch with your classmates and share photos! When you log into Facebook (www.facebook.com), and open your account, click on "Groups" and search for “USAPT Physical Therapy Alumni.” Then you can request to join the group and Dr. Fell will approve your request so you can see who has already joined. Help us find other USA alumni and invite them to join the group. Who knows who you might find there? You can add archive photos from your PT school years!

Alumni Access to Career Services Job Postings

http://www.southalabama.edu/careerservices/index.html

USA PT Alumni who are considering a change in employment can access all the job postings at this University Career Services website for free. Employers can also post a job to this site for access by our graduating students and alumni by contacting Beverley Hendley at bhendley@southalabama.edu.

USA PT Study Abroad/International Mission Trip to the Dominican Republic

The USA PT Department partnered with Christian Medical Ministry of South Alabama (CMMSA) for a mission/service trip to Juan Dolio (Dominican Republic) in August 2013. The students will have designation as an official University Study Abroad experience on their transcript for the experience. Ashley Wells PT (PT class of 2005), Mary Bounds Gregory PT (PT class of 2007), and Diane Pitts PT (PT class of 1986), and local clinician Maria Barreiro PT joined Dennis Fell PT (PT class of 1993) to lead a group of 9 PT students from the class of 2014 on a mission trip to the Dominican Republic. We provided care and did community clinics in a local hospital two days, two separate nursing homes, and set up a village clinic in a local church in a very small community. The 15-team members screened and provided physical therapy services and personal care to 141 patients for a total of 455 service hours.

Our team included 9 DPT 3rd-year students, with clinical supervision by two PT faculty, two PT alumni and and one local PT clinician (fluent in Spanish), and the trip coordinator Duane Baxter (also a USA alumus) from CMMSA (Christian Medical Ministry of South Alabama). The students said that the experience transformed their lives while being able to serve others. They gained an appreciation for how much we have in the US, and how content people can be with far less. They were very glad to be able to practice their clinical skills while sharing their faith. The language barrier was an issue but with translators, though still difficult, they were able to overcome and communicate. Body language, combined with a little Spanish vocabulary goes a long way. And many of them commented on how kind the Dominicans were.

You can view the blog the students wrote http://ptdr2013.wordpress.com/ to see more details. You can view Dr. Fell’s favorite DominRepub photos at this Facebook link:

https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10100253876771223.1073741826.51207873&type=1&l=0fc0a92327

A group of students from the DPT Class of 2015 is planning another mission trip in August 2014, in conjunction with CMMSA, perhaps returning to the Dominican Republic. The students, with some faculty and other therapists, are exploring options for a University-approved location to provide PT services, meeting a need in another country, while putting their faith into practice to encourage local individuals (both patients and staff). If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the group, please make your check payable to “CMMSA”, and mail to Dr. Dennis Fell, USA Physical Therapy Department, 5721 USA Drive N, HAHN 2011, Mobile, AL 36688.
Physical Therapy continued...

USA PT Study Abroad/International Mission Trip to the Dominican Republic continued

STUDENT NEWS

Scholarships Awarded: For the coming academic year, $6,300 in PT scholarships is being awarded to DPT students from the department’s scholarship endowments. Over the past ten years, the corpus of these endowments has grown to ~$157,400.00 through generous donations of alumni and supporters. Student recipients this year include: Panus Scholarship (Alex Bell, Christie Calametti, Tyler Covington, Kacie White, Melissa Payne, and Robert Best); McCoy/Archambault Scholarship (Tim Lipe); Walt Gault Scholarship (Olivia Drew, Noah Dickens); Anne Petty Scholarship (Byrnes Tatford, Jason Wamsley); Charles Gray Scholarship (Elizabeth Spitz); and James C. Wall Scholarship (Tiffany Pickett). Alumni who wish to donate to a scholarship fund, can send their tax-deductible gift to USA PT, Attn. Dr. Dennis Fell. Additionally, the following students are receiving scholarships from the South Baldwin Health Foundation Allied Health Professions Scholarship: Evan Stringfellow (Class of 2014), Ty Peterson & Jessie Williams (Class of 2015), and Nadia Arainejad & Brandon Wyatt (Class of 2016).

Alumni Updates

The latest news we’ve received regarding the alumni listed below is now posted on our department website Alumni page. Let us know about your promotion, certification, move, new job, grandchildren… We want to include you in the next issue! Also help us get in touch with other alumni who are disconnected.


Alumni Message

In May 2013, Anna Howard posted this statement on the USA PT Alumni Facebook page: “A great big THANK YOU to all the wonderful teachers (eh hem...professors) molding the minds in the PT Dept. at USA! I was certainly blessed to have learned from you...and now blessed to work along side you. Thank you for the gifts you share so selflessly!” From our perspective, helping to mold clinicians like that who are strongly engaged in the profession is one of the main reasons we teach!!!!

DPT GRADUATE SERVING IN AFGHANISTAN

Jeremy Fletcher DPT (2010) currently serves as the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division’s Physical Therapist. His Brigade is approximately 4500 Soldiers; however, approximately 2500 Soldiers deployed to Afghanistan for a nine month deployment Feb – Dec 2013. His primary mission is to serve the Soldiers within that area of operations to include US Army, Ranger, and Special Operation Forces. His duties include flying to Combat Outpost and Forward Operating Bases to care for acute and chronic musculoskeletal conditions providing a “Sports Medicine on the Battlefield” approach. This allows Soldiers to remain in their area without the need to be evacuated to a higher level of care. A secondary mission is injury prevention, early recognition and treatment of MSD conditions through educating medics and other health care providers on principles of orthopedic evaluation and management. Jeremy says, “This experience, more than any other, has opened my eyes to the fact that we (PTs) really are the neuromusculoskeletal experts...” You can follow this link to see an article about Jeremy’s work there with a photo http://www.dvidshub.net/news/111491/service-members-attend-health-fair-improve-readiness#.UjnCkbzkDLi. As Americans, we are very grateful to the men and women who selflessly serve our country here and abroad!!
Faculty Scholarly Productivity

Peer Reviewed Publications

Over the past year, faculty have published eleven peer-reviewed manuscripts:


Faculty Scholarly Presentations at National Conferences


- Irion, J.M., Gubler, C., Isacson, J., Kozakewicz, R., Weed, T. The Impact of Nutrition and Physical Activity Interventions Based on the Scale Back Alabama and Go Red Programs on Female Employees at the University of South Alabama. Poster. APTA CSM, San Diego, CA, January 24, 2013.


Faculty Scholarly Productivity continued

Faculty Scholarly Presentations at National Conferences continued


- **Kennedy, E.T.** Current Perspectives on Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD): Translating Evidenced-based Practice across Diverse School-based Settings, Educational and Developmental Intervention Services (EDIS) Rota Naval Air Station, Rota, Spain, March 11, 2013.


Faculty Achievements

- **Dr. Glenn Irion** was selected as recipient of the national APTA Award “Lucy Blair Service Award” in 2013, based on his ongoing contributions to the APTA Arkansas chapter, Section on Women’s Health, helping to develop the ABPTS Wound certification process, and particularly his efforts with the Acute Care Section as Editor of the Journal of Acute Care.

- **Dr. Dennis Fell** traveled to South Korea again for two weeks in February 2013, including visits to lecture and establish research collaboration at Sahmyook University in Seoul, Daegu University in Daegu, and Youngdong Univ. in Youngdong.

- **Dr. Dennis Fell** was selected as one of the USA “50 Outstanding Faculty” from the University’s history, as part of the celebration of the University’s 50th Anniversary.

- **Dr. Laura White** supervised the research project for which Kayla Braddock (2013 graduate) received the APTA Section on Geriatrics Student Award for Geriatric Research. Congratulations Kayla and Dr. White.

- **Dr. Jean Irion** received the Chapter Leadership Award from Alabama Chapter of APTA.

- **Dr. Elisa Kennedy** taught an international workshop in Spain “Current Perspectives on Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD): Translating Evidenced-based Practice across Diverse School-based Settings, Educational and Developmental Intervention Services (EDIS)” For PTs, OTs, and SLPs, and special educators, at Rota Naval Air Station, in Rota, Spain, March 11, 2013.

- **Dr. Jean Irion** has been appointed to a four-year term on the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties (ABPTS) to oversee the specialization process for all APTA specialties.

- **Dr. Dennis Fell** was recently elected Vice President of the Alabama Chapter of APTA.

Patti Fassbender PT Outstanding Teaching Partner

The University of South Alabama Faculty Senate selected Patti as the USA Faculty Senate’s Outstanding Teaching Partner award. Patti has provided direct support to the teaching mission of USA faculty by providing a setting and skilled supervision for USA students and also supports the teaching mission with specific and valuable learning experiences in wheelchair prescription and management. She was nominated by Laura White, Dennis Fell, Jean Irion, and Elisa Kennedy. The award was presented at the Annual Faculty Senate Banquet, Saturday, April 13th at the Fairhope Yacht Club.

USA PT Alumni Society and Future Gatherings

A PT Alumni Advisory Group has been formed to facilitate alumni activities and advise the department, and also plan several regional alumni reunions. The group this past year included: Tim Clemmons, Lucinda Davis, Eric Dekle, David Greer, Elizabeth Kavanagh, Michelle Short Lollar, Jocelyn Mayfield, Steven Mistretta, Shellie Parchman, Kathy Robinson, Kelly Shaw, Valerie Sullivan, and Donovan Brooks (some participating by cell phone or Skype). Contact Dr. Fell at <dfell@southalabama.edu> if you wish to contribute to the group. Also, you might have the address or phone for an alumnus with whom we have lost contact. Call (251)445-9330 or email <ptdept@southalabama.edu>.

We are also starting a specific Physical Therapy Society within the USA Alumni Association [http://www.southalabama.edu/alumni](http://www.southalabama.edu/alumni). If you are a USA Alumni Assoc. member, you can help us form the PT Society just by saying that you want to have membership in the PT Alumni Society (no extra fee). So please contact Dr. Fell dfell@southalabama.edu to let him know you want that designation. This will help us get financial support for our regional alumni events. **Help us plan an alumni event in your area!!**
Message from the Chair, Dr. Diane Abercrombie

As I reflect on my last 16 years with the USA PA program, with nearly 2 of those as Program Director and Chair, I am honored and humbled to have a job that I love. My colleagues are also my friends, and each cares deeply about the educational opportunities offered to our students as they develop new skill sets and gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for healthcare delivery in the United States. As a program, we are constantly assessing how we can enhance the education of our students and better prepare them for the complexities of working in diverse clinical settings and our melting pot society. As such, we embarked upon a revision of our curriculum in 2012 that would not only represent the transfer of information and skills, but also provide the transformation from student learner to a compassionate and caring physician assistant. Our new curriculum implemented summer semester 2013 remains 121 semester hours, but now reflects more independent learning by fostering synthesis of the basic medical sciences with the clinical medicine series. Students are further challenged with vital critical thinking, problem solving skills, and self-reflection. Societal, behavioral, and psychosocial issues in health care are addressed in a four course series.

Ambulatory and primary care are strongly emphasized as well as cultural competency and inclusion. Our students participate in service-learning and outreach community projects early during the didactic phase of the program and are extremely prepared for the clinical year. We are integrating more technology in the classroom as a key to higher student engagement and achievement, thus preparing our students for real-time clinical practice.

The program now has approximately 542 graduates employed in a variety of health care settings. Much like our physician colleagues, physician assistants are increasingly choosing to specialize, rather than practice primary care. However, with an improved focus on primary care throughout the breadth and depth of our curriculum, more of our most recent graduates are choosing primary care medicine and all have demonstrated growth in an appreciation for the need of primary care providers.

The issue of workforce shortage in primary care is not an easy fix. The program recently received its year two 2013-2014 HRSA grant funding, and anticipate a greater awareness of the PA profession among the community, Alabama, and our service area. Our goal is to increase the number of applicants from rural and medically underserved areas (MUA), veterans, and underrepresented minorities (URM). Data shows these applicant populations are more likely to return to their communities to provide much needed health care services. During year one of our grant (2012-2013), we were successful in expanding our recruitment strategies and student selection, establishing at least seven new clinical sites in rural and/or MUA, and increasing diversity in our 2013 matriculate body (12.5% vs. 2-5%). For these efforts our program received a national award October 17, 2013 at the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) Annual Forum in Memphis, Tennessee for “Excellence in Diversity”. This award includes a monetary gift which our program will use to start a scholarship for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Utilizing the services of the Development Office, our program anticipates growing the $500.00 gift associated with the award into a $5000.00 scholarship over the next year. Our faculty, staff, and alumni are committed to this project and its potential impact on students from disadvantaged backgrounds, further increasing opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This scholarship would be in addition to a $25,000 endowed scholarship given to the program (2012) from the Parker Family. Also, as a result of the PA Training Grant Award and increased awareness of the USA PA program, the Educational Outreach Coordinator position has been created. Ms. Cheryl Nicholls, BA, holds that position. Ms. Nicholls is responsible for actively seeking out and fostering relationships with community leaders, civic and faith-based, and participating in a plethora of other local and regional recruitment events targeting URMs and veterans.

It has been well documented throughout the literature that interprofessional collaborative practice helps to improve patient safety and patient outcomes. The PA program is proud to join forces with the College of Nursing (CON) and the College of Medicine (COM) as only one of 12 recipients nationwide of an Interprofessional Collaborative Practice to Improve Patient Outcomes grant totaling $1.3 million over a three year period. There are numerous goals of the grant, to include the engagement of accelerated nursing, physician assistant and medical students in an interprofessional collaborative education model to provide the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that lead to improvements in healthcare. This grant is a remarkable extension of the Interprofessional Collaboration and Education intramural grant our program received in 2012 where we chose to focus on faculty development and readiness for interprofessional teamwork. We are currently completing Module IV of our Faculty Development Workshop which consists of faculty from nursing, allied health, medicine, emergency medical services and library sciences.

On a final note, the faculty and staff are busy with teaching, advising and other scholarly activities. Dr. D. Vetrosky continues to serve on several national PA committees, is editor of one of the leading PA textbooks in the country, and has received many awards and honors. Dr. Z. Aliabadi is currently writing a textbook on medical microbiology and continues to share her wealth of clinical knowledge and expertise with our students each day. Ms. R. Risling, our junior faculty member, is busy with teaching, scholarly activities, and also coordinates our team-based learning pedagogy. The department has added two new part-time instructors, both graduates of the program. Ms. Erin L. McAdams, PA-C who also serves as Captain in the armed services and Ms. Elizabeth Eisenbeis, PA-C who presently practices in public health, emergency medicine and internal medicine. Ms. C. Davis, our Director of Clinical Education, has worked tirelessly to improve the clinical year curriculum with much success, and remains a valued and trusted student/graduate advocate. Thank you to the faculty and staff for making each day a gift to come to work as we dare to dream big, and together, make those dreams come true.

Dr. Diane Abercrombie; dabercrombie@southalabama.edu
NATIONAL PA WEEK

The PA profession was first proposed in the United States when Charles Hudson recommended to the American Medical Association (AMA) in 1961 the "creation of two new groups of assistants to doctors from nonmedical and non-nursing personnel." Dr. Eugene A. Stead, Jr. of the Duke University Medical Center in North Carolina assembled the first class of physician assistants in 1965, composed of former U.S. Navy hospital corpsmen. He based the curriculum of the PA program in part on his first-hand knowledge of the fast-track training of medical doctors during World War II. "National Physician Assistant Week" is celebrated annually in the US from October 6 through October 12. This week was chosen to commemorate the anniversary of the first graduating physician assistant class at Duke University on October 6, 1967.

To acknowledge the unique contribution of physician assistants in providing access to medical care on the anniversary of the graduation of the first class of PAs, Senator Vivian Figures presented this Proclamation to the USA Department of Physician Assistant Studies in recognition of the program’s continued efforts to educate compassionate and competent individuals from diverse backgrounds to become highly qualified physician assistants in accordance with the highest professional standards to provide a spectrum of preventative and curative healthcare to patients in various communities and clinical settings. Senator Figures commends the program on its emphasis on primary care medicine, including a broad foundation in the medical and surgical specialties.

RECRUITMENT

Enrollment growth is of strategic importance to the future of the USA PA Studies program. In conjunction with the continued enrollment of all students, it is vital that we recruit and retain students from economically disadvantaged, medically underserved and rural areas, those who are considered underrepresented minorities (URM’s) and veterans in order for the PA department to meet the goals and objectives set forth in the Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care Program grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in August 2012.

In order to meet our goals for recruitment, we set about creating a strategic marketing plan. The plan incorporated a number of initiatives, namely identifying capable, highly skilled individuals at younger ages within our target populations, providing potential students with early professional and campus experiences through summer outreach programs, campus visits, and shadowing opportunities. In addition to creating retention strategies for at-risk students, design marketing materials that reflect a commitment to diversity, develop relationships with local organizations to enhance promotion of the PA profession. Outlined below are a few of the recruitment strategies and promotional activities that were conducted throughout the 2012/2013 academic year:

- The 2012/2013 academic year began with attending the Mobile County Public School System (MCPSS) Career Day held at the Mitchell Center in October. We were able to speak with and educate high school students about the PA profession. Many of the URM students were completely unfamiliar with the profession and were thus invited to a URM information session that was held in February.
- In a continuing effort to educate URMs in both rural and urban areas, we intensified our outreach initiatives for high school students. Efforts included attending Parenting Night at Citronelle High School. The student population is comprised of a large percentage of Native Americans. This event provided an excellent channel of communication for students and their parents to engage in one-on-one conversations with faculty and staff about the PA program.
- In May, Educational Outreach Specialist (EOC), Cheryl Nicholls, was invited to participate with the MCPSS First Annual Summer Health Science Explorer’s Camp. Twenty students in grades 7 and 8 were invited to become “campers.” The EOC and Admissions Director, Karen LaSarge, presented a diverse program covering topics such as mock interview sessions, health career exploration, with an emphasis on the PA profession and how to dress for success. Again it was learned that 98 percent of attendees were unfamiliar with the PA profession.
- During the summer of 2013 we were pleased to host 15 students from the Rural Health Scholars Program, sponsored by the College of Community Health Sciences at the University of Alabama. The students spent the day on our campus touring the simulation lab, the anatomy lab and participating in various mock physical exams with our second year PA students. Also, due to increased visibility of the PA program on campus, we were, for the first time, invited to participate as a guest speaker for the Stars and Stripes Program.
Physician Assistant Studies continued ...

RURAL HEALTH SCHOLARS STUDENTS

Last fall Ms. LaSarge was invited as a guest speaker to attend a meeting of the Pre-PA Club at the University of Alabama. Due to this meeting, Ms. LaSarge was able to establish a relationship with one URM minority student who applied to and was accepted into the Class of 2015.

Pre-PA Society

Our crowning glory for the 2013/2014 academic year has been the establishment of a Pre-PA Society here at USA. More than 90 people registered as members and the first meeting, held on September 4th, was well attended. Officers were elected and they are anxious to get started. Officers are: President, Kim Wilson; Vice President, Emma Mitchell; Secretary, Rashunda Mathis; Treasurer, Destiny Brown; Historian, Mary King; Philanthropist, Bailee Johnson. Congratulations to all!

ADMISSIONS

To encourage more diversity in our class selections, changes to the admissions policies were made in the 2011-2012 cycle, beginning with an extensive revision of application deadlines, minimum requirements, academic score calculations, and the interview process. The most substantial revisions were made to the interview selection procedures.

To foster diversity and better evaluate each applicant’s background and experience, the Admissions Committee made decisions to:

- Equally weigh the academic score with the interview scores,
- Revise the individual interview scoring to include more holistic and emotional intelligence values such as cultural and environmental awareness,
- Add a group case scenario interview to the interview process. The group case scenario interview is a 15-minute segment in which a healthcare scenario is presented to three applicants for discussion, with two interviewers acting as observers. The interviewers then scored applicant performance on leadership, ethical behavior, and maturity with the implicit goal of embracing a more holistic admissions interview.

For the 2012-2013 admissions cycle, the top 90 students with highest academic scores were invited for interviews. After interviews, class selections were made only on the final score, thus placing equal weight on both academic ability and interview performance.

After implementation of these new policies plus a strategic recruitment schedule, the department experienced increases in:

- Underrepresented minorities: 10% (compared to previous years of 2%)
- Students with economically or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds: 20%
- Current military or veterans: 5%

We will be using the same procedures for the current admissions cycle, and look forward to increasing the diversity of our student body, and thus, increasing the diversity of the physician assistant workforce.

PA’S GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

Class of 2014 with Dr. Fields

Since its inception in 1996, the USA PA program has a longstanding tradition of community service and are involved in numerous activities and programs that “pay it forward” to local residents and abroad. One program that USA students are proud of is its annual PA student charity event. In June 2013, the Class of 2014 chose the Nemours’s Children’s Oncology Center as its charitable
Physician Assistant Studies continued ...

PA’S GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY continued

organization in honor of Dr. Phillip Fields, Professor, College of Medicine. Dr. Fields has taught gross anatomy with cadaver lab to the USA PA student body for over 10 years. He is known as an avid runner and has completed over 50 marathons. This year the PA students hosted a 5K, “Miles for Medicine” and presented the Nemours’s Clinic with a check for almost $6000.00 in honor of Dr. Fields and the USA PA Class of 2014.

Class of 2013
On July 26, 2013, 37 students graduated as the 16th PA class. Those honored at the ceremony were:

Student Service Award                      Brandi Eberly
Dean’s Award                               Brandi Eberly
Didactic Instructor of the Year            Edgar Finn, MD, Altopointe Health Systems
Clinical Instructor of the Year            Don Smith, PA-C, The Surgery Group, Pensacola, FL
Clinical Support of the Year               Shyla Reddy, MD
Primary Care Recognition Award            Shyla Reddy, MD

SPOTLIGHT ON ALUMNI
Barbara Favreau, PA-C, MHS

I have often envied those people who knew from the time they were little what they wanted to do with their life. I was definitely not one of them. As a girl I had dreams of being an architect, an interior designer or a microbiologist. Having a wide range of interests can be an obstacle when you have to choose one to immerse yourself in for the rest of your life! I went to college in New England, majoring in Medical Technology for a year and then transferring to another college where I graduated with a degree in Biology. During my college years I still had no clear direction of what profession to pursue. I just knew I enjoyed anatomy and physiology and I enjoyed working with people. I briefly considered going to medical school, but decided that all those years in school would conflict too much with my desire to have a family. My first introduction to the physician assistant profession was as a patient at about 20 years old. At first I thought it was kind of weird that I wasn’t seeing a doctor, but after about 30 seconds with the PA I was completely comfortable and confident of his ability to take care of me. He was professional, knowledgeable and courteous, just like any doctor I had ever been to and I was given excellent care. My mother, an RN, mentioned to me that I might consider being a PA and I tucked that thought away for later consideration.

I got married right after graduation to a Navy man and in the next 20 years had four children and moved many times. Raising children and moving often kept me busy, but I had occasional part time jobs working at a credit union and doing taxes. Throughout this time I thought about what kind of profession I would be happy with when the time came for me to return full time to the work force. I went back to college studying computer programming, which was interesting, but not for me. It was difficult to really settle in to a course of study with our frequent moving and I could not envision a clear direction.

After my husband’s retirement from the Navy, we moved to the Mississippi Gulf Coast. My children were in high school and I was free to expand my horizons. I decided to go to the local community college to study to become a radiologic technologist, figuring that the job prospects would be good, I would be pursuing my interest in the medical field and the time involved would be minimal. Though I enjoyed the course very much I realized during my many days as a student x-ray tech in the hospitals that I wanted to know more and be able to do more. I wanted to know what brought these patients in, what their symptoms were and their diagnosis. I wanted to be part of their care from the beginning, help them throughout their illness and hopefully, be part of their healing process.

It was during my x-ray school rotations that I began to seriously consider being a physician assistant. I began researching how one became a PA and forming a plan on applying for the program at USA. Coincidentally, or Providentially as I believe, I had a professor who was a physician assistant and had been instrumental in the genesis of the PA program at South and he was very encouraging and supportive of my interest. Being in my mid-40s, I was very concerned that my age would be an automatic down check to my application and I also worried about the difficulty of being the “old lady” in a class of people whose average age was 25, but I decided to take a chance and apply. I told myself, and God, that I would apply for PA school at USA once and if I was not accepted I would be happy with being an x-ray tech. Apparently, my age was not a significant obstacle to my acceptance and I began PA school at USA the day after I graduated from x-ray school.

PA school was tough, the first semester especially so, but I was blessed with great professors, good friends in my class and a family who cheered me on even when I had doubts about my ability to do the work. I set up a little table in my walk in closet and spent many a long night in there studying. The hour drive to school every day became routine and the occasional teasing about being the oldest in the class just made me laugh. Rotations through the various fields of medicine exposed me to all kinds of new experiences, different types of people and pushed me way beyond my comfort zone. Seeing roaches crawl out of a patient’s purse, trying to get a medical history from a psych patient, examining a squirming and screaming 2 year old, holding a patient’s heart in my hands were just a
Physician Assistant Studies continued ...

Barbara Favreau, PA-C, MHS continued

few of the experiences that helped me grow and learn. I found that the things that had scared me the most, surgery, trauma and emergency medicine, were my favorite rotations. All of the medical professionals I came into contact with, whether they were great at their job or awful, taught me something I could use to shape my own career and attitude toward being a health care professional. There were great days and there were awful, tiring, discouraging days but I was blessed with a husband and children who never stopped believing in me and never stopped encouraging me to keep going. Without them I don’t know if I would have been able to do the long days and nights of studying and call. They were all there at graduation and it was one of the happiest days of my life.

I have always had a strong faith in God and no more so than when my husband passed away 3 weeks after graduation. My husband, besides being my mate of 25 years, my best friend and a loving father, had been our sole bread winner. Knowing that I could make a good living as a PA and support my family was a huge weight off my shoulders during that time of despair. My friends at the PA program kept their eyes peeled for a good opportunity for me while encouraging me and supporting me through those awful months. I had an offer to work in family practice, but it just didn’t seem like the right fit for me so I waited to see what else God had for me.

A small group of emergency medicine doctors had recently started an urgent care center and were interested in hiring a PA and the school gave them my name. I went in to interview with Dr. Darren Waters at Greater Mobile Urgent Care. I knew before my interview, when Dr. Waters told me to wear something casual, and during my interview, when Dr. Waters ran in sweaty and smelly from jogging to his office, making a comment about how he was afraid I would catch the clinic on fire walking with my corduroy pants, that I had found my professional home and family. I joined them as their first PA after they had been open only 3 months. We have worked hard and laughed a lot. Dr. Waters didn’t know much about PAs and their role in health care but he knew they needed help, so he took a chance on me. I think it’s safe to say that he has been happy with their decision to hire PAs since I have been there almost 5 years and we now have 10 full time PAs and 2 part time PAs.

I love working in urgent care. I see all kinds of patients, babies through elderly, minor cuts and scrapes and colds to severely ill and injured people. I have treated almost every kind of ailment, sutured many lacerations, incised and drained myriads of abscesses and splinted injured extremities. The pace is fast, which I like and there is a lot of variety to the patients, which I love. Over the last year I have been “by myself” in one of our satellite clinics in Citronelle, AL. Of course, I am only a phone call away to one of the docs and my charts are reviewed frequently, so I am always under the supervision of a doctor, but it has been the greatest growing experience of my professional life. I have gained confidence in knowing what I can handle and, equally important, confidence in knowing what is beyond my scope of knowledge and practice. I have also come to love and respect my patients up in the “country” and to form a relationship with many of them. I have also been able to go on two medical mission trips as a PA, one to Haiti and one to Guatemala. These experiences have been invaluable to me personally and professionally.

In my opinion, one of the most important aspects of being a medical professional and in particular to being a physician assistant is to treat our patients with respect and warmth, to listen to them, and to interact with them on a friendly and professional level. I am very grateful to Dr. Waters and his sister, Dr. Shannon Waters, for allowing me to be part of their successful urgent care adventure. I am also grateful for their superb teaching, guidance and friendship over the years, and their continued support of the physician assistant profession and the PA program at USA. I am blessed to have found a profession I love and a job with people who make work fun and interesting.

Dr. Darren Waters said, “Barbara was the first PA we hired at Greater Mobile Urgent Care and she quickly made it clear how valuable mid-levels are in a physician practice.” He continued, “She was brought on virtually at the inception of our clinic and has been a huge asset to our practice. We’ve hired, almost exclusively, USA graduates because they have been so well trained and beneficial to our clinic.”

FACULTY ACTIVITIES

Publications


International Presentations

Abercrombie, D.D. Interprofessional Collaborative Practice: An Investigation of Health Science Faculty Perceptions of Interprofessional Education and Practice. Hawaii International Conference. Honolulu, HI, January 7, 2013

Non-Peer Reviewed Journals


Non-Peer Reviewed Presentations before Scholarly Groups

Click-Davis, C. Physician Assistants and the University of South Alabama. Pre-health Student Society, University of West Florida, Pensacola, FL, March 2012.

Click-Davis, C. Physician Assistants and the University of South Alabama. Pre-Physician Assistant Student Society, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL, April 2012.
Physician Assistant Studies continued ...

**FACULTY ACTIVITIES continued**

**Continuing Education Workshops and Seminar Presentations**


**Abstracts**


**Office/Appointed Positions Held in Scholarly/Professional Organizations**

Diane D. Abercrombie
Board Member At-Large, Alabama Society of Physician Assistants, 2011-Present.
Faculty Liaison, Alabama Society of Physician Assistants, 2010-Present.
Member, Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, Physician Assistant Education Association, 2010-Present.
Elected Board Member at Large, Alabama Society of Physician Assistants, 2011-2013.
AAPA Rural Health Education Advisory Panel, 2012.

Daniel T. Vetrosky
Member, National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, Physician Assistant National Recertification Exam Committee, 2000 - present.

**Reviewer for Journals/Books**

Diane D. Abercrombie
1999-Present. Editorial Reviewer, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Daniel T. Vetrosky
1997-Present. Editorial Reviewer, Springhouse Corporation, Springhouse, PA.
1998-Present. Editorial Reviewer, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
Reviewer for Sutureline peer reviewed Journal of the American Association of Surgical Physician Assistants.
Reviewer for the Journal of the American Academy of Surgical Physician Assistants.

**Editorships**

Daniel T. Vetrosky
Editorial Board member, Sutureline, Journal of the American Association of Surgical Physician Assistants.

**Grant Funding**

Funding Agency: Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA)
Program Title: Interprofessional Collaborative Practice
Project Title: Interprofessional Collaborative Practice to Improve Patient Outcomes
PI: Dr. Catherine Dearman
Project Role: Project Faculty
Funding Requested: $1,300,000.00
Date Awarded: August, 2013

Funding Agency: Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA)
Program Title: Primary Care Training and Enhancement
Project Title: Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care Program
PI: Dr. Diane D. Abercrombie
Project Role: Project Director
Funding Requested: $1,000,000.00
Date Submitted: May 8, 2012
Date Awarded: August 1, 2012

Funding Agency: University of South Alabama, Health Sciences Division
Program Title: Enhance Interprofessional Education across the Health Sciences at USA
Project Title: Interprofessional Education Collaboration across the Health Sciences
PI: Dr. Diane D. Abercrombie
Project Role: Primary Investigator
Funding Approved: $5,000.00
Date Awarded: May 22, 2012
Radiologic Sciences

Message from the Chair, Dr. Charles Newell

With the 2013-2014 academic year well underway, the Department of Radiologic Sciences program begins its 37th year of operation! Forty-one junior students were admitted to the B.S. program, and will join twenty-eight senior students who are quickly acclimating to the demands of the second year. In addition to the new class, student enrollment in the various modalities remains stable with a current enrollment of: MRI (31), Ultrasound (4), Radiation Therapy (7), CT (23), Cardio-Vascular (4), Mammography (2) and Radiology Administration (20). The combined Departmental enrollment for the fall semester is 108.

Last year marked the end of the two-year certificate program, and the beginning of the new baccalaureate program. The new B.S. program requires all students to complete 63-64 semester hours of non-radiography freshman and sophomore level course work prior to entering the program. Under the new curriculum all students will complete one year of general radiography course work. Prior to the start of their senior year, students will select one area of concentration (e.g., radiation therapy, ultrasound MRI, CT, etc.). Students selecting MRI, CT, vascular, radiology administration or mammography will also enroll in general radiography and radiography clinical education courses, that will qualify them for ARRT certification in general radiography and in an advanced imaging modality. Radiation therapy and ultrasound students will enroll in courses specific to their area of concentration and although they will not be eligible for ARRT certification in general radiography, they will be eligible for certification in ultrasound (ARDMS) and radiation therapy (ARRT).

Although all of the scores have not been received, the Class of 2013 has thus far received a 93% first-time pass rate on the ARRT Exam, and we are certainly proud of these graduates. The first-time pass rate for Radiation Therapy students was 100%.

Graduation for the Class of 2013 was held at the Laidlaw Performing Arts Center on July 25, 2013. Twenty-eight students graduated, and the Center was filled to capacity. Mr. Barry Nielsen, Class of 1993 delivered the graduation address. During graduation ceremonies, those graduates recognized for academic and clinical achievement were Brian Campbell, Graduate Student Award, Michelle Nowak, Dean’s Award, and Danielle Niewind received the Clinical Excellence Award. Ms. Brook Nicholas, R.T. (R) received the Clinical Adjunct Instructor of the Year Award. Ms. Nicholas serves the Department, as so many others do, as an Adjunct Clinical Instructor. Ms. Nicholas is employed at Springhill Medical Center. Once again, our appreciation goes to the 2013 Class officers who made significant contributions via support for their fellow class members and the Department. The 2013 class officers were: President, Jacob Owens; Vice-President, Brian Campbell; Treasurer, Meagan Lynde; Secretary, Mui Lam; and Historian, Marissa Gutierrez.

The Department currently offers four scholarships which are:
The Department of Radiologic Sciences Scholarship ($1000/annum)
Mary Lou Littleton Endowed Scholarship ($2000/annum)
Radiation Therapy ($700/annum)
Charles and Penny Newell Endowed Scholarship (a new scholarship [2011] with an anticipated per annum of $1500-2000)

The Department’s scholarship fund received $1,200 in donations during the USA Annual Fund Drive in 2012-2013. As I have indicated in previous editions of the Crucible, our Departmental scholarship funds enable us to award $3,700 annually to three deserving students, which are always greatly appreciated. However, with tuition at $292.00 per semester hour, one can see that $3,700 does not go very far. So, I once again request that alumni consider making a small donation to one of our scholarship funds. Remember, as the scholarship fund grows, so will the annual amount awarded to a student. Any assistance you may lend will be sincerely appreciated.

Best wishes to all!

Charles Newell; cnewell@southalabama.edu

THE GRADUATE CORNER

Our featured graduate for this edition of the Crucible is Barry Nielsen, Class of 1993. As mentioned previously, Barry delivered the graduation address to the Class of 2013 in July of this year, and he did a wonderful job. As Barry noted during his address, twenty years have passed since he sat in the same place as the graduates of 2013, and the intervening years have brought many changes, both personal and professional.

Following graduation in 1993, Barry worked as a radiographer for several years in the Mobile area, and served as an adjunct clinical instructor for the radiography program. His duties at the University of South Alabama Medical Center included CT, interventional radiography, OR service and ED trauma. At the same time, he continued his education earning a bachelor’s degree from USA in 1994. His long-time interest in the business side of radiology resulted in the completion of an MBA from the University of Mobile in 1997. He is also a Certified Professional Coder and a Certified Radiology Administrator.
Radiologic Sciences continued ...

THE GRADUATE CORNER continued

His first venture outside of clinical radiology was as an account manager with Per-Se Technologies/McKesson, which is a national billing company. In this position, he covered a seven-state Southeastern region for coding and auditing and was responsible for accounts receivable, mergers and acquisitions, finance, and coding management of over 150 physicians whose practices ranged from radiology to pediatrics. He also specialized in interventional radiology coding and was an instructor for the American Academy of Professional Coders.

In 2002, Barry accepted a position as the Clinical Director for Virginia Medical Imaging and Medical Imaging of Fredericksburg, Virginia. His initial assignment was to direct the operations of multiple outpatient imaging centers and related services. He was also involved in all aspects of information technology, including PACS, RIS, Scheduling, Voice Recognition, etc. For a large medical imaging system, it is worthy to note that patient satisfaction ranged up to the 99th percentile. Without doubt, Barry’s presence played a key role in the overall success of all of those imaging facilities.

Owing to Barry’s accomplishments, he was promoted to the position of Executive Director for Imaging Services at Virginia Medical Imaging and Medical Imaging of Fredericksburg in 2013. His current duties include managing over 170 full-time employees, who perform over 200,000 procedures per annum with an annual operating budget of over $120M. His facilities in Virginia have been recognized in the top 100 Radiology Imaging Facilities for the last three consecutive years by the Imaging Economics Journal. For his efforts in radiology management, Barry was also recognized as a semifinalist candidate as one of the top 10 Most Effective Radiology Administrators in America. To say the past 20 years have been exciting for Barry is somewhat of an understatement as “we” have all witnessed the advancements in image storage, distribution, the electronic format (PACS) and the development of sophisticated imaging systems that are now part and parcel of what is now known as diagnostic imaging. I believe we all can agree that Barry has played a significant role in advancing the application of these technologies.

So what else has Barry been doing since 1993? In Barry’s words, “the last 20 years went by in a flash”. He married Debbie in 1996 and began a campaign to build their collective careers and start a family – all at the same time. The family lived in Charleston, SC and then moved to Fredericksburg, VA. He and Debbie are the proud parents of two sons, Tyler (16) and Cameron (14). Like other parents, they have sought to balance work and family. Debbie is a physicist with the Department of Defense and, of course, Barry still enjoys his career in medical imaging. As far as balancing family and work, they have spent numerous hours observing their sons participate in sports. This included dugouts, watching from the sidelines, pool-side and any number of activities at the beach. Barry and Debbie enjoy hiking, cycling, working in their yard and going to the theater. They have also found time to travel, but not enough, according to Barry. Given Barry’s professional accomplishments, only he and Debbie can attest to the success of balancing work and family. Knowing Barry, I would guess that he and Debbie have been equally successful in this endeavor as well.

Without intending to do so, I believe Barry provided an appropriate ending to this brief biographical sketch when he wrote the following to me a few weeks ago:

Over the years I have immersed myself in work and family, and now look back to my years in college. I have some great memories such as attempting to catch a 400 lb. patient before he fell to the floor while winding up pinned to the floor, as well as experiencing many of the symptoms mentioned in Disease class. More importantly, I miss all my many friends... Going back to Mobile to present the graduation address caused me to realize that I have so many memories with friends, now colleagues. When we get to the point in life where we begin focusing on the quality of life, it is wonderful to be able to reflect on the great memories we have. [It’s] just like a vacation. Once we return, we only have those memories. I enjoyed seeing Robert, Brad and all of my professors.

As I reflect on my visit to Mobile, I am struck by the happiness of the people whom I saw... I also have a renewed appreciation of where I came from, and who helped me succeed. I share with anyone now and [those] who will meet in the future, that humility, a friendly smile and uncompromising professionalism are the secrets to success. I'm proud to have come from the University of South Alabama School of Radiologic Technology, Class of 1993, and look forward to remaining a part of such a proud family of Radiographers in Mobile.

I am unable to add to Barry’s statements other than to say the faculty and I are proud of Barry’s accomplishments, and his appearance at graduation was both appreciated and enjoyed. We wish Barry and his family the very best, and we fully expect Barry to continue to be the true professional that he is today.

OTHER NEWS

Alpha Eta is a national allied health organization, which recognizes the academic accomplishments of students completing allied health programs. This year two students graduating from our B.S. program were inducted into Alpha Eta. Congratulations go to Dana Bekurs and Charles Davis who are this year’s new members in Alpha Eta. They were officially inducted during the Pat Capps College of Allied Health Profession’s annual Faculty Recognition Ceremony on March 27, 2013.

In April 2013, the Alabama Society of Radiologic Technologists and the Georgia Society of Radiologic Technologists held its second joint annual conference in Gadsden, Alabama. As usual student participation was well represented through competing in the Student Bowl, poster displays, and scientific essays. Cathy Cooper and Trish Brewer remain active in the ALSRT as State officers and ASRT delegates.
FACULTY ACTIVITIES

Ms. Cathy Cooper:
- Patient Care and Ethics. Alabama Society of Radiologic Technologists Annual Meeting. Orange Beach, AL, April 2013.
- Medical Ethics and Patient Care. 35th Annual Department of Radiologic Sciences Seminar, March 2013.
- ASRT Senior Delegate representing ALSRT for the Annual Governance and House of Delegates Meeting of the American Society of Radiologic Technologists.
  - Member of the Student Intern Selection Committee.
  - Mentor for two students attending the Educational Symposium and House of Delegates meeting in Albuquerque, NM.

Ms. Patricia Brewer:
- Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology, Accreditation Site Visitor.
- Alabama Society of Radiologic Technologists, Secretary/Treasurer.
- Association of Educators in Imaging and Radiologic Sciences, Membership Committee.

Mr. Chucri Jalkh:
- Diagnostic Contrast Media Examinations. 35th Annual Department of Radiologic Sciences Seminar, March 2013.
- Radiation Protection and Radiation Biology. 35th Annual Department of Radiologic Sciences Seminar, March 2013.

Dr. Charles Newell:
- Imaging Receptors. 35th Annual Department of Radiologic Sciences Seminar, March 2013.
- Radiologic Physics. 35th Annual Department of Radiologic Sciences Seminar, March 2013.
- Radiographic Exposure Factors. 35th Annual Department of Radiologic Sciences Seminar, March 2013.

Ms. Cherie Pohlmann:
- Webmaster for Alabama Society of Radiologic Technologists.
- Uterine Abnormalities. RADSYM. Biloxi, MS, October 2012.

Mr. Dale Smith:
- Stereotactic Mammography. USA Mammography Conference. Mobile, AL, September 2012.

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 students in our program through donations to one or more of our scholarship programs. Arrangements to make donations to the Department of Radiologic Sciences Scholarship Fund can be made by contacting The University of South Alabama Office of University Development - 650 Clinic Drive - Room 2150 - Mobile, AL 36688-0002, Telephone: (251) 460-7032 FAX: (251) 461-1776 development@southalabama.edu, or the Department of Radiologic Sciences, Telephone: 251/445-9346, FAX (251) 445-9347. Regardless of the amount, your support will be sincerely appreciated. A current list of departmental scholarships that will welcome your contributions is as follows:

The Department of Radiologic Sciences Scholarship
Mary Lou Littleten Endowed Scholarship
Radiation Therapy
Charles and Penny Newell Endowed Scholarship

Alumni are also encouraged to submit items of interest for publication in the Crucible. Please let us hear from you. Direct your submissions to: Dr. Charles Newell, Department of Radiologic Sciences, 5721 USA N. Drive, HAHN 3015, Mobile, AL 36688-0002. cnewell@southalabama.edu. Again, let us hear from you!
Message from the Chair, Dr. Robert Moore

This has been another good year for the department. Dr. Ishara Ramkissoon has received two grants during the year. One grant is Environmental Literacy in Marine Science & the Health Impact of Pollution. The amount is $120,352.00. The sponsor is Environmental Health Capacity and Literacy Project at Tulane University, which is a part of the Gulf Region Health Outreach Program (BP). The second grant is an ASHA Multicultural Activities Grant. The title of the grant is Addressing the Needs of Children with Limited English Proficiency During Speech Recognition Threshold Evaluation. The grant is in the amount of $10,717. Dr. David Evans received a $2,250 fellowship from the Stuttering Foundation. This year we updated the Voice Lab with a new videostroboscopy unit. This is the only videostroboscopy unit in Mobile.

In May 2013 we graduated 21 students with MSSLP degrees and 5 students with Au.D. degrees. Dr. Neina Ferguson graduated with a Ph.D. degree. Upon graduation, Dr. Ferguson accepted a faculty position at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, TN. Thirty-three undergraduate students also graduated with degrees in Speech and Hearing Science in May. The following students were honored during the commencement ceremony: Michelle Johnson, Valerie Lanier, Kimberly McWherter, Julie Sellers, Jessica Dobson, Mary Grafe, Christina Knowlton, Chloe Kruedewagen, Mary Grace Stewart, Ellen Watson, Marisa Ard, Monika Rotondo, and Megan Smith.

In August 2013 the department welcomed 24 new students to the MSSLP program and 11 new students to the Au.D. program. This brings our totals to 46 SLP graduate students, 40 AUD graduate students, and 4 Ph.D. students.

Robert Moore; rmoore@southalabama.edu

RECENT FACULTY AND STUDENT PUBLICATIONS


RECENT FACULTY AND STUDENT PRESENTATIONS


Speech Pathology and Audiology continued...

**RECENT FACULTY AND STUDENT PRESENTATIONS continued**


Evans, D.L., Healey, E.C. Relationships between speech motor variability and autonomic arousal in adults who stutter. 7th World Congress on Fluency Disorders, Tours, France, July 2012.


**STUDENT RECOGNITION**

During graduation ceremonies in May several student awards were presented.

*Fran Battles* – Outstanding MSSLP student  
*Lindsay Oldham* – Outstanding AuD student  
*Monika Rotondo* – Outstanding undergraduate student  
*Neina Ferguson* – Outstanding Ph.D. student

Each year one student pursuing an MSSLP degree, one student pursuing an AuD degree, and one student pursuing an undergraduate degree in speech and hearing sciences are awarded Marjorie Faircloth Scholarships for excellence in the classroom and clinic. The Marjorie Faircloth Scholarships are named in honor of our first departmental Chair. These scholarships are funded by donations from alumni, friends, and faculty of the department. This year’s honorees are:

*Jerica Pressley* – MSSLP  
*Jonalyn Moore* – AuD  
*Karima Kemp* – undergraduate

In 2009 Dr. Bryce Evans began the Dr. Bryce Evans Book Endowment. The endowment is to fund an award to assist a deserving undergraduate student in purchasing textbooks for their classes. This year’s winners of this award were:

*Monique Harris*  
*Kaylon Turner*

Alabama Department of Education Consortium Grant:

*Ashley Johnston*

**OUTSTANDING OFF-CAMPUS SUPERVISORS**

In 2012 the faculty began to recognize outstanding off-campus supervisors who volunteer their time to help us train our students. This year the recognized supervisors were:

*Speech-Language Pathology* – Leigh Ann Riley, M.S., CCC-SLP  
*Audiology* – Jennifer Barnes, Au.D., CCC-A

**FACULTY RECOGNITION**

Dr. Tonia Beverly continues to serve as a Board Member of ABESPA.

Dr. Robert Moore is serving on the Board of SIG Coordinators for ASHA.

Dr. Julie Estis and Dr. Susan Gordon-Hickey are representing the department and college as members of the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Estis is serving on the Executive Committee of the Senate. Dr. Hickey is chair of the Salaries and Benefits Committee.

Dr. Susan Gordon-Hickey is in the second year of for her NIH-LRP grant.

Dr. Ishara Ramkissoon serves as the Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Trustees for Mercy Medical.

Dr. Brenda Beverly is a member of the Learning Tree of Mobile Advisory Board and a member of the Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee.

Dr. Paul Dagenais is a member of the Board of Trustees, Mercy Life.

Mrs. Kendra Hudson is a consultant to Mobile Community Action, Inc. (Head Start).