

SPRING/SUMMER 2009

UAB Psychiatry

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

BUILDING A PARTNERSHIP

FOR AN AGING POPULATION

ALSO INSIDE:

When is
Anxiety Not
Normal?

UAB CARES:
Joining Forces
for Autism

Department
Welcomes New
Resident Class

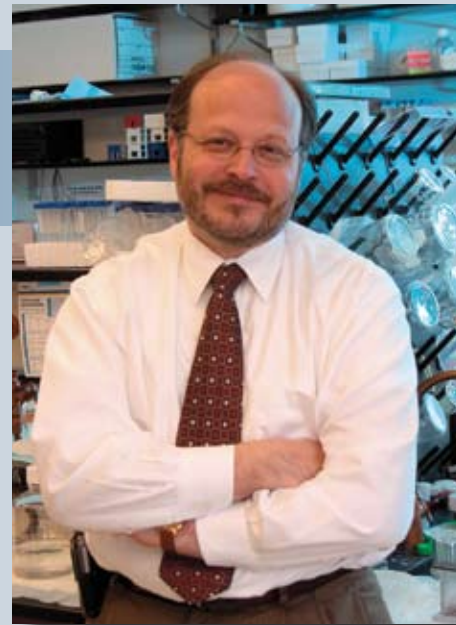
Clinics Move to
Callahan Eye
Foundation Hospital

Message from the Chairman

It has been a busy time since we last published UAB Psychiatry. I am pleased to bring this current issue to you, in which some of the recent activities in the Department of Psychiatry are highlighted.

One of the recent developments that I am personally excited about is featured on the cover of this issue and showcased inside. This is our new partnership between the Department of Psychiatry, and in particular our Division of Geriatric Psychiatry, and the Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute and Department of Neurobiology, both headed by Dr. David Sweatt. Dr. Sweatt is an internationally known scientist who studies mechanisms of learning and memory, and arrived at UAB at about the same time that I moved to Birmingham. He has spent the last three years recruiting multiple new laboratory scientists to the Department of Neurobiology and the McKnight Brain Institute, many of whom study aspects of learning and memory. The main mission of the McKnight Brain Institute at UAB is to understand age-associated memory dysfunction. Dr. Sweatt has built a stellar team studying this in the laboratory, and our recent partnership permits this enterprise to expand in a “bench to bedside” translational manner to now apply the breakthroughs in the laboratory to help patients with memory problems. The focus of this bridge between our departments is naturally with our Division of Geriatric Psychiatry, and we plan several joint recruitments of clinician-scientists that work directly in these areas. Dave and I both see this as “win-win” not only for our Departments, but for all of UAB and especially the patients that we serve.

A great deal of our recent activity and recent excitement is the relocation of many of our outpatient clinics, formerly located in the antiquated Smolian Building, across the street to the Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital (CEFH). As part of my recruitment to UAB, the School of Medicine committed to relocating the Smolian clinics into upgraded, freshly renovated, and expanded space. Although this project has been delayed, I am delighted that we were finally able to move the clinics into this space in July. The clinics occupy nearly the entire 3rd floor of the CEFH and are a substantial improvement over the space that we left behind. These new clinics should be a more pleasant and convenient environment for our patients to be seen and for our faculty, staff, and trainees to work.



As we noted in a past issue, the Sparks Clinics, UAB’s multidisciplinary clinics for the assessment of developmental disorders, has been moved into the Department of Psychiatry. The Clinics, under the leadership of one of our child psychiatrists, Dr. LaTamia White-Green, continue to evolve as we work to further develop this important UAB-wide program. Emphasizing the truly interdisciplinary nature of these Clinics, we feature a short article on UAB Collaboration for Autism Research, Education, and Service (UAB CARES), a group of talented individuals passionate about serving those affected with autism drawn from a number of UAB Departments and Schools campus-wide.

Finally, we continue to grow as a Department and many new people are to be found in these pages. We attracted a spectacular group of new trainees into our Psychiatry residency, our Child and Adolescent Psychiatry training program, and our Psychology internship. We continue to recruit stellar new faculty, and I am pleased to welcome Dr. Jacinda C. Hammel, an outstanding addition to our group of psychologists.

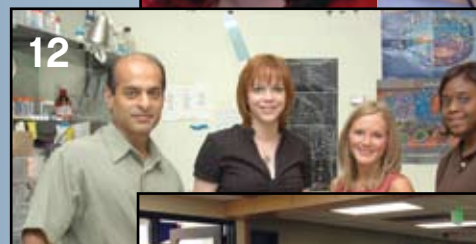
I hope you enjoy this issue. Exciting things continue to happen in Psychiatry at UAB, and as always I am delighted to bring news of these happenings to you in this publication.

James H. Meador-Woodruff, M.D.

Heman E. Drummond Professor and Chair
UAB Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurobiology

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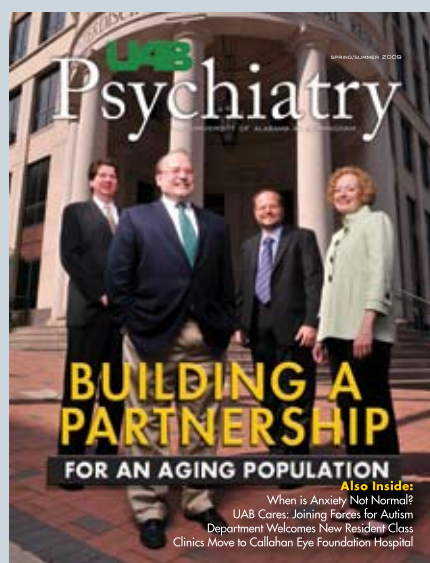
UAB Psychiatry

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About the Cover

Featured on the cover are (left to right) J. David Sweatt, Ph.D.; F. Cleveland Kinney, M.D., Ph.D.; James H. Meador-Woodruff, M.D.; and Terri Steele, M.D.

Through a new partnership with the Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute at UAB, the UAB Department of Psychiatry is taking steps to address the problem of memory dysfunction in our older patients. Bringing together UAB's clinical and research leaders in Geriatric Psychiatry and Aging-Related Memory Dysfunction, we are launching an exciting new initiative that will better serve our community. Find more about the cover on page 10 of this issue.



We've all faced anxiety in our lives-before a big test, prior to giving a speech, or when faced with a major decision- but when is anxiety not normal? What is the difference between feeling anxiety and having an anxiety disorder? Anxiety is a normal reaction to a stressful situation; a human emotion that we use to cope. However, when anxiety impairs our ability to lead a normal life and we begin to dread normal everyday situations, it has become a disabling disorder.

There are five major types of anxiety disorder: **generalized anxiety disorder**, **obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)**, **panic disorder**, **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**, and **social phobia** (or social anxiety disorder).

Generalized Anxiety Disorder, GAD, involves excessive worry and tension, even when it is not provoked. People with GAD can't seem to stop worrying about various concerns. They often experience physical symptoms which cause significant distress such as restlessness, muscle tension, unsatisfying sleep, irritability, fatigue, and difficulty concentrating.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, OCD, is characterized by recurrent thoughts (obsessions) and/or repetitive behaviors (compulsions). People with OCD are flooded with persistent and unwelcome thoughts or by the need to engage in certain rituals. Repetitive behaviors like hand washing, cleaning, counting and checking are performed with the intention of preventing the obsessive thoughts and making them go away. Unfortunately, performing these rituals only provides temporary relief from the anxiety.

Panic Disorder involves sudden episodes of intense fear or terror accompanied by chest pain, rapid heart beat, shortness of breath, dizziness, abdominal distress, or other physical symptoms. During a panic attack, a person may often feel like their heart is going to beat out of their chest, sweaty, weak, dizzy or faint. These symptoms are accompanied by tingling in the hands, nausea, chest pain, a fear of impending doom or loss of control.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, PTSD, develops after a traumatic event or situation in which severe physical harm

occurred or was threatened. These events could include military combat, physical assaults, natural disasters, or accidents. Signs of PTSD include constant frightening thoughts or memories of the event, and disconnecting from close friends and family. Sleep problems and feelings of emotional numbness can also accompany this disorder.

Social Phobia (Social Anxiety Disorder) occurs when a person is excessively self-conscious or feels an overwhelming sense of anxiety in everyday social situations. Social phobia can be limited to one specific situation (fear of speaking in various situations or eating in front of others) or may be more severe, and encompasses any experience the person has around other people. Signs of social phobia include a fear of being watched and judged by other people, and the fear of embarrassing themselves in front of others. Sometimes these fears are so intense that they interfere with daily activities such as work or school. Physical symptoms can include excessive sweating, feeling dizzy, nausea, trembling and difficulty talking.

It is not known exactly what causes anxiety disorders, but research has shown that changes in the brain and environmental stresses may be factors. These disorders are very treatable using approaches including relaxation therapy, medication, psychotherapy, and dietary and lifestyle changes. Even though anxiety disorders cannot be prevented, there are steps that can be taken to manage symptoms.

- Stop or reduce your consumption of caffeine-coffee, tea, cola and chocolate
- Exercise, get a good night's sleep and develop a healthy diet
- Deep breathing and other relaxation techniques
- Consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking any over-the-counter medicines or herbal remedies-some may increase anxiety symptoms
- Seek counseling or support after a traumatic experience

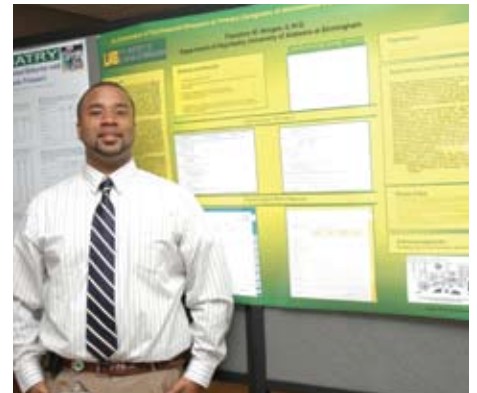
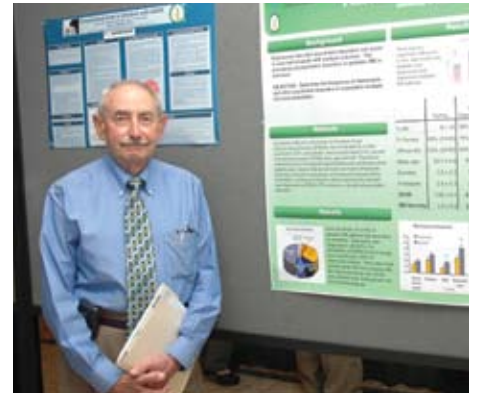
For information about scheduling an appointment with a physician in the Department of Psychiatry, call the ACCESS line at (205) 934-7008.

Department Hosts Third Annual Research Symposium

Scientists from multiple areas of expertise within the UAB Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurobiology came together for the Third Annual Research Symposium on Tuesday, April 14th. Over 30 posters covering a variety of research projects were presented. Among these were projects conducted by psychiatrists in training, faculty, postdoctoral and graduate students. Topics included attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, risk factors for violent crime, suicidal behavior and substance abuse in prisoners, brain imaging, genetic investigations of patients and studies of neuropathology. A key strength of the meeting was the emphasis placed on both basic science and clinical investigations, in order to foster a 'bench to bedside' or translational approach, which aims to bring laboratory science to potential clinical use.

The symposium concluded with oral presentations by two members of the Psychiatry faculty, Dr. Robert McCullumsmith and Dr. Adrienne Lahti, and also a guest speaker, Dr. Maria Muzik, from the University of Michigan. The focus of Dr. McCullumsmith's research is the investigation of gene expression within the glutamatergic system in schizophrenia, using postmortem human brain tissue. Dr. Lahti subsequently presented results of her investigations in schizophrenia using brain imaging. She was recently funded by the National Institutes of Health in a project aiming to bridge her work with postmortem studies, in collaboration with Dr. Rosalinda Roberts. Dr. Maria Muzik, a leading psychiatrist-investigator from the University of Michigan, presented data on the effects of impaired maternal care on children resulting from anxiety in mothers during pregnancy or postpartum.

Many thanks to all of the participants for making this year's symposium such a success.



Civitan-Sparks Clinics: Dedicated to Clinical Excellence

By LaTamia White-Green, M. D., Director, UAB Civitan-Sparks Clinics



Dr. LaTamia White-Green with patient

The UAB Civitan-Sparks Clinics remain committed to providing interdisciplinary services for children and their families with developmental disorders, despite the tough economic times that have developed throughout the community, state, and nation. Our mission involves three principles that we continue to work diligently to improve—clinical service, training, and research.

Clinically, there are several services provided at UAB Civitan-Sparks Clinics that are unique and innovative. The ADHD Summer Treatment Program that is headed by Dr. Bart Hodgens has provided summer services for children with disruptive behavior disorders and was recently recognized in U.S. News and World Report. Another unique program to our community is the Adult Down Syndrome Clinic that was begun by and is currently headed by Dr. Edward Lose, a UAB Geneticist who specializes in treating children and adults with Down syndrome. The adults who receive services in this clinic may have consultation with a nutritionist, social worker, speech pathologist, psychologist, audiologist, or occupational therapist, depending on their needs. This clinic seeks to provide support for a challenging population that may not be able to have access to these services elsewhere. The Sparks Dental Clinic, headed by Dr. John Thornton and Dr. Janice Jackson, provides more dental services to adults with special needs than anywhere else in Alabama.

Realizing the importance of maintaining a high level of clinical service, process improvement groups have begun to make improvements to the clinical services provided at Sparks. These teams have been hard at work implementing policies and procedures that will improve the intake process and as a result allow evaluations and treatment to occur more quickly.

While providing clinical services, Civitan-Sparks Clinics also continues to be dedicated to training graduate students, medical students, and residents. As Director of Training, Dr. Fred Biasini has worked tirelessly in making Civitan-Sparks Clinics an excellent training experience for short-term and long-term trainees rotating through various disciplines, including psychology, audiology, physical and occupational therapy, speech pathology, nutrition, and social work. Trainees are required to become competent in several areas, including knowledge of human development, neurodevelopmental disabilities, health care systems related to other disabilities, the interdisciplinary team process, and recognizing the need for cultural awareness in the provision of health care and promotion.

Research has been an integral part of the Civitan-Sparks Clinics, and as we continue to improve clinical services the Sparks' staff is also dedicated to expanding research on developmental disabilities. In response to Stimulus and Recovery Act grant opportunities, several clinicians are currently applying for grants that involve expanding diagnostic and treatment options for children with developmental disorders.

Our commitment to excellence to those affiliated with autism was also recently recognized by UAB Provost, Dr. Eli Capilouto, who presented Civitan-Sparks Clinics with a service award that was given to UAB from Mitchell's Place, a community provider of services for children with autism spectrum disorders.

As we continue to grow and flourish and improve the various aspects of our clinic, UAB Civitan-Sparks Clinics will become a leader both state and nationwide in the field of developmental disorders.

UAB CARES: Joining Forces for Autism



*Standing left to right; Rajesh Kana, Kristi Menear, Kristi Guest, Elizabeth McMahon Griffith
Seated left to right; Karen Bowen Dahle, Sarah O'Kelley, Valise Davis*

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one out of every 150 individuals in the United States has an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). There are three main forms of ASD: autism, Asperger syndrome, and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified. Research into ASD, training professionals, and clinical service are being conducted in various departments campus-wide. In an effort to facilitate these efforts UAB Collaboration for Autism Research, Education, and Service (UAB CARES) was formed.

Founded and coordinated by Dr. Elizabeth McMahon Griffith of the Department of Psychology and Civitan-Sparks Clinics, UAB CARES consists of faculty from eleven different departments dedicated to work in Autism Spectrum Disorder. Faculty meet monthly to discuss interests ranging from bench science to clinical service. Ongoing research projects of the various faculty include investigations into underlying neurodevelopment patterns in ASD and Rett Syndrome, brain imaging of higher cognitive func-

tions, genetic models, surveillance of epidemiology, ways to educate teachers regarding the specific needs of students with ASD, medication trials, and behavioral interventions targeting social symptoms. Most recently, faculty members submitted applications to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in response to calls stemming from the Recovery Act. With work at the Civitan-Sparks Clinics, the Department of Psychiatry, and the School of Education, UAB conducts state of the art diagnostics and empirically based interventions. All faculty are dedicated to training upcoming generations of students, and are planning a Neurodevelopment Day in Spring 2010 to highlight activities in this area on campus. UAB CARES is an active collaborative group striving to integrate work across departments within the University, as well as with a variety of community partners.

The formation of this group is a huge step toward a breakthrough. UAB CARES has made it their mission to ensure that a difference will indeed be made in the lives of people with ASD and their families.

Spotlight on Endowed Chairs

The strength of a great university resides in its faculty and to build a world-class psychiatry program, it is essential to attract, recruit and maintain the best and brightest talent in the field. The Department of Psychiatry has three main goals in order to further build a world-class psychiatry program: invest in young talent and groom them to success; recruit and maintain outstanding mid-career faculty, many of whom are often courted by offers from other institutions; and attract and recruit world-class faculty who are leaders in the field of psychiatry and recruited world-wide for their expertise in a certain research area. One of the most effective ways to accomplish these goals is through the use of endowed chairs. Endowed chairs provide an outlet for beneficent donors to contribute to the current and future strength of the department's faculty as well as partner with us in attracting and recruiting additional world-class faculty to UAB and the Department of Psychiatry. Earnings from an endowed chair provide funds to support the teaching, research and service of the holder. An endowed fund may be named in honor or memory of the donor or another individual designated by the donor.

Benefits to the Department and UAB

Endowed chairs benefit the Department of Psychiatry by providing the opportunity to retain key faculty members. An appointment to an endowed chair is very prestigious in the university setting and the academic community. An endowed chair also provides for the opportunity to build new programs of interests within the department by attracting an expert in a specific area to UAB. Also, an endowed chair gives UAB an opportunity to secure and sustain quality faculty members in competitive markets with other institutions. Having such a prized asset to offer someone sets UAB apart from the rest. Endowed chairs attract exceptionally talented faculty to the clinic, the classroom and research laboratories and directly enhance UAB's overall quality and performance. The promise of an endowed chair can attract or retain senior level scholars and educators to the campus, or junior level "rising stars" who are sought after by other institutions in the intense competition for top-notch educators and researchers.

Benefits to the Donor

Establishing an endowment gives a donor the opportunity to directly invest in the outstanding research, innovation, education and patient care produced by the occupants of the endowed chair. Through these efforts, a donor can positively impact the lives of countless individuals who will benefit from the work of the occupant of the endowed chair. An endowed chair gives the donor a great vehicle to honor someone. Their name will be linked forever to a commitment to academic excellence and all achievements of the occupants of the endowed chair. Investing in an endowed chair is a living testimony to a donor's commitment to social responsibility and the future of psychiatric medicine.

Our department is extremely grateful to the generous families who have invested in the research endeavors of our department by establishing endowed chairs and professorships in honor of faculty members and loved ones. We currently have three faculty members who occupy endowed chairs in the department.



Heman E. Drummond Chair

The Heman E. Drummond Chair is designated for the Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry. **Dr. James H. Meador-Woodruff** was recruited to this position in April 2006 from the University of Michigan. Dr. Meador-Woodruff is an internationally respected psychiatrist-scientist who has specialized in the study of schizophrenia. His research focus is on understanding brain abnormalities in schizophrenia and his research has been continuously funded by NIH since 1989. He moved his research lab from Michigan largely intact to UAB. The Meador-Woodruff laboratory's primary research interest is on understanding how different parts of the brain communicate with other parts via a variety of chemical signals, and how this communication is disrupted in schizophrenia. A current focus is on studying the expression of genes associated with glutamatergic neurotransmission within individual cells in the nervous system. In addition, the provision of

these funds allows Dr. Meador-Woodruff to have protected time to focus on growing the Department's research programs, on managing clinical operations, developing myriad educational programs, and on dealing with the many challenges facing academic medicine today.



Kathy Ireland Chair

In February 2007, **Dr. Rosalinda Roberts** was recruited from Maryland and appointed to The Kathy Ireland Chair. The provision of these funds allows Dr. Roberts to have protected time to focus on developing the department's brain collection of postmortem brains from subjects with schizophrenia and other mental illnesses, on overseeing the establishment of her new laboratory, and on dealing with the many challenges facing academic science today. Her research in neuropathology in schizophrenia, ultrastructure in normal human brain and the effects of medication on the brain provides novel information and understanding of the underlying mechanisms that may play a role in schizophrenia. Dr. Roberts is one of the very few scientists in the world who study the ultrastructure of human brain with the electron microscope. She collaborates with colleagues from UAB and many other institutions in the US and around the world. In June 2008, Dr. Roberts

launched The Alabama Brain Collection (ABC) in collaboration with the Alabama Organ Center. In one year of collecting we have 46 brains, including those from controls and people suffering from schizophrenia, depression, alcoholism, and dementia. Dr. Roberts and her team are in the process of educating the public about donation possibilities, and making the ABC known to basic neuroscientists and clinical colleagues around UAB.



Patrick H. Linton Endowed Professorship

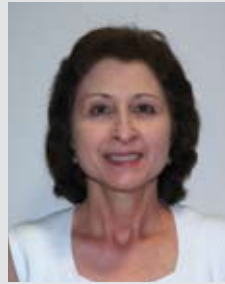
Dr. Jacqueline M. Feldman was appointed to The Patrick H. Linton Endowed Professorship in 1999. The provision of these funds supports travel to professional meetings in which Dr. Feldman presents, is utilized to purchase educational materials used by the Community Psychiatry staff, and supports a portion of salary (matched by the Alabama Department of Mental Health) of a grant writer who has generated over 10 million dollars worth of grants. Dr. Feldman's research interests are focused on identifying relevant factors in systems of care that enhance recovery in patients with serious mental illnesses. Her most recent efforts have focused on grants which serve to place those who are homeless and have mental illness in housing with wrap-around clinical services provided. Dr. Feldman is also now researching effective treatment of women with pre-and post-natal depression. She is both the Executive and Medical Director of the UAB Comprehensive

Community Mental Health Center/Community Psychiatry Program and serves as the federal court monitor for women's prison mental health services for the Alabama Department of Corrections. These funds have been pivotal in permitting Dr. Feldman to "spread the word" nationally on the importance of recovery-oriented, evidence based treatment for patients with serious and persistent mental illness.

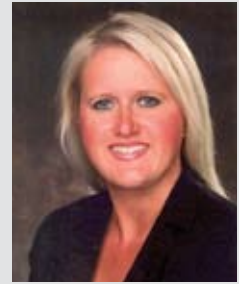
UAB Psychiatry Welcomes New Residents

The Psychiatry residency program keeps getting better and better each passing year, and the first year residents entering our program this year are no exception. The breadth of our academic program steeps the residents in a number of clinical settings that few other programs can offer. The Psychiatry Residency Training Committee (PRTC) works diligently to evaluate each candidate to assure our program is accepting only the very strongest applicants suited for the demanding curriculum our residency training program has to offer.

This year the UAB Psychiatry Department is happy to announce the matching of eight applicants to our PGY-I class. Their hard work and experience combined with our strong curriculum, will strengthen our program. Please welcome our new 2009-2010 PGY-I residents:



Brenda Harris, M.D.
From Dade City, FL
Medical Degree from:
University of Florida
College of Medicine



Jessica Gordon, D.O.
From Pearl, MS
Medical Degree from:
Pikeville College School
of Osteopathic Medicine

Please join us in welcoming two new residents to the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry program.



Abigail Babin, M.D.
from Birmingham, AL
Medical Degree from:
Texas Tech University
Health Sciences Center
School of Medicine



Noah Downie, M.D.
from Mount Pleasant, SC
Medical Degree from:
Medical University of
South Carolina College of
Medicine



**Nina Vanessa
Kraguljac, M.D.**
from Rochester, MN
Medical Degree from:
Paracelsus Private
Medical University,
Salzburg, Austria



Li Li, M.D., Ph.D.
from Birmingham, AL
Medical Degree from:
Hubei Medical University,
China



Cayce Paddock, M.D.
from Augusta, GA
Medical Degree from:
Medical College of
Georgia School of
Medicine



Rachel Pope, M.D.
from Macon, GA
Medical Degree from:
Mercer University School
of Medicine



Taylor Preston, M.D.
from Birmingham, AL
Medical Degree from:
University of Alabama
School of Medicine



Richard Wagner, M.D.
from Ormond Beach, FL
Medical Degree from:
Saint George's University

Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute at UAB

Psychiatry Partners with the McKnight Brain Institute at UAB

Dr. J. David Sweatt, Director, Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute at UAB joined by
Dr. James H. Meador-Woodruff of the UAB Department of Psychiatry

The Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute at UAB, located in the Richard C. and Annette N. Shelby Interdisciplinary Biomedical Research Building and directed by Dr. J. David Sweatt who is also the Evelyn F. McKnight Endowed Chair for Learning and Memory in Aging, houses a unified scientific and clinical focus on age related memory dysfunction. Launched in 2004 through a generous commitment from the McKnight Brain Research Foundation, the Institute has a long-term goal of translating discoveries from basic biomedical research into treatments to minimize the harmful effects of aging on learning and memory in humans. The goal is on both understanding the basic processes underlying age-related memory dysfunction and developing new treatments for aging-related memory disorders. Having the Institute on campus has also stimulated changes in the education and training of future clinicians and researchers. New courses in aging-related memory dysfunction, normal memory function, and translational research in memory dysfunction are all being developed. As the average age in the United States continues to increase, research into aging-related memory dysfunction has never been so critical. It is also of particular relevance for the mission of the Department of Psychiatry, as many of the disorders we treat often have memory-associated symptoms.

The UAB Department of Psychiatry has partnered with the McKnight Brain Institute to jointly fill two of the open endowed chairs in the Department of Psychiatry—The Geropsychiatry Research Chair and The F. Cleveland Kinney Endowed Chair in Geriatric Psychiatry. With both of these chairs targeting research focused on elderly psychiatric patients, the scholars that are recruited into these chairs, while holding primary appointments in the Department of Psychiatry, will also simultaneously join the faculty of the McKnight Brain Institute. We expect to recruit a laboratory scientist into the Geropsychiatry Chair, and we plan to recruit a clinician-investigator into the F. Cleveland Kinney Chair who would build a patient-based research program in Geriatric Psychiatry. This partnership will bring together the clinical and research efforts of the Department of Psychiatry with the research excellence on cognitive aging and associated memory loss of the McKnight Brain Institute at UAB, which will bring state-of-the-art translational research findings to the clinic, to provide even better care for our aging patients and improve their cognitive health. This partnership is yet another critical step in our trajectory of making UAB Psychiatry one of the very best psychiatry departments in the country.

About the Cover *Continued...*

Dr. F. Cleveland Kinney, a highly regarded professor and psychiatrist in the Department of Psychiatry at UAB, was honored in 2000 with an endowed chair bearing his name, the F. Cleveland Kinney Endowed Chair in Geriatric Psychiatry, which will be used in our partnership with the McKnight Brain Institute to recruit a clinician-scientist in Geriatric Psychiatry. Dr. Terri Steele is an Associate Professor and Director of the Division for Geriatric Psychiatry at UAB. Dr. David Sweatt is the Director of the Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute at UAB and Chairman of the Department of Neurobiology. Dr. James Meador-Woodruff is the Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurobiology. These four individuals represent the leadership of UAB's effort to understand age-related memory dysfunction and bring new treatments to aged patients impacted by memory impairment as part of their psychiatric conditions.

The Department Welcomes Dr. Jacinda C. Hammel



The Department of Psychiatry welcomes Jacinda C. Hammel, Ph.D. as Assistant Professor and program co-director for the AIMHS Center for Excellence. Her research focuses on mental health services and her clinical foci include outpatient therapy with adults. She is a member of the UAB Psychology and Internship Training Consortium and will be providing psychotherapy supervision for psychiatry residents.

Dr. Hammel received her first undergraduate degree in Business and Accounting in 1994. In 2001 she received her second Bachelor of Science degree (cum Laude) in psychology from Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. Her graduate work was completed at Auburn University in 2004 (MS) and 2006 (PhD), where she worked with Dr. F. Dudley McGlynn studying anxiety disorders. Her specific interests were that of "autonomic activity in generalized anxiety disorder: Sympathetic and parasympathetic activity during worry exposure and decatastrophizing." Thereafter, she

completed her dissertation entitled "Meta-worry and Generalized Anxiety Disorder." As a clinical psychology intern at the Durham Veterans Affairs Medical Center in North Carolina, Dr. Hammel provided therapeutic, assessment and consultation services in a medical setting. Some of those services included mental health, infectious disease, inpatient psychiatry, rehabilitation and medical consultation. She also has extensive teaching and training experience in Dialectical Behavior Therapy, suicide and self-injury prevention, social psychology, behavior therapy, abnormal psychology and lifespan development.

Dr. Hammel's clinical experience includes private practice and working with the Youth Services Institute of the University of Alabama and the State of Alabama Department of Youth Services. Her duties included working with incarcerated adolescent females, program/policy development, design and oversight of research, and supervision of clinical staff. Dr. Hammel is currently a co-investigator with the program. She is a member of professional organizations including the American Psychological Association and the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies. Please join us in welcoming Dr. Hammel to the Department.

UAB Psychology Welcomes New Intern Class



Hal Thurstin, Ph.D.
Chief Psychologist

Dr. Hal Thurstin, Director of Training for the UAB Psychology Training Consortium, announces the 2009 - 2010 Psychology Interns who have been accepted to our program. These individuals were chosen from a large number of applicants because of their hard work and dedication to the field of Psychology. We welcome them to the UAB Psychology Training Consortium and look forward to working with them as they advance their careers. The new interns for the 2009 - 2010 academic year are:

- **Dominique Delalot**, University of Florida
- **Michelle K. Kramer**, Chicago School of Professional Psychology
- **Bradley J. Daniels**, University of Florida
- **Lindsey Kirsch Darrow**, University of Florida
- **Misti J. Norton**, University of Alabama
- **Kristy Adler Domnanovich**, University of Southern Mississippi
- **Christie Salamone**, Auburn University

Gary Drummond, Jr. Memorial Research Award Created



left to right; Dr. Gautam Bijur, Johanna Gandy, Keri Mans and Brittany Holt

The Gary Drummond, Jr. Memorial Research Award was created in October 2008 from the generous memoriam support of the community. Dr. Gautam Bijur received the award to fund the pilot stage of his investigation into the treatment of schizophrenia with Omega-3 fatty acids.

It has been suggested that the neurological abnormality for schizophrenia may occur during development in-utero. Evidence for this concept comes from numerous studies showing that environmental factors such as prenatal malnutrition or infections, and perinatal complications result in higher incidence of schizophrenia. The notion that prenatal malnutrition contributes to schizophrenia is particularly interesting because it suggests that the lack of certain essential nutrients may contribute to the disease, or conversely, that supplementation of these nutrients to mothers prior to and during pregnancy may reduce the risk that their children will develop schizophrenia. Also, administration of nutrient supplements to high risk children may protect against the development of schizophrenia, or at least improve some of the symptoms of the disease.

One class of nutrient supplements that have garnered some attention by researchers is the omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (FAs); especially eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexanoic acid (DHA). EPA is well known for its anti-inflammatory properties and it has been proposed that its therapeutic efficacy in some types of brain trauma may be due to its ability to reduce neuroinflammation. DHA is the most abundant fatty acid in the brain and is the primary component of neuronal membranes. Neuronal membrane integrity is essential for conductance of nerve impulses and ultimately the proper release and uptake of neurotransmitters. It is suggested, that DHA and EPA may bolster neuronal signaling and neuronal plasticity. Numerous studies have examined how DHA and EPA protect against brain injury and neuronal death, but no studies to date have actually looked at prenatal supplementation of FAs within the context of schizophrenia. The overarching goal of Dr. Bijur's study is to explain how these two FAs, DHA-EPA, affect brain signaling. Low-cost nutritional supplements like DHA-EPA as preventative treatments for schizophrenia are increasingly getting scientific interest and funding because they have the potential to substantially reduce the cost burden of this chronic illness. However, almost nothing is known about how prenatal administration of DHA-EPA affects brain neuronal physiology and signaling. These studies will provide new preliminary data that can lead to a potential therapeutic application for DHA-EPA.

Dr. Bijur and the Department of Psychiatry would like to thank the members of the community who honored Mr. Gary Drummond, Jr. with your memorial gifts to the department. We are pleased to honor such a wonderful family by continuing groundbreaking research on such a life-altering illness.

Personality and Individuality: Workshop Focus

By Fred L. Griffin, M.D.



Most of us enter mental health disciplines because we are interested in creating therapeutic relationships that accompany our patients through their illnesses and that contribute to their healing. In psychiatry, the practice of psychotherapy affords the clinician the opportunity to work centrally within such physician-patient relationships.

Useful as they are, conventional psychiatric diagnoses do not always capture the complexity of any one human being and may not be adequate to the task of creating a roadmap that is useful in charting the journey of psychotherapy. In order to create a viable approach to this form of treatment, we must delineate the unique ways that each patient experiences the inner, emotional world and the distinctive patterns he or she employs in relating to others. This is called personality.

On March 28, the renown psychologist and psychoanalyst, Dr. Nancy McWilliams, conducted a day-long seminar, titled "Personality, Ordered and Disordered: Therapeutic Effectiveness by Appreciating Individuality," in which she discussed comprehensible ways of approaching the complex matter of personality. Drawing upon extensive clinical experience and recent research in the field, she described certain dimensions of personality, each of which delineates an aspect of a complex tapestry of human behavior. Paying particular attention to the dimensions of subjective experience, repetitive themes, defensive patterns, central conflicts, self-esteem maintenance, and relational patterns, Dr. McWilliams then translated these concepts into practical approaches to the treatment of patients, each of whom has his or her individual style of learning and changing.

This day-long workshop was one in a series of psychotherapy programs that our Department is providing for both the faculty and the broader mental health community of Birmingham.



Fred L. Griffin, M.D. is Director of Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Training in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurobiology and Training Psychoanalyst with the New Orleans-Birmingham Psychoanalytic Center.

Clinical Scientist Receives Doris Duke Award



Dr. Robert McCullumsmith was awarded the 2009 Doris Duke Clinical Scientist Development Award. This 3 year award provides grants to junior physician-scientists to facilitate their transition to independent clinical research careers. The Doris Duke Foundation provides grants for biomedical research to facilitate the discovery of disease processes and new treatments. Dr. McCullumsmith was nominated by UAB to compete nationally in the Psychiatry, Neurology, and Neurosurgery category, is among thirteen other recipients receiving this award across all disease categories, and is only the third clinical scientist from UAB to ever receive this award. Dr. McCullumsmith's application is focused on studying glutamate transporter localization abnormalities in schizophrenia. He plans to use laser-capture microdissection and immunolocalization of subcellular compartments to probe for changes in transporter function in glutamate synapses in human postmortem brain tissue.

These studies represent an extension of his findings of altered transporter expression in corticothalamic circuitry in schizophrenia. These studies will help advance the understanding of the pathophysiological changes underlying the symptoms of this complex and often devastating illness.

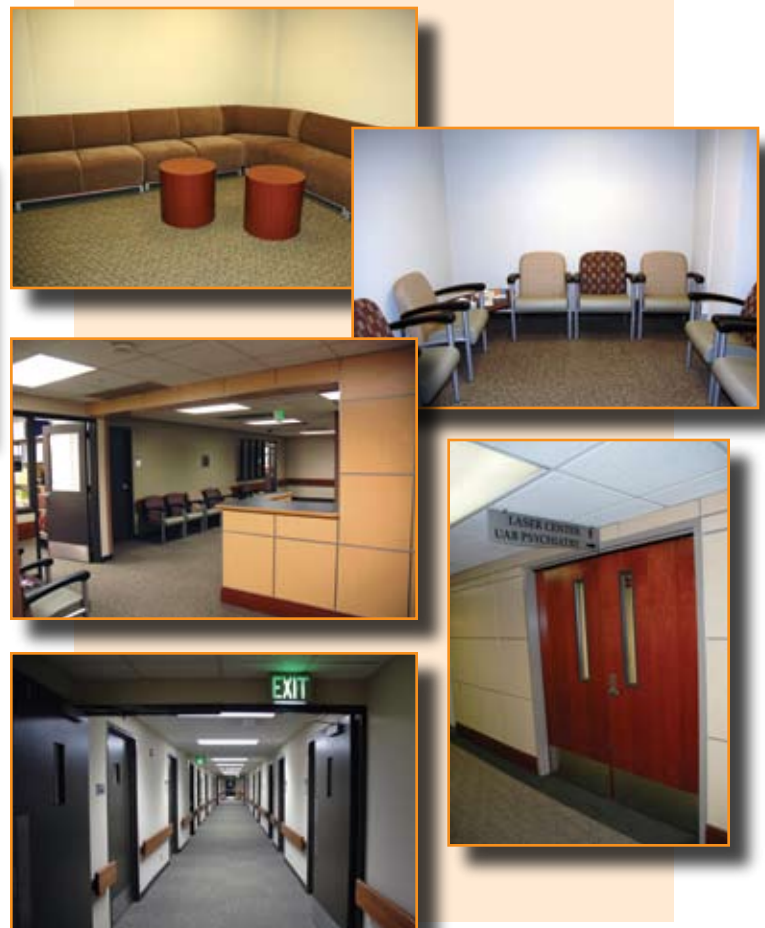
Clinics Move to Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital

It has been a long wait, but the newly renovated space on the 3rd floor of the Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital (CEFH) is complete. The new space, located at the corner of 8th Avenue and 18th Street, now houses all outpatient clinics formerly located in the Smolian Building as well as our resident training and education offices. This new location is beneficial not only for our faculty and staff, but more importantly for the patients who visit the clinics. The new clinic space provides easy access for patients by allowing for parking and valet service within the facility via the parking deck located on 8th Avenue South (University Blvd.). The newly renovated clinic provides more office space for our doctors and residents in addition to upgraded public areas. Because of the clinic's central location and new floor plan, the check-in and check-out process will be much easier for the patients and their families. It has been a long wait to move into the CEFH, but the wait has been well worth it. We hope that you will be as pleased with our new clinic as we are. Our sincere appreciation to the School of Medicine for their generous investment in the renovation of this space and making this new clinic a reality. Without their help, this would not have been possible.

Before



After



UAB Psychiatry Annual Ice Cream Social

On the afternoon of June 19th, the Education and Training office within the Department of Psychiatry sponsored an Ice Cream Social to introduce and welcome the new residents to the department. Incoming residents were joined by faculty, staff and current residents for an afternoon of ice cream and great conversation.

