

SPARKS PLUGS

A quarterly publication of the UAB Civitan-Sparks Clinics
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FALL 2010 EDITION

From the Director...

As we look to the New Year and develop resolutions and goals, remember this quote:

“Great works are performed not by strength, but by perseverance.”

-- Samuel Johnson

Conferences/Workshops

Stephanie Deluca, PhD presented “A Multi-center Clinical Trial of Pediatric Constraint-Induced Therapy in Children with CP: What is the Dose?” at the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine in Washington, DC on September 24.

Bart Hodgens, PhD presented “Skills-building Interventions for Children with ADHD” at the University of Alabama 2010 Southeast Regional ADHD Conference in Tuscaloosa on October 18.

Allie Green, LCSW, MSW participated in the resource fair at Shelby County Department of Human Resources on Friday, October 22, and **Teresa Teer, LGSW, MSW** at Jefferson County Department of Human Resources on October 26. On October 18-20, **Cindy Sweeney, LCSW, MSW** attended the 2010 Disability Conference in Perdido Beach, AL on behalf of UCEDD as a member of the Planning Committee.

CALENDAR



Clinical Operations Committee Meeting

Friday, November 19
Friday, December 17
1:00 PM

General Staff Meeting

Friday, November 5
1:00 PM

Thanksgiving Holidays

Thursday, November 25
Friday, November 26

Leadership Retreat

Friday, December 3
8:30 AM

Holiday Luncheon

Wednesday, December 8
11:30 AM

Christmas Holiday

Friday, December 24

New Year Holiday

Friday, December 31

The UAB Rett Syndrome Team, under the direction of Dr. Alan Percy, has continued research activities for the Rett Syndrome Natural History Study, Rare Disease Clinical Network of the NIH. The UAB team, including **Suzanne Geerts, MS, RD** conducted study activities at the Robert Woods Johnson School of Pediatrics in New Brunswick, NJ on July 30 and August 1. They just returned from a study visit to Oakland, CA, where they evaluated clients at the Katie's Rett Syndrome Clinic at Oakland Children's Hospital. The UAB team was joined by medical teams from the Greenwood Genetics Center, Greenwood, SC, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX, and Boston Children's Hospital, Boston, MA. The trips are sponsored by local Rett Syndrome support groups. The UAB team will travel to Chicago, IL, the first weekend of November to conclude research activities for 2010.

Dr. Lane Rutledge, a Phenylketonuria (PKU) Family, and **Suzanne Geerts, MS, RD** recently presented a lecture on PKU Treatment and Family Support to the freshman medical school class at UAB Volker Hall. The lecture was attended by approximately 200 medical students who enjoyed asking questions of the family about daily life and dealing with a long-term special diet, quality of medical care received, and future prospects for a PKU cure. The students had the opportunity to sample PKU medical foods after the lecture.

Research/Publications

Suzanne Geerts, MS, RD announced that the International Rett Syndrome Foundation (IRSF) has won a \$250,000.00 award for research from the Pepsi Refresh Program for September 2010. RTT families across the nation were asked to vote via internet or texting for IRSF to win the award. Competition was tough and IRSF were runners-up several months this summer. September's efforts paid off. The research award will be doubled by the Pioneer Fund founded by contributors to

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



JOHN B. THORNTON, DMD

The University of Alabama System Board of Trustees appointed University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) School of Dentistry Associate Dean John Bernard Thornton, DMD, MA, professor and associate dean emeritus during its June 18 meeting.

Thornton joined the UAB faculty as an assistant professor of dentistry in the Department of Pediatric Dentistry in 1980. He became a full professor in 1991. He was director of the Civitan-Sparks Dental Clinic from 1976-2001 and chair of pediatric dentistry from 2000-2004. He became associate dean for community affairs in 2004 and served until retiring in April 2010. He also retired from the Alabama National Guard in 2003 with the rank of colonel.

Thornton has received a number of honors from professional organizations, including the Odessa Woolfolk Community Service Award in 2008, the Legion of Merit Medal for Exceptionally Meritorious Military Service from the Department of the United States Army in 2004 and the UAB President's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2001. He was inducted into the Alabama Healthcare Hall of Fame in 2008.

IRSF. This was a terrific start to Rett Syndrome Awareness month-October 2010.

Garner AA, Mrug S, **Patterson C**, **Hodgens JB**. *Sluggish cognitive tempo and internalizing difficulties: Discrepancies across informants*. Poster accepted for the Annual International Meeting of Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD), Atlanta, GA, November 2010.

The UAB Biochemical Genetics Team at Civitan-Sparks Clinics has completed the third fiscal year of the ADPH grant to provide low-protein foods for metabolic clients with medical and financial needs. The team submitted a request for renewal for 2010–2011. **Suzanne Geerts, MS, RD** is the grant program manager. She is very grateful for the kind support of Cynthia Helms in ordering medical food for the families.

Suzanne Geerts, MS, RD has received/accepted a request to serve as a reviewer of two book chapters on nutrition evaluation/support for the topics of autism spectrum disorders and Prader-Willi syndrome. The book on special needs is being produced by the members of the Behavioral Health Practice Group and the American Dietetic Association. Publication is planned for 2011.

The ACQUIREc Therapy team is finalizing details to start a lower extremity pilot in November and December. **Stephanie Deluca, PhD** is gathering information to submit a grant based on the results obtained through the pilot. The group hopes to add this as a service offer through the ACQUIREc Therapy clinic in the upcoming year. The basis will be the same as with the upper extremity: Intensive practice in the natural setting with a focus on mass practice and repetition with the lower extremity for five hours each day, Monday through Friday, for three weeks.

Announcements

Cindy Sweeney, LCSW, MSW is on the Family Voices Partners in Project Excellence (PIPE) Advisory Board.

Sparks Award



Congratulations to

RAKESHA GARNER,

recipient of the Sparks

Award for the fall

quarter. Thank you,

Rakesha,

for all of your

hard work and

commitment to the

Civitan-Sparks Clinics.

October was Rett Syndrome Awareness month. October 22 was Wear Your Rett Syndrome T-Shirt Day in Alabama. One local dad, K.C. Byers, is on his way across America by bike to raise awareness and accept donations for Rett Syndrome. If you would like to donate, please contact **Suzanne Geerts, MS, RD** at sgeerts@uab.edu.

Several new clinicians and staff have joined various disciplines within our clinics:

Wanda Allen	Intake	July 5
Christina Copeland	Sparks Pediatrics	August 9
Velesha Heard	Scheduling	September 20
Robin “Mindy” Nelson, CCC-SLP	Speech-Language Pathology	September 7
Sandra Pennington	Billing	September 7

Babies born to Civitan-Sparks Clinics faculty and staff include Parker McCurdy Smith on June 30 to **Laurie Lou Smith**; Mason Lawrence Green on July 27 to **Dr. LaTamia Green**; and Eleanor Dulin Simms on September 24 to **Leslie Simms**.

Current Job Postings

AUDIOLOGIST: asha.jobcontrolcenter.com/jobs/#/detail/3618713
sjobs.brassring.com/1033/ASP/TG/cim_home.asp?partnerid=25048&siteid=5238

PHYSICAL THERAPIST: sjobs.brassring.com/1033/ASP/TG/cim_home.asp?partnerid=25048&siteid=5238

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST: asha.jobcontrolcenter.com/jobs/#/detail/3618713
sjobs.brassring.com/1033/ASP/TG/cim_home.asp?partnerid=25048&siteid=5238



Email news, recent publications, presentations or significant announcements to Cynthia Helms at helms@uab.edu.