

APDA Declares UAB an Advanced Center for Parkinson's Research



University Hospital

The University of Alabama at Birmingham has been awarded the honor of becoming one of the eight Advanced Centers for Parkinson Research by the American Parkinson Disease

Association, Inc. (APDA)

UAB brought Parkinson's research to the forefront in 2003, with the creation of the Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorder Research Program under the direction of Dr. Ray Watts, Chairman of the Neurology Department.

UAB joins the University of Pittsburgh

School of Medicine; Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta; UMDN-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, New Brunswick, N.J.; Boston University School of Medicine; University of Virginia Medical Center, Charlottesville; UCLA School of Medicine; and Washington University Medical Center, St. Louis, in the effort.

OUR STAFF

Neurologists:

Ray L. Watts, MD
David G. Standaert, MD, PhD
Natividad P. Stover, MD
Paul R. Atchison, MD
Anthony P. Nicholas, MD, PhD

Fellows:

Harrison Walker, MD
Talene Yacoubian, MD, PhD

Nursing Staff:

Stephanie Guthrie, RN, CRNP
Nancy Watts, RN, BSN
Rebecca McMurray, RN, MSN
Rachel Clark, RN, BSN
Jennifer Newsome, RN, BSN

CARLA RETIRES

After many years of dedicated service, Carla Cothran, UAB's APDA I&R Center Coordinator, has announced her retirement. In an effort to fill her shoes, Jennifer Newsome has joined UAB/APDA as Coordinator. Jennifer is an RN with 10 years of nursing/research experience who also founded Tailor Made Motivations, Inc., a non-profit organization that benefits AA youth.

(See back for *A Word from Carla*)

Dr. David Standaert Joins UAB

Dr. David Standaert has been appointed Director of the APDA Information and Referral Center at UAB. Dr. Standaert came to UAB in July of 2006 from the Department of Neurology at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School where he was the Director of the APDA Advanced Center for Parkinson

Research. Dr. Standaert's focus has been to understand the cause of Parkinson's Disease and his research is aimed at one day finding a cure.

In addition to serving as director for the APDA I&R Center, Dr. Standaert also serves as the Director of the Movement Disorders Program in the Department of Neurology and is the

Director of the Program for Neurodegeneration and Experimental Therapeutics.



UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM APDA INFORMATION AND REFERRAL CENTER

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Recognizing the effects of the PD upon the patient and the family, a support program was initiated to motivate the patients in maximizing strengths, minimizing impediments and achieving and maintaining full potential. The American Parkinson Disease Association, Inc. sponsors 65 chapters and more than 250 affiliated support groups which provide education, counseling, assistance and referrals throughout the United States.

The Birmingham Parkinson's Support group meets every 3rd Sunday at the Marshall Conference Center at 2:00pm. The conference center is located at 801 11th Street South.

We are also pleased to announce that Birmingham now has a support group for young onset Parkinson's patients. For this group, young onset refers to those that were diagnosed before the age of 55. For more information regarding meeting times and locations, please contact Sharon Parker @ 256-350-8712 or via email @ sfp1126@aol.com.

A WORD FROM CARLA - *You will be missed.*

Dear Friends,
The winds of change are blowing through UAB and through Alabama's Parkinson Disease Community. Hope for the cure is murmuring on southern breezes. Gentle spirits whisper their encouragement and love. Patients, caregivers, families, doctors, nurses, therapists, friends, and unknown well-wishers are sensing a wind shift in the treatment and care of PD. We welcome with open arms our new physicians and scientists and nurses. Your energy and enthusiasm, your knowledge and compassion, your humor and insight are just what is needed. Those of us who are watching for the cure for PD give you our blessings, our prayers, and our pledges. Spread your wings and soar. "By flying in a "V" formation, a flock of wild geese adds 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew alone. As each goose flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the birds that follow. When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies to the point position. Geese flying in formation honk in order to encourage those up front to keep up their speed." (Anonymous) So it is with our PD community. We welcome the winds of change that refresh us and uphold us and encourage us. Our support groups multiply our

opportunities to share comfort and care and increase our range of flight. The generosity of our donors is a beacon of light in our storms. The spirits radiating from our patients give our servant hood its joy. Alabama's PD community first organized in the late 1970's. Those that are living in this world and those that are now flying free have all propelled us forward. The American Parkinson Disease Association gave us our first monetary grant in 1986 to fund a PD Information and Referral Center. Their financial support has continued and been increased up to this present day. Their stated mission is "to ease the burden and to find the cure." APDA's first chapter in NY was founded by Mrs. Sophie Maestroni as a memorial to her much loved mother and was established as a family foundation. Their philosophy is to establish "grass roots" seed money to motivate the development and organization of local PD communities. Thank you to APDA for PD communities. Thank you to APDA for all of their monetary and spiritual gifts to us. Alabama's PD community is strong and stands ready, willing, and able to serve.

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Nurse Jennifer will now be taking over the "point" position as the new APDA Nurse Coordinator at UAB. I will be "rotating" back into formation as a volunteer. Watching a flight of wild geese is a startlingly joyful experience. I find myself filled with joy and gratitude and hope. As the old song from the sixties says, the answer, my friends, is blowing in the wind. The cure is coming down to the shore to meet us as the wind suddenly fills our sails and carries us steadily towards home. Now that I am an unrestrained volunteer, I will be "flapping" along with all of you old geese and "honking" to encourage the geese up front.

Thank you, Jennifer, for offering me the opportunity to write our Alabama Parkinson's Disease Community this letter. All of us welcome you and are ready to be of service.

Fondly, Carla Cothran

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