Message from the Chair

The UAB Department of Pathology and the UAB Tissue Collection and Banking Facility (TCBF), under the direction of Dr. William Grizzle, have established an international reputation for leadership in biospecimen collection and utilization. The TCBF has provided support to numerous UAB investigators and the Comprehensive Cancer Center for over 35 years. Biorepositories have traditionally been thought of as a component of translational research with relatively little to do with active pathology diagnostics or clinical care. This situation is rapidly evolving as appropriate tissue procurement, processing and storage procedures become critical for advanced metabolomic, proteomic, and molecular testing on which treatment decisions will be based.

Recent reports, however, emphasize the challenges facing biospecimen banking in the personalized medicine era and the need for Hospitals and Health Systems to prepare for a more significant role for biobanks in direct patient care (Am. J. Clin. Pathol. 2011; 136:679-684). In response to this challenge, the UAB Health System and the School of Medicine have committed significant financial support over the next several years to the Department of Pathology to upgrade our biobanking capabilities. This investment will be used for faculty recruitment, improved infrastructure, biorepository-related informatics needs, and to achieve our goal of obtaining College of American Pathology (CAP) accreditation and Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendment (CLIA) certification for our TCBF. In partnership with the School of Medicine and the Health System, I am confident that the TCBF will be able to achieve both its research and clinical missions.

Best wishes,
Kevin A. Roth, M.D., Ph.D.

Faculty Profile: Malay Basu, Ph.D.

Dr. Malay Kumar Basu is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Informatics since August 2012. Dr. Basu’s research interests involve various aspects of Computational and comparative Genomics and Bioinformatics. Dr. Basu received his Ph.D. degree in Life Sciences from the Center for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad, India in 2003. While carrying out his Ph.D. in cold-adaptation of Antarctic bacteria, he became interested in Bioinformatics and wrote his first software, Sequence analysis using Web Resources (SeWeR), a web interface for popular bioinformatics software available over the web. SeWeR is a completely customizable interface with intelligent semi-automatic mechanism for incorporating new services in an integrated, at that time nascent, dynamic HTML (dHTML) interface. The software became very popular and mirrored all over the world and translated into various languages. The success of SeWeR bolstered Dr. Basu’s confidence and he wrote several packages, like Pastel, BioSVG (one of the first software to use Scalable Vector Graphics, SVG in bioinformatics) while he was still carrying out his Ph.D.

After his Ph.D., Dr. Basu joined Dr. Eugene Koonin’s lab at the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) at National Institutes of...
Faculty Profile: Malay Basu, Ph.D. Cont’d...

While doing his postdoctoral training, Dr. Basu with his coauthors for the first time used computational linguistics to investigate “promiscuity” of protein domains. Promiscuous domains are those that are present in many different contexts in different types of protein sequences. They are very important in cell-signaling and cell-cell interaction. Dr. Basu and his colleagues for the first time used a popular technique for N-gram analysis in the context of protein domains.

After finishing his postdoctoral training Dr. Basu joined J. Craig Venter institute (JCVI), a premiere non-profit research institute in Rockville, MD. There Dr. Basu’s research interests concentrated on various aspects of computational genomics. He continued his research in linguistic exploration of genomes and wrote novel algorithms for protein clustering and functional annotation. This resulted in several software packages like SaucePan, AnnotationRules, ProPhylo, etc.

At UAB, Dr. Basu will continue his work of genome architecture evolution, mostly of cancer genomes. He is now investigating the massive genome rearrangements, called “chromothripsis”, that happens in cancer genomes. He is using computational linguistic and evolutionary methods to better understand the contribution of these rearrangements in evolution of cancer cells.

Faculty Profile: Robin Dzialo Hatton, Ph.D.

Dr. Robin Hatton is an associate professor in the Division of Anatomic Pathology. She was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and throughout her youth experienced the nomadic lifestyle of a military brat with her favorite and most memorable posting being during her teenage years on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. After seeing an article in Time magazine heralding the new field of molecular biology, Robin, as a junior in high school, made the declaration that she would become a genetic engineer. Few schools at the time offered a specialized degree in molecular biology but Worcester Polytechnic Institute’s program seemed to fit the bill. After graduating from WPI, Robin worked as a research associate at Genetics Institute in Cambridge, MA where she developed a keen interest in the field of immunology while being involved in the identification and subsequent cloning of a gene encoding one chain of a protein of what at the time was called, natural killer cell stimulatory factor, currently known as IL-12.

After two years at Genetics Institute, Robin entered the graduate program in the department of Microbiology at UAB. She obtained her Ph.D. in the laboratory of Dr. Max D. Cooper studying the evolution of the immune system, identifying elements of the T cell recep...
tor complex in Xenopus laevis subsequently allowing her to investigate extra-thymic T cell development in adult amphibians by exploiting the ability to completely thymectomize animals prior to metamorphosis.

Following graduate school, Robin chose to remain at UAB to continue her studies in immunology and began a post-doctoral fellowship in the laboratory of Richard D. Hockett studying the regulation of Fas ligand expression in effector T cells. Following the departure of Dr. Hockett, Robin was fortunate to be able to complete her post-doc in Casey Weaver’s laboratory. While in Dr. Weaver’s laboratory, Robin became interested in the molecular mechanisms that control CD4+ T effector cell phenotype fate decisions, focusing initially on the transcriptional control of the Th1-hallmark cytokine, IFN-γ. During this time the new field of epigenetics was emerging and using new bioinformatics techniques and assays to identify changes in chromatin structure along with BAC transgenesis, she identified an enhancer element some 22 kilobases upstream of the transcriptional start site of Ifng that was required for optimal expression in T cells and NK cells.

In 2001 Robin became an Instructor in the Department of Pathology at UAB and has continued her work studying the epigenetic regulation of T effector phenotype development in collaboration Dr. Weaver. Currently, Dr. Hatton is involved in studies investigating the regulation of a number of cytokines including IL-2 and IL-10 in both effector and regulatory T cells, focusing on the roles of single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) and repressive transcription factors both of which have been implicated in autoimmune disorders.

When the opportunity arises Robin still enjoys being at the bench, particularly when teaching students and post-docs. She finds it extremely rewarding to not only instruct them in a difficult technique but also to impart on them the theory behind the experimental procedure. She also truly enjoys helping students learn to formulate hypothesis and to design experiments to address them. Robin currently sits on a number of thesis committees and runs a journal club for post-docs and students.

Robin and her husband Sean will be married 14 years this April. They have two children Alexander (12) and Nicole (8) who are very busy playing musical instruments and soccer. Robin enjoys traveling, spending time with her family, cooking, and exercising like a fiend.

2013 Faculty Advisory Council

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Accolades:


http://www.the-aps.org/fm/About-Us.html

The American Physiological Society (APS) is a nonprofit devoted to fostering education, scientific research, and dissemination of information in the physiological sciences. The Society was founded in 1887 with 28 members. APS now has over 10,500 members. Most members have doctoral degrees in physiology and/or medicine (or other health professions). APS is governed by an elected Council consisting of a President, President-Elect, Past President, and nine Councillors. The National headquarters of the Society is based in Bethesda, Maryland, on the campus of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB).

APS is a member of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), a coalition of 26 independent societies that plays an active role in lobbying for the interests of biomedical scientists.

Yabing Chen, Ph.D. was an invited speaker and chaired a cardiovascular seminar session on “Pathophysiological Regulators of Atherosclerotic Calcificant” in the AHA Scientific Sessions in November, 2012.

Dr. Chen also accepted the invitation to serve as a Member of the AHA Committee for Scientific Sessions Planning (CSSP) Committee for the term beginning December 1, 2012 and ending November 30, 2015.

Anurag Purushothaman, Ph.D. received a Young Investigator Grant from the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center for $40,000.

Rajeev Samant, Ph.D. was appointed as the MCP Representative to the Department Faculty Advisory Committee.

Where Are They Now?

Douglas DiGiralamo, Ph.D. obtained his B.S. in Microbiology, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from Penn State University in 2001, during which time he spent a year at GlaxoSmithKline (then SmithKline Beecham) in the cancer angiogenesis group. Over the next three years, he conducted research on breast cancer - bone metastasis; first at Penn State and then at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). In 2004, he entered the Molecular and Cellular Pathology graduate program at UAB, where his work shifted from cancer metastasis to skeletal biology, and focused on understanding the distinct actions of GH and IGF-1 in skeletal development. His interest in GH and IGF-1 signaling expanded to skeletal muscle following the completion of his Ph.D. training in 2008 and his move to Johns Hopkins in 2009. He is now an Assistant Professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at Johns Hopkins, where he is studying the role of activin receptor signaling in bone development and crosstalk with skeletal muscle. Doug is also wrapping up his term as the Administrative Editor of the Journal of Bone and Mineral Research this summer, having served since 2008.

When asked, Doug said “There isn’t a single favorite memory, but the many friends – fellow students, staff, and faculty members – and our experiences over those years, Cont’d...
Where are they Now?  Cont’d...

are collectively my most fond memory of the program. If there’s a time in your scientific career that is more “pure” in scientific pursuit, and more thoroughly enjoyable than any other, it is undoubtedly graduate school. I only wish I would have realized this when I was in such a terrible rush to move on."

After graduating in December 2008, Doug moved to Johns Hopkins in July 2009 with Tom Clemens. I spent a brief period of time as a postdoc before being promoted to Assistant Professor in October 2010. During that time, he formed a collaboration with Se-Jin Lee, who discovered myostatin, to investigate the role of activin receptor signaling in the skeleton. Doug developed an R01 application based upon these preliminary studies, which was submitted in February 2011 and funded. In addition to this project, he’s exploring some new projects in collaboration with faculty in biomedical engineering, as well as mentoring both his first graduate student and orthopaedic surgery resident. Doug said “I’d like to comment on some personal experiences, but for all my successes since I left UAB, I have failed miserably at maintaining balance between my work and personal life; definitely my next goal.”

Spotlight on Administration: Angie Schmeckebier

Ms. Angie Schmeckebier is the Assistant to the Chair in the Department of Pathology. Along with overseeing the day-to-day administrative operations in the Chair’s office, Angie is also responsible for overseeing grant submissions, coordinating the quarterly newsletter, updating the Pathology website, coordinating the annual Paulette Shirey Pritchett lecture, and assisting faculty during the yearly promotion and tenure cycle. She is also the Administrative Supervisor for the Division of Neuropathology and the Editorial Assistant for The American Journal of Pathology. Angie’s background was not originally in the medical field. From 1988-1993, Angie worked as a licensed asbestos inspector/program coordinator for an engineering firm in St. Louis, Missouri teaching asbestos removal classes. In 1994, she began working with Dr. Kevin Roth at the Washington University School of Medicine in the Division of Neuropathology. However, after arriving at work and seeing a brain in a bucket on her desk, she was a little unsure about a future with Neuropathology! She soon learned to overlook “the buckets” and immensely enjoyed the work she did in Neuropathology, both in the clinical and autopsy areas. In addition to neuropathology, she occasionally helped in the histology lab in the Department of Pathology. She transferred to UAB in June 2002 as Administrative Associate for Dr. Kevin Roth in the Division of Neuropathology where she became involved in the neuroscience community as the Administrator for the UAB Comprehensive Neuroscience Center. Angie has been a member of the Council for Scientific Editors (CSE) since 2006. Her role with CSE includes participating as a program committee member and as moderator for 5 sessions involving subjects relating to image manipulation, ghost authors, and Informatics. Angie is also currently completing her degree in Business Administration at UAB (prospective graduation date of June 2014).

Angie and her husband Glenn live in Alabaster along the border of Montevallo. She has two Jack Russell Terriers (Zoey and Roscoe) and one Australian Bearded Dragon (Kahn). In her spare moments, Angie enjoys spending quality time with her husband and son (John), rooting for the St. Louis Rams/Cardinals, target shooting, reading, and designing/repairing jewelry.

“I only wish I would have realized this when I was in such a terrible rush to move on.”
We want to thank everyone who helped with recruitment this year, especially all of the residents who volunteered for breakfasts and lunches. We are very excited about the possibilities for the incoming class and we are looking forward to match day!

Amy Treece and Johnny Ross
Chief Residents, 2012-2013

Research

The spring conference season is upon us and yet again, our residents have been extremely successful. Accepted abstracts are listed below:

USCAP 2013 Annual Meeting, March 2-8, Baltimore, MD

The Indoleamine 2,3-Dioxygenase (IDO) Pathway Is Constitutively Activated in HPV-Mediated Oro-pharyngeal Carcinoma. Xu J, Isayeva T, Saag M, and Brandwein-Gensler M.

The Use of Progesterone Receptor (PR) and p53 in Assessing Uterine Smooth Muscle Tumors of Uncertain Malignant Potential (STUMP). John Ross MD, Shi Wei MD, PhD, Kui Zhang PhD and Michael Conner MD.


*Stowell-Orbison and Surgical/Autopsy Pathology Awards Competition

The RANK Pathway in Breast Cancer: Src Plays a Role! Rong Li MD, PhD, Thuy Nguyen MD, Christopher Kragel MD, Kui Zhang PhD, William E Grizzle MD, PhD, Omar Hameed MD, Gene P Siegal MD, PhD, Shi Wei MD, PhD.

Factors Associated with Survival in Patients with Breast Cancer (BC) Brain Metastasis (BM). Rong Li MD, PhD, Kui Zhang MD, Gene P Siegal MD, PhD, Shi Wei MD, PhD.

Protein Arginine Methyltransferase 5 Is Highly Expressed in Glioblastoma and Important for the Growth of Glioma Cells. Rong Li MD, PhD, Xinyang Zhao PhD, Dewang Zhou PhD, Qiang Ding PhD, Peter H King MD, G Yancey Gillespie PhD, L Burt Nabors MD, Xiaosi Han MD, PhD.

Predicting 5-Year Recurrence of Ductal Carcinoma In Situ (DCIS) Following Initial Breast Conserving Surgery and Radiation Therapy. Chris Kragel and Shi Wei


Changing Prognostic Factors in Osteosarcoma: Analysis of 381 Cases from Two Institutions. Deyin Xing MD, PhD, Shadi A Qasem MD, Kofi Owusu, Kui Zhang PhD, Gene P Siegal MD, PhD, Shi Wei MD, PhD. (Platform presentation)

Transcriptionally Active HPV Infection and Salivary Adenoid Cystic Carcinomas. Tatyana Isayeva PhD, Deyin Xing MD, Margaret S. Brandwein-Gensler MD.

Non-classical MHC-I class Ib HLA-E expression levels are maintained in HIV-1 infected CD4 positive T cells. Jason Wicker, Paul Gaepfert, Steffanie Sabbaj.

The Utility of Phosphohistone H3 (PHH3) in Breast Cancer Grading. Xiaoyan Cui, Shi Wei, Gene Siegal.

Evaluation of Wilm’s Tumor-1 (WT-1) Immunohistochemistry in Synchronous Primary Adenocarcinomas of the Endometrium and Ovary. Deal T, Ross J, Conner M.

ISDP 2013 Joint Meeting, February 27-28, Miami, FL

Cowden Disease Presenting in a 67-year-old man. Caitlin Halverson, Peter Pavlidakey, Danette Bentley, Kristopher McKay

Microcystic Adnexal Carcinoma of the Buttock with Giant Microcysts. Riley Ballard, Caitlin Halverson, Peter Pavlidakey, Kristopher McKay

From the Chief Residents: Cont’d...

ASFA 2013 Annual Meeting, May 22-25, Denver, CO

In search of demographic and laboratory characteristics associated with increased risk of exacerbation and relapse in idiopathic thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura. **Brandi McCleskey.** Jessica Scott, Thomas Vetter, MD, Jill Adamski, MD, Marisa Marques, MD

Continuous infusion of calcium gluconate during therapeutic plasma exchange for acute hyperlipidemia pancreatitis: A case series. **Erik Kouba, Jill Adamski.**

Future Fellowships

Fellowship positions accepted by current residents are listed below.

**2013-2014**
- **Chris Kragel:** Cytopathology, Duke University
- **Rong Li:** Molecular Genetic Pathology, Vanderbilt
- **Thuy Nguyen:** Surgical Pathology, Stanford
- **Zhiyong Ren:** Surgical Pathology, MD Anderson
- **Johnny Ross:** Hematopathology, University of Florida
- **Amy Treece:** Molecular Genetic Pathology, UNC Chapel Hill
- **Jason Wicker:** Microbiology, University of Utah

**2014-2015**
- **Taylor Deal:** Hematopathology, UCLA

**2015-2016**
- **Caitie Halverson:** Dermatopathology, UAB
- **Ben Hill:** Transfusion Medicine, UAB
- **Chris Kragel:** Hematopathology, Duke University
- **Zhiyong Ren:** GI, University of Utah
- **Amy Treece:** Pediatric Pathology, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia
- **Jessie Xu:** Hematopathology, Harvard

From the Graduate Students:

**Accolades/Awards:**

**Samantha Giordano**—In Dr. Jianhua Zhang’s lab won a Travel Award from Society for Free Radical Biology and Medicine (“Mitophagy plays an important role in preserving neuronal bioenergetics and cell survival in response to an environmental toxin”) November 2013

**Jack Heath**—Was selected to do an oral presentation, and received travel award to attend the 2012 AHA Scientific Sessions in Los Angeles.

**Jack** also won first place in the Graduate Student Research Day for his oral presentation.

**Angela Gullard**—Received an AADR Bloc Travel Grant to attend the 2013 IADR/AADR/CADR General Session and Exhibition in Seattle, WA from March 20-23. For this same research meeting, she was selected as a finalist in an oral presentation competition, the 2013 AADR/Johnson & Johnson Healthcare Products Hatton Awards Competition, Senior Category. Her initial and extended abstracts are entitled “Dentin Induction: BMP/TGF-beta Pathway Genes in Radicular Dentin Dysplasia.”

Angela also represented UAB nationally as a nominee for Graduate Student Awards to Attend the 63rd Meeting of Nobel Laureates in Lindau, Germany.

Angela also received the Best Presentation award at the 4th Annual UAB School of Dentistry Cake-Off for a Cure, a cake competition and fundraiser for breast cancer research. On October 10, 2012, the UAB chapter of the American Association of Women Dentists raised more than $1,300 and donated this money directly to the UAB network for breast cancer research.
Pathology In Focus

From the Graduate Students Cont’d...

Publications/Presentations:


**Kim Dunham**—Society for Free Radical Biology & Medicine Meeting in San Diego, CA 11-14 Nov and presented a poster: "The Role of Mitochondrial Genetic Background on Mitochondrial Bioenergetics and Energy Balance". She received travel awards from GSA, Pathology, CFRE and Seahorse Biosciences for this meeting.

General News:

Matt Dodson (a CMDB graduate student in Dr. Zhang’s lab) won a poster presentation award (“Autophagy plays a protective role in the response to decreased glucose metabolism and oxidative stress in neurons”) in Center for Aging retreat at UAB October 19, 2012

Matt Dodson (a CMDB graduate student in Dr. Zhang’s lab) won a Young Investigator Award (“Autophagy plays a protective role against decreased glucose metabolism and oxidative stress in differentiated SH-SYSY cells”) in Society for Free Radical Biology and Medicine annual conference in San Diego November 15, 2012

Qiuli Liang (a postdoc in Dr. Zhang’s lab) won a Travel Award from Society for Free Radical Biology and Medicine (“Role of Sirt3 in autophagy”) November 2013

Mark Stewart (graduate student - Cancer Biology Theme—Sanderson Lab) has been elected to the AACR Associate Member Council.

Mark was also notified that he received a $1,000 travel award from the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Annual meeting in Boston.

Pathology Grants Awarded:

**DENNIS KUCIK**
VA-IPA
“Tao Yu”
$52,852
01/01/13—12/31/14

**AIMEE LANDAR**
UAB/CCC
“Development of Novel Mitochondrially-Targeted Electrophilic Compounds as Potential Anti-Metastatic Drugs”
$30,000
01/01/13—12/31/13

**AIMEE LANDAR**
UAB/CCC
“Multi-Targeted Approach to Overcome Hypoxia-Induced Apoptotic Resistance and Malignant Phenotypes in Cancer Cells.”
$45,000
10/01/12—09/30/13

**JOANNE MURPHY-ULLRICH**
UAB/CCC
“Role of the Thrombospondin1-TGF-Beta Axis in Multiple Myeloma”
$45,000
12/01/12—11/30/13

**MOON NAHM**
PATH Vaccine Solutions
“Pilot Studies to Establish Functional Assays for diarrheal Vaccine Evaluations”
$148,998
10/09/12—02/28/13

**JOHN SHACKA**
Sanofi US Services, Inc.
“Lysosomal Storage Diseases—Causes, Pathophysiology and Therapeutics”
$3,853
02/26/13—02/27/13

Cont’d...
Pathology Grants Awarded: Cont’d...

DEJUN SHEN
UAB/CCC
“Rapid Molecular Imaging to Evaluate the Surgical Margins of Breast Lumpectomy”
$40,000 01/01/13—12/31/13

22nd Annual Paulette Shirey Pritchett Lecture—Save the Date!!

Speaker: Jeffrey I. Gordon, M.D.
Dr. Robert J. Glaser Distinguished University Professor
Director, Center for Genome Sciences
Department of Pathology and Immunology
Washington University School of Medicine

Title: “Exploring the Human Gut Microbiome: Dining in with Tens of Trillions of Fascinating Friends”

Date: May 1, 2013

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Place: Margaret Cameron Spain Auditorium

If anyone has any news items, accolades, etc. to be put in the quarterly newsletter, please send it to the Path In Focus e-mail address at: pathinfocus@uab.edu.

Thank you.

Angie Schmeckebier
Dear UAB Department of Pathology Friends and Colleagues:

The UAB Department of Pathology is recognized nationally for excellence in biomedical research, undergraduate and graduate medical education, and diagnostic pathology. This rise to prominence has been accomplished through the hard work and dedication of numerous Department of Pathology faculty and trainees who have made UAB a phenomenal environment for pathology education and clinical practice. Several decades ago, the former Departments of Anatomic Pathology and Clinical Pathology of the University of Alabama School of Medicine merged into a single Department of Pathology of the UAB Health System. More than 250 residents have received their graduate training in Pathology at UAB and have gone on to populate the state, region and the nation. In fact, the vast majority of Pathologists in the state of Alabama have received some or all of their training here at UAB. This program of excellence in graduate medical education has been appropriately balanced by a world-class graduate program that has similarly trained generations of scientists who fill academia, industry and government service. Our department has been bolstered in recent years by an ever increasing number of post-doctoral fellows, clinical fellows and junior faculty members who have achieved academic, research, and/or clinical excellence, and ascended to leadership positions at UAB or other institutions.

Please consider making a gift to the Department of Pathology at UAB to support our missions of clinical practice, teaching, research and service. Any amount would be most gratefully received and would be fully deductible*. One could direct it to a particular area of need, to fund current and future endowed professorships or create new awards, prizes or similar recognition opportunities to honor yourself, a family member, a favorite professor, etc.

We would be pleased to assist you and your professional advisors in including the UAB Department of Pathology in your estate plan or in exploring other giving strategies. A simple tear off sheet is found below.

* One should always check with their tax advisor.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this request.

Please fill out each of the 3 Sections:

A1—Enclosed, please find my contribution to the UAB Department of Pathology in the amount of:

___  $50
___  $100
___  $500
___  $1000
___  Other: _____________________

Please make all checks payable to the UAB Department of Pathology and return them to Ms. Lynne Roden, Departmental Administrator, 500 22nd Street South; Suite JNWB 404, Birmingham, AL 35294-0500.
A2—Please contact me to discuss further:
Name: ________________________________
Address: ______________________________
Telephone Number: ____________________
E-mail Address: _______________________
*Please indicate your preferred means of communication.

B—I wish to direct this gift to the Department towards:
___ Where the need is the greatest
___ Teaching
___ Research
___ Named Chairs or Professorships
___ Awards for teaching/research/clinical excellence
___ Naming opportunities (Rooms, collections, equipment, etc.)

C—Person(s) and complete address to be acknowledged for tax purposes:
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Do you want this gift to be anonymous? Yes ___ No ___
Do you want to honor a particular person or event?
Specifics: _______________________________________________________

D—If you prefer to donate via credit card, please call the UAB Development office at (205) 975-5659.