This issue represents the late summer/fall issue of the departmental newsletter and this is especially apropos as “late summer/fall” has been the metaphor for a certain stage of life in which I now find myself. This reflective look on my part is stimulated by several events; 1 – the October 1 arrival of our new Chair, Dr. George Netto from Hopkins and 2 – The retirement of my first clinical fellow at UAB – Dr. Mike Conner. It’s not a stretch to say when your Fellows start retiring before you do – its time to take a hard look at oneself. When I gave up the AP Division Director seat to the fabulously capable Vishnu Reddy, I had been in place for 25 years, been the longest serving Division Director in the entire UAB health system and seen more than a few changes and expansions. It, thus, now seems the right time to recruit new blood into that critical position with new ideas, new programs, new strategies and high energy. With Dr. Netto’s support, I have asked him to allow me to surrender those Director responsibilities and head the search committee to find my successor and he has graciously accepted my suggestion.

I will however remain close at hand, again with Dr. Netto’s support, returning to my other position of Executive Vice-Chair of Pathology to help the leadership team plan for the next 25 years. It has been a great honor and privilege to serve as the Interim Chair while Dean Vickers conducted his search. It was actually relatively pain-free with the help and backing of a fantastically powerful faculty of approximately 85 scholars. I certainly owe a special personal thanks to Dr. Victor Darley-Usmar who has served as my partner in this undertaking and Ms. Lynne Roden, who kept me out of mischief more times than I care to publicly reveal.

This year has however not been without some other significant changes. Along with Dr. Conner, Dr. Alexander, our long serving Vice-Chair, residency program director, Section Head of the Autopsy Service and master of innumerable other jobs has also retired from UAB and moved to a part-time status along with Dr. Conner and Dr. Gary Simmons. The former is still helping us transition on the GYN Path service and the latter has moved from the Medical Examiner office and Forensic Pathology Division to the Anatomic Pathology Service University Autopsy Service. Many other changes have occurred too which are covered elsewhere in this issue or are scheduled for future issues. As my children would say, it’s all good.

Again, thanks for your support and dare I say it, love. Please vote and please welcome Dr. Netto – I know he’s going to do great things!

Best

Gene P. Siegal, M.D., Ph.D.
Faculty Profile:

Yabing Chen, PhD, is a Professor in the Department of Pathology, and Director of Pathobiology and Molecular Medicine Theme (PBMM) in the Graduate Biomedical Sciences at the University Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), as well as a Principal Investigator in the Research Division at Birmingham Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center. Dr. Chen received her BS degree from Fudan University and her Ph.D. from Xiamen University in China. She completed postdoctoral training and was appointed as a research instructor at the University of Vermont, School of Medicine.

Dr. Chen joined the faculty of the Department of Pathology at UAB in June 2004, was promoted to Associate Professor in 2010 and Professor in 2014.

Dr. Chen investigates molecular mechanisms of gene regulation and function in the pathogenesis of cancer and cardiovascular disease. She considers it most fortunate for her to be recruited in 2004 to UAB by Dr. Jay McDonald, who was then Chair of UAB Department of Pathology and has been an inspiring mentor and collaborator. Dr. Chen has been collaborating with Dr. McDonald to determine the molecular regulation of apoptotic signals in cancer tumorigenesis and resistance to therapy. Over the past 10 years, they have demonstrated that modulating the components in the death-inducing signaling complex determines the downstream survival and apoptosis signals conveyed by the death receptors; and have identified several novel regulators in the apoptotic machinery and new compounds that sensitize cholangiocarcinoma and pancreatic cancer cells to apoptosis, thus overriding drug resistance in pre-clinical animal models.

Dr. Chen’s major research program in cardiovascular disease is to uncover the molecular mechanisms of vascular calcification. Her research team has determined an integral role of the osteogenic transcription factor Runx2 in vascular calcification; and elucidated novel mechanisms underlying protein O-GlcNAC modification and AKT signaling pathways in upregulating Runx2 in the vasculature by oxidative stress and hyperglycemia, which promote vascular calcification in atherosclerosis and diabetes. Her group has identified novel crosstalk between vascular smooth muscle cells, macrophages and vascular stem cells in the development of atherosclerosis and vascular calcification. Dr. Chen’s research has been continuously supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), American Heart Association (AHA), and VA. Recently, Dr. Chen received a Research Career Scientist Award from the VA (https://www.uab.edu/news/faculty/item/7358-uab-s-yabing-chen-named-a-va-research-career-scientist), which recognizes her outstanding achievements and contributions to the VA research and development.

Dr. Chen has mentored many graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, and served on many graduate student thesis committees at UAB. Currently, she is the Director of the UAB graduate school PBMM theme and serves as a faculty mentor on 6 NIH-funded training programs. Her graduate students and postdocs have received numerous awards at UAB and nationally, including Young Investigator Awards, a Scholar-in-Training Award, Travel Awards to attend national/international meetings and several awards for Best Oral Presentations. In addition, her trainees have been selected as pre- or post-doctoral fellows on three NIH funded T32 Training Grants; as well as having received pre- or postdoctoral fellowship awards from the AHA. Recently, Dr. Chen received the 2016 Graduate School Dean’s Award for Excellence in Mentorship (https://www.uab.edu/graduate/news-and-events/619-15-uab-faculty-honored-for-excellence-in-mentorship).

Dr. Chen serves as an editorial board member for “Circulation Research”, “Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis and Vascular Biology (ATVB)” and “Journal of Biological Chemistry”. She is a Fellow of the American Heart Association and Vice-Chair of the ATVB Committee on Scientific Sessions Program of the AHA. Dr. Chen has served on the NIH Atherosclerosis and Inflammation of the Cardiovascular System (AICS) and Vascular Cell and Molecular Biology (VCMB) study sections as an Ad Hoc reviewer in the past few years, and she is currently a regular member of the VCMB study section.
Faculty Profile:

Dr. Todd M. Stevens is an assistant professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) in the Department of Pathology where he specializes in general and head and neck surgical pathology, in addition to bone, soft tissue, frozen sections, and medical renal pathology, and enjoys filling in on other services as needed. Dr. Stevens is board certified in anatomic and clinical pathology, and joined the Division of Anatomic Pathology on October 1, 2014, where he serves as Medical Director of the Histology Laboratory, on the Pathology Department’s Faculty Advisory Council, and the UAB Hospital Tissue Committee.

Dr. Stevens is a native Iowan, born and raised in Sioux City, IA. He holds a B.S. in biology from Iowa State University and obtained his medical degree from the University of Iowa, where he spent a year in the Pathology department as a Pathology Extern. Following medical school he completed an AP/CP residency at Creighton University in Omaha, NE where he served as Chief Resident and received the Hal G. Lankford Pathology Resident Award in 2012 and an award for outstanding customer service in 2011. This was followed by a fellowship in surgical pathology at UAB under the direction of Dr. Margaret Brandwein-Gensler. Dr. Stevens is active in and enjoys resident education at UAB, where he received the Leonard H. Robinson Award for Excellence in Resident Education in Anatomic Pathology for the 2015-2016 academic year. He is a member of the United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology and the College of American Pathologists. Dr. Stevens’ research has focused mostly on the histologic features and protein expression profile of salivary gland tumors in an effort to provide more accurate diagnosis, in particular a large series of mammary analogue secretory carcinoma (MASC) published in *Modern Pathology* in 2015. He is also involved in case series and reports of unique clinicopathologic findings that provide insight into disease processes and enhance diagnostic accuracy. He has had 10 papers accepted for publication and several abstracts presented at national meetings since joining UAB.

Outside of work Dr. Stevens is an avid Chicago Cubs baseball fan, enjoys any outdoor exercise activity, his family, friends, nieces and nephews, especially his Godson Will, Saw’s bbq, and music, especially a type of blues originating out of North Mississippi, the Hill Country Blues.
Dr. Dario Vitturi earned his Bachelor’s degree in Biochemistry in 2005 after working under the direction of Drs. Gerardo Ferrer-Sueta and Ana Denicola at the Universidad de la Republica in Montevideo (Uruguay). During this period, Dr. Vitturi became acquainted with the complex chemistry of reactive nitrogen and oxygen species, as well as with the principles behind the rational design of synthetic antioxidants as potential therapeutic agents. Following graduation, Dr. Vitturi moved to the University of Alabama at Birmingham where he joined the Molecular and Cellular Pathology program under the direction of Dr. Rakesh Patel. At that time, Dr. Patel was developing the novel concept that nitrite anion could function as a hypoxic reservoir for nitric oxide in vivo when reduced by deoxyhemoglobin and other metalloproteins. This line of work allowed Dr. Vitturi to critically apply the knowledge in free radical biochemistry acquired during his undergraduate studies within the context of physiologically relevant problems. In this regard, Dr. Vitturi’s work under Dr. Patel’s mentorship ranged from basic science endeavors such as the elucidation of an oxygen-sensitive component in the transport of nitrite across erythrocyte membranes, to more translational projects such as the discovery of an antioxidant role for the hemoglobin beta-93 cysteine in the vascular compartment, and the use of sodium nitrite as an adjuvant therapy to prevent the hypertensive response associated with the use of hemoglobin-based blood substitutes. Dr. Vitturi’s time at UAB was extremely productive, with the publication of several original manuscripts and reviews, participation in national and international meetings and successful application to a pre-doctoral award from the American Heart Association. Besides these scientific accomplishments, Dr. Vitturi will always remember the welcoming environment and camaraderie among the faculty and students in the graduate program as well as Dr. Patel’s exceptional mentorship and his willingness to openly discuss new ideas and concepts. Some of Dr. Vitturi’s favorite memories involve attending and actively participating in “roasts” of fellow graduate students and faculty members within the Center for Free Radical Biology. These parties, often held at Dr. Darley-Usmar’s house, were a fantastic opportunity to enjoy a few drinks, share great food and poke fun at each other, all while building long-lasting relationships and creating fond memories. After obtaining his Ph.D. in 2010, Dr. Vitturi moved to Pennsylvania to pursue postdoctoral training at the University of Pittsburgh, where he now is a faculty member in the Department of Pharmacology & Chemical Biology. Dr. Vitturi’s current research focuses on understanding the mechanisms by which redox-regulated processes modulate cellular function under healthy conditions, the impact that dysregulation of these systems has during pathological states and the rational development of pharmacological strategies to reinstate physiological homeostasis. In this regard, Dr. Vitturi’s scientific vision is to be able to apply solid biological chemistry principles to physiologically relevant questions with the ultimate objective of positively impacting human health.
From the Chief Residents: Abha Soni and Virginia Duncan

Headed into the second month of the academic year, our new residents and fellows have settled into their new roles and the year is off to a great start. Thanks to everyone – faculty, new and seasoned residents, fellows and staff – for a seamless and efficient transition to a new crew!

Our seven new first year residents:
Paul Boothe – University of Alabama at Birmingham
J. Adam Jones – University of Alabama at Birmingham
Erin Baumgartner – University of Louisville School of Medicine
Bo Chen – Qingdao University College of Medicine
Danielle Fasciano – Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine
Ashish Kurundkar – Government Medical College Aurangabad
Morad Qarmali – King Abdulaziz University

Our ten new fellows:
Jessica Tracht - Cytopathology
Erik Kouba - Cytopathology
Brandi McCleskey – Forensic Pathology
Stephen Marbut – Surgical Pathology
Liurka Lopez – Surgical Pathology
E. Rebekah McIntosh - Hematopathology
R. Chad Siniard – Molecular Genetics
Juan Mercado - Neuropathology
Sierra Simmons – Transfusion Medicine
Cesar Guerrero – Dermatopathology

~Ginger and Abha (Chief Residents 2016-2017)

ACCOLADES:
Alex Feldman was selected as council member for the ASCP Resident Council, a 3 year position to start September, 16th 2016 at the ASCP Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS:


From the Chief Residents Cont’d….

ORAL PRESENTATIONS:


Dr. Zheng Ping presented “High Frequency of Mutations in Genes Encoding Factor VIII, VWF and ADAMTS13 in Cutaneous Melanoma” at the Academy of Clinical Laboratory Physicians and Scientists 2016 Annual Meeting, Birmingham, AL. June 2016 (Received Paul E. Strandjord Young Investigator Award).

Dr. Virginia Duncan presented “Usage pattern of 4-factor prothrombin complex concentrate in a tertiary care center” at the Academy of Clinical Laboratory Physicians and Scientists 2016 Annual Meeting, Birmingham, AL. June 2016.


PUBLICATIONS:


Duncan VE, Ping Z, Varambally S, Peker D. Loss of RUNX3 expression is an independent adverse prognostic factor in diffuse large B-cell lymphoma. Leuk Lymphoma. 2016 May 17:1-6. [Epub ahead of print]


From the Chief Residents Cont’d…. 

Research and Festivities!

Joseph Drwiega at 2016 ASH Meeting on Lymphoma Biology in Colorado

Ginger Duncan at ASCP 2015 in Long Beach, CA

Ginger Duncan at USCAP 2016 in Seattle, WA

Tiansheng Shen at USCAP 2016 in Seattle, WA

Joseph Drwiega and Zheng Ping’s birthday
Outgoing Reception 2016

Dr. McCleskey receives the Roger Denio Baker Award
Accolades

Bruce Alexander -
Recipient of the William C. Bailey Award for Outstanding Mentoring in Respiratory Medicine. Established in 2014 and is meant to recognize faculty who dedicated significant time and effort to mentoring fellows and faculty in Pulmonary Medicine. It is one of the Division’s foremost recognitions.

John Chatham -
Chosen to represent UAB for a one year appointment to the regional selection committee for the Marshall Scholarship.

Yabing Chen -
Received a VA Research Career Scientist Award from the Department of Veterans Affairs. This competitive award is in recognition of outstanding achievements and contributions to VA research and development at the Birmingham VA Medical Center, and outstanding scientific accomplishments.

Michael Conner -
Received an award at the Gynecologic Tumor Board recognizing his 25 years of outstanding service and expertise to the Division of Gynecologic Oncology.

Andra Frost -
Kayla Goliwas, graduate student in Dr. Frost’s lab, received a Pathology Travel Award to attend the American Association for Cancer Research annual meeting held in Boston, MA on June 25-28, 2016.

Jennifer Gordetsky -
Nominated for a 2016 Dean’s Excellence Award in Teaching Junior Faculty. The Dean’s Excellence Awards recognize the truly outstanding work done by the School of Medicine faculty in the areas of research, teaching, service, diversity enhancement and mentoring.

Elected to 2016 UAB Faculty Senate representing the Joint Health Sciences as a Senator.

Awarded two research awards from the School of Medicine Dean’s Research Award Program for her projects: “A School of Medicine Website for Virtual Microscopy Slides” 
“Three-dimensional Organ Printing for Medical Student Education”

Ralph Sanderson -
Presented invited lectures at two international meetings: Fifth International Research Conference on Multiple Human Exostoses, May 2016, West Palm Beach, Florida and Matrix Biology Europe, June 2016, Athens, Greece.

Chaired session on Cancer and Infectious Disease at July 2016 Gordon Conference on Proteoglycans, Andover, New Hampshire.

Rajeev Samant -
Selected as a Mentor for the American Society for Cell Biology- Faculty Research and Education Development (ASCB-FRED) Program.

Presented his group’s research work in an invited seminar at the American Society of Cell Biology- Faculty Research and Education Development Program (ASCB FRED) workshop, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Served as a Review Panel Member (July 2016) for National Cancer Institute: Early-Stage Innovative Molecular Technologies, IMAT, study section, to review proposals (R21, R33) under the initiative for “Technologies for Cancer-Relevant Biospecimen Science”.

Gene Siegal -
Appointed to a 2 year term on the National Advisory Council of Omicron Delta Kappa, the National Leadership Honor Society. He was originally inducted as a senior medical student at the University of Louisville in 1974.

Soory Varambally -
Selected as the Co-director of the Cancer Biology Theme at UAB.

Yang Yang -
Timothy N Trotter, a GBS student in Dr. Yang Yang’s laboratory, received the Carmichael Scholarship Award for the second year (2016-2017). The Carmichael Award is a very competitive award with only two GBS students selected for this award in 2016. This award provides an annual stipend of $23,000 to the awardee(s).
Pathology Publications:

**Robert Hardy**
- Drwiega, Joseph; Chaffin, Carolyn; **Hardy, Robert.** Adventures in Turnaround Time. Clinical Laboratory News. June 1, 2016

**Ralph Sanderson**
- The abstract submitted by Shyam Bandari, a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Sanderson Lab, was chosen for an oral presentation at the 2016 Gordon Conference on Proteoglycans.

**Rajeev Samant**

**Yang Yang**
- Timothy N. Trotter, Justin T. Gibson, Tshering Lama Sherpa, Pramod S. Gowda, Deniz Peker, and **Yang Yang.** Adipocyte-lineage cells support growth and dissemination of multiple myeloma in bone. The American Journal of Pathology 2016; Accepted for publication.
Pathology Grants Awarded...

DAN ATHERTON
UAB Faculty Senate/2016-2017 FDGP
“Microscopic Examination of Lesions Discovered in the Anatomy Lab: An Innovative Educational Tool”
$1,485 06/15/16 - 08/31/17

SHANNON BAILEY
NIH - R21 AA024543
“Alcohol-Induced Mitochondrial Dysfunction and the Hepatocyte Clock”
$385,876 06/01/16 - 05/31/18

YABING CHEN
VA - IPA
“Shan-Zhong Yang”
$113,768 11/01/15 - 10/31/17

WILLIAM GRIZZLE
CCC/NH/NCI - P30 CA013148
“Comprehensive Cancer Center Core Support Grant - Tissue Procurement Core”
$184,545 04/01/16 - 03/31/21

DOUG HURST
Elsa U Pardee Foundation
“Adiponectin Enhances Breast Cancer Aggressiveness”
$163,645 07/01/16 - 06/30/17

ROBIN LORENZ
NIH/NIGMS - T32 GM08361 supplement
“Medical Scientist Training Program”
$48,703 07/01/16 - 06/30/17

LALITA SHEVDE-SAMANT
DRC Internal Pilot
“Investigating the nexus of diabetes and Hedgehog signaling in triple-negative breast cancer”
$25,000 04/29/16 - 04/28/18

KEN WAITES
GlaxoSmithKline
“In Vitro Activities of GSK Gepotidacin and other Antimicrobial Agents against Human Mycoplasmas and Ureaplasmas”
$43,375 05/31/16 - 09/30/17

IHMA, Inc.
“In Vitro Activities of KBP Investigational Compound and Other Antimicrobial Agents Against Mycoplasma Pneumoniae”
$4,500 06/13/16 - 07/12/16

CASEY WEAVER
UAB Multiple Sclerosis Center
“Weaver Multiple Sclerosis Center Research Award”
$50,000 04/01/16 - 03/31/17

ADAM WENDE
UAB/CCTS
“Human Blood DNA Methylation and RNA Transcript Signatures to Define Diabetic Cardiac Subtypes”
$60,000 04/01/16 - 03/31/17

Center for Healthy African American Men through Partnerships (CHAAMPS)
“Regulation of cardiac gene expression in African American men in heart failure”
$100,000 07/01/16 - 06/30/2017

X. LONG ZHENG
Alexion Pharmaceuticals
“ADAMTS13 mRNA Therapy in TTP”
$193,105 07/11/16 - 07/10/17
51st ACLPS Annual Meeting hosted by UAB Department of Pathology a success!

✓ Registrants: 191 from 25 institutions
  ✓ Including 70 trainees
  ✓ 23 people participated in 5K run to benefit Equal Access Birmingham (EAB)
    ✓ Proceeds: $575

✓ Speakers (not including satellite workshops): 18
  ✓ Non-UAB: 10; UAB: 8

✓ Moderators and facilitators of “Breakfast with the Professor” tables: 26
  ✓ Non-UAB: 6; UAB: 20

✓ Abstracts accepted: 93
  ✓ 58 speakers and 29 posters

ACLPS 2016 Hosts:

Robin Lorenz
Marty Simmons
Marisa Marques
Rob Hardy
ACLPS 2016 Cont’d….

**Welcome Reception**

“Tailgate Party”

Dr. Stankovic, Marty Simmons and Dr. Milner

Dr. Laposata, Dr. Crowther and Dr. Musser

Dr. Fung and the UAB Group (Dr. Zheng, Dr. Harada Dr. Marques, Dr. Saylor and Dr. Williams)
ACLPS 2016 Cont’d....

Breakfast with Professors

Dr. McDaniel and Dr. Cao

Dr. Smith at “Breakfast with Professors”

Dr. Duncan presenting her abstract
ACLPS 2016 Cont’d....

Awards Banquet at the McWane Center

Yale Group at Banquet

Dr. McDonald is roasted at the banquet by Drs. Sacks and Bruns
ACLPS 2016 Cont’d….

Awards on Friday and Saturday

Dr. Eisenbarth receiving the Ellis Benson Award

Dr. Saag receiving the Cotlove Lecture Award from Drs. Marques and Frank

Dr. Miller receiving the Gerald T. Evans award from Dr. Frank
ACLPS 2016 Cont’d....

Awards Banquet at the McWane Center

Young Investigator Awardees with Drs. Frank and Lindeman
ACLPS 2016 Cont’d....

Fun at the McWane Center

Dr. Miller having fun

Drs. Ng, Spitzer, Frank, and Bryan

Drs. Lindeman, Lorenz and McDonald
ACLPS 2016 Cont’d....

Runners getting ready to start 5K run Saturday Morning

Dr. Faye-Petersen, Ali Simpson and Kerry Nivens after the 5K Run
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.

Cont’d...
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:

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

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.