

SUMMER 2008

# UAB Psychiatry

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

## The Faces of the Future

Building a Career in Psychiatry

### Also Inside:

An Update on Programmatic Research • Clinical Psychologists Trained at UAB  
Collaborative Care for Patients • A Resident's View



## Message from the Chairman

JAMES H. MEADOR-WOODRUFF, M.D.

Welcome to the summer 2008 issue of UAB Psychiatry. Time has truly flown, and I am already in my third year as the chair of the department. In this issue, we take stock of exciting new activities in the department and update others in planning.

A critical mission of a clinical department in an academic medical center is education, showcased within this issue. One of the core teaching commitments of this department is our postgraduate residency training program. The state of Alabama has a critical shortage of psychiatrists, by some counts this state ranks very near the bottom in per capita psychiatrists. This is why I have made it a goal to train more psychiatrists at UAB. Many people settle into careers near where they complete their residency training, and one of the most efficient ways for us to have more psychiatrists in this state is to train more. With the generous financial assistance of the state's Department of Mental Health, we were able to match a record number of eight incoming residents to our internship class; up from the five we had been anticipating. The high quality and stellar reputation of our general residency program, under the leadership of Dr. Daniel Dahl, allowed us to recruit this outstanding new class to UAB. Our child and adolescent residency is next for expansion, and we will reopen our fellowship to train geriatric psychiatrists within the year. In addition, UAB's Clinical Psychology Internship Program is hosted by this department. This highly competitive and nationally regarded program, under the leadership of Dr. Hal Thurstin, was recently reaccredited for five more years.

We have undergone dramatic expansion of our research enterprise since my arrival, and our level of federal grant support has nearly tripled in two years. Beyond the active and major departmental research areas highlighted in this issue, we are launching several initiatives to expand our research on the psychiatric problems of children, including expansion of our pediatric clinical services and a new campaign to endow a chair or professorship to attract a researcher that specializes in these disorders to UAB.



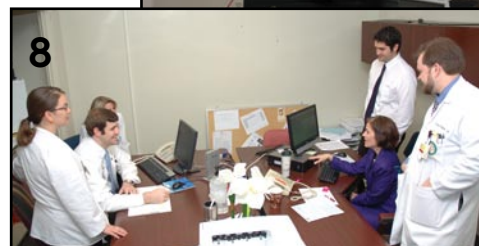
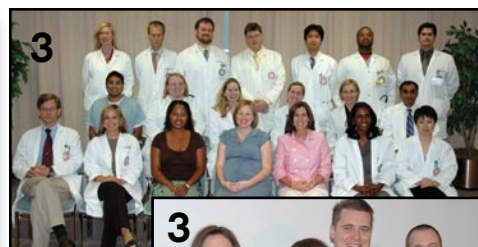
Clinically, we have expanded services to the patients we serve, and are seeing significantly more patients per week than just a year ago. A major change occurred this year with the appointment of Dr. Cheryl McCullumsmith as the director of our Division of Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry. She has led a series of major initiatives to provide timely consultations to patients seen by our colleagues in other departments at UAB, changing the culture of the delivery of urgent care in the emergency room, and working closely with other departmental and UAB leaders to continue the evolution of psychiatry emergency care for our community.

Let me end by commenting on the cover of this issue. While the department delivers a high volume of clinical care and is rapidly growing research, we are also planning for the future by training a next generation of clinicians and scientists. The young people that grace this issue's cover represent some of our many trainees that are engaged in postdoctoral education, representing psychiatry, psychology, and laboratory scientists. One of the most exciting parts of my job is planning for the upcoming needs of the department, UAB, and the community. Given our superb complement of trainees, I am confident that we are ready to meet that future which is going to be soon!

Sincerely,

# Table of Contents

- 3 A Resident's View**  
Building a Career in Psychiatry
- 3 Psychology Internship Program**  
Recently Reaccredited for 5 Years
- 4 Clinical Psychologists Trained at UAB**  
A Collaborative Training Program
- 5-6 Update on Programmatic Research Efforts**  
Working Toward a Breakthrough
- 7 Collaborative Care for Patients**  
A Team Approach
- 8 Exceptional Match Day for Psychiatry**  
Department Welcomes New Residents
- 9 New Faculty Join the Department**  
New Additions Bring Fresh Perspectives
- 10 Message From Eve Rhea**  
Launch of New Donor Society



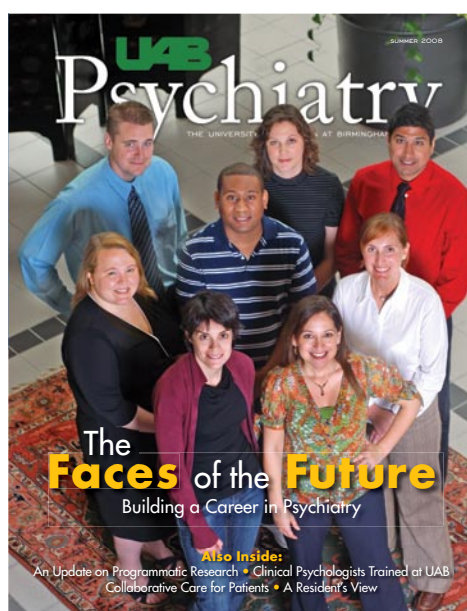
## UAB Psychiatry

Editor in Chief  
James H. Meador-Woodruff, M.D.

Managing Editor  
M. Eve Rhea, M.A.

Photographer  
Jason Neel

Publications Committee  
David B. Allen, J.D., FACHE  
Gautam Bijur, Ph.D.  
Karen Cropsey, Psy.D.  
Rebecca W. Jones, M.D.  
Jason Neel  
M. Eve Rhea, M.A.  
Monsheel Sodhi, Ph.D.  
Latamia White, M.D.



## About the Cover

This photo represents the next generation of clinicians and scientists in psychiatry at UAB and across the state of Alabama. The trainees in this photo are psychiatry residents, psychology interns and postdoctoral fellows that represent the future of psychiatric care, research, and education. As the Department of Psychiatry prepares for the coming years, it seems fitting to feature a few faces of our future.

(Back L to R) Brian McFarland, M.A.,  
Andrea Solomon, B.S., Aalok Chandora, M.D.;  
(Center L to R) Rebecca Jones, M.D.,  
Taj King, Ph.D., Erin Hanover, M.D.;  
(Front L to R) Eleonore Beurel, Ph.D.,  
Jennie Mahaffey, M.D.



# Psychiatry education

## A Resident's View

Building a Career in Psychiatry - By Rebecca W. Jones, M. D.



The UAB Psychiatry Residency Program has undergone several important changes in the last two years. Through the leadership of Dr. James Meador-Woodruff, Department Chair, and Dr. Daniel Dahl, Psychiatry Residency Training Director, our program has become one of the leading training programs in the Southeast. Dr. Meador-Woodruff and Dr. Dahl have ensured the ongoing success of the residency program by consolidating educational activities, a change which allows residents to spend more time with patients in a hands-on approach to learning. In addition, residents are now asked to complete a research project and are encouraged to attend conferences and meetings to discuss their research. This research requirement has allowed residents to realize the importance of constant learning.

While the first two years of psychiatry residency training are primarily spent on inpatient units, the third year is an outpatient or clinic year. In the last two years, residents have been able to spend more time at the V.A. Medical Center in Birmingham, learning about psychiatric illness in the veteran population. This experience has been very rewarding, especially given the high prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder and other psychiatric illnesses in the veteran population. Some of the third year of psychiatry residency training is spent in the UAB Community Psychiatry Program. This is a unique opportunity for residents to longitudinally follow patients with schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, depression, and bipolar disorder.

Perhaps the biggest change to the residency process is the addition of a fourth-year concentration. In the past, fourth-year residents passed through many different rotations as a way to prepare for the future. Now, residents have the opportunity to tailor their fourth year to specific interests.

Possible concentration experiences include inpatient psychiatry, geriatric psychiatry, consult/liaison psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry, community psychiatry, psychotherapy, research, telemedicine, and forensic psychiatry.

There is a nationwide shortage of psychiatrists, and this shortage is particularly critical in Alabama. Because of this, the Alabama Department of Mental Health has funded positions to train three additional residents. This year the entering psychiatry intern class was expanded to eight new residents, an expansion which will allow the Department of Psychiatry to better serve the community.

There have been many positive changes to the residency program in the last two years, but one thing remains the same. The faculty has been supportive of the residents, and this is something that residents truly treasure. Given the direction that the residency program is going, the quality of applicants, the collegiate learning environment, and the support of the faculty, this psychiatry residency program will continue to be a substantial asset to the university and broader community.

## Psychology Internship Program Recently Reaccredited for 5 Years



The Department of Psychiatry hosts the UAB Clinical Psychology Internship Program under the leadership of Dr. Hal Thurstin, which began in 1965 and has since been continuously accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA). The consortium is co-sponsored by UAB and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VA) and includes many university departments and centers. Internship rotations include positions in Preventive Medicine, the

## Clinical Psychologists Trained at UAB

### A Collaborative Training Program

The UAB School of Medicine and the UAB Graduate School sponsor a Ph.D. program in Clinical Medical Psychology. This program is approved by the American Psychological Association and provides students with thorough training in the psychological bases of behavior, including biomedical bases of behavioral, neuropsychology, psychophysiology, and health psychology. Students receive intensive clinical training involving professional skills, assessments, interventions, consultations, and evaluations. Emphasis is placed on applying these skills in a medical setting, and graduates are expected to take positions in medical centers, hospitals, other health care facilities, or academic departments.

There are three areas of emphasis within the program: Neuropsychology, Pediatric/Child Psychology, and Gerontology. The Department of Psychology is the core academic training resource while Department of Psychiatry faculty, as well as other School of Medicine faculty, may mentor research, teach, and provide supervision to students within their specific area of emphasis. Faculty research interests include health psychology, clinical neuropsychology, psychopharmacology, human psychophysiology, behavioral modification, learning and cognitive processes, neurochemistry, development, vision, audition, control of movement, obesity, aging, psychopathology, social psychology, sleep, drug abuse, car-

diovascular regulation, spinal cord injury, mental retardation/developmental disabilities, cognitive development, language and communication disorders, and pediatric psychology.

Six students are admitted each year to the program from a pool of approximately 70 applicants. For 2008-2009, all nine graduates of the Medical Psychology Program matched at APA-approved internships, including some of the nation's most prestigious sites such as Harvard Medical School/Massachusetts General Hospital, Brown Medical School, Seattle VA, and the University of Florida Health Sciences Center.

While there are currently no postdoctoral trainees in the department, Dr. Meador-Woodruff is working with department psychologists to create postdoctoral training opportunities. The department seeks to develop research-oriented Clinical Psychologists who can become faculty members after their postdoctoral training.



Department of Psychiatry (Adult Outpatient Psychotherapy, Adult Outpatient, Adult Inpatient, Medical/Surgical Neuropsychology, Geropsychology, and Behavioral Medicine/Neuropsychology), Veterans Administration (Outpatient Substance Abuse, Blind Rehabilitation, PTSD Psychotherapy, Primary Care, Geropsychology, Neuropsychology, and Rehabilitation/Chronic Pain), the Department of Neurology, Spain Rehabilitation Center (Neuropsychology/Rehabilitation, Spinal Cord Injury/Pain, Neuropsychology, and Medical Neuropsychology/Rehabilitation), and Clinical Child and Pediatric Psychology. This clinical internship year focuses on consolidation of assessment and therapy skills that were part of graduate training.

Doctoral students in Clinical Psychology are required to do a pre-doctoral clinical internship during the last year of their graduate program as a requirement for their degree and eventual licensure. These clinical internship positions are highly competitive, with more applicants than available positions. For example, in 2008, there were 3,058 pre-doctoral

internships nationally for 3,759 applicants, which left 19% of applicants unmatched.

The UAB Psychology Internship Training Consortium utilizes the scientist-practitioner model, which emphasizes the combination of clinical and research experience. Since its inception, over 300 doctoral psychologists have been trained and many remain in Alabama after completion of the program. Recently, the internship program was reaccredited for seven years and a new consortium agreement was written, which was essential to the reaccreditation. In the 2008 match, UAB successfully filled all seven positions from our very top choices. After completion of the training, many interns take postdoctoral fellowships, enter practice, or join the UAB School of Medicine faculty. For more information about our clinical psychology internship program, please visit us on the web: <http://main.uab.edu/Sites/psychiatry/education/training/>

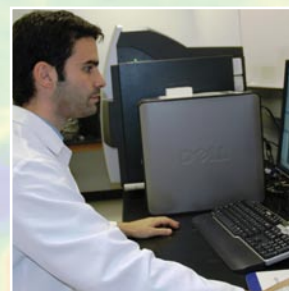


# Update on Programmatic Research

## Working Toward a Breakthrough

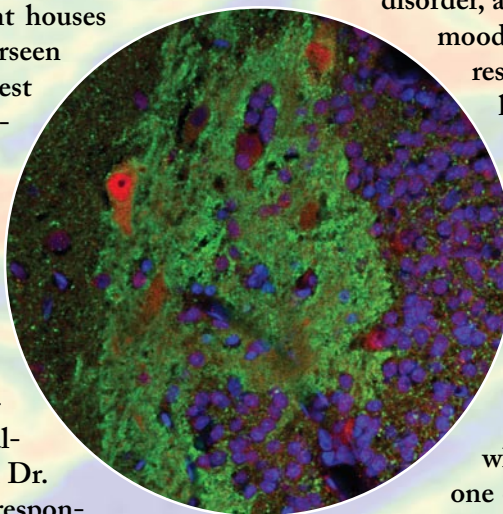
### Schizophrenia

One of the major strengths of the Department of Psychiatry is its multidimensional research focus on schizophrenia, a truly translational effort involving both basic science and clinical investigation. Dr. Robert Savage has coordinated much of the clinical research activities in the Department. Dr. Savage is currently involved with two large-scale research studies: PAARTNERS and AIMHS. PAARTNERS is a 5-year multi-site study of schizophrenia liability genes among African-Americans. The Alabama Institute for Mental Health Services (AIMHS) is an evidence-based practice (EBP) implementation and evaluation center of excellence. This project is responsible for the implementation of and evaluation of EBPs within the public mental health system in the state. The Department houses a longstanding clinical trials program overseen by Roberta May, M.A. that is designed to test new treatments for many disorders, including schizophrenia, in patients. This program permits us to test the newest, most exciting new treatments at UAB. A strong laboratory program has been built to complement the clinical research on schizophrenia. Dr. James Meador-Woodruff's lab is studying the role of the brain signaling molecule glutamate in schizophrenia using postmortem human brain tissue. Dr. Robert McCullumsmith's team, in close collaboration with Dr. Meador-Woodruff, focuses on the proteins responsible for glutamate reuptake in the brain. Dr. Adrienne Lahti specializes in functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) which allows her to study brain chemistry in patients and their response to medications. Dr. Rosalinda Roberts and her colleagues, Dr. Emma Perez-Costas and Dr. Miguel Melendez-Ferro, are leading cutting edge research in schizophrenia using light and electron microscopy of postmortem human brain. The goal of her research is to understand the detailed anatomical changes occurring in the brain in schizophrenia.



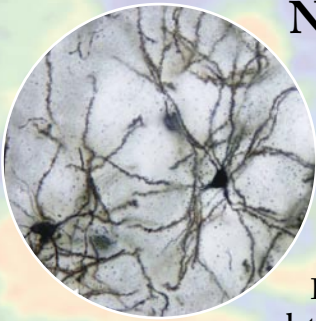
### Mood Disorders and Suicide

Dr. Richard Jope's laboratory studies the pathophysiology of mood disorders, including major depression and bipolar disorder, and the therapeutic mechanisms of mood stabilizers. A major focus of his research is the enzyme, GSK3, which has been shown to play an important role in neurogenesis and the mechanism of action of antidepressants and lithium. The findings from basic neuroscience in the laboratory are being translated to clinical research in collaboration with Dr. Xiaohua Li. Dr. Li is working to identify biomarkers for mood disorders and who has led numerous clinical trials, one of which showed that risperidone, an atypical antipsychotic, greatly reduces suicidality and depressive symptoms. Mood disorders and suicide run in families, therefore Dr. Monsheel Sodhi's laboratory is studying genetic factors in depression to facilitate the development of better predictors of suicide risk and new treatments for depression. Dr. Sodhi's research involves studies of postmortem gene expression, molecular genetic studies in collaboration with Dr. Daniel Dahl, and proteomic biomarker discovery.





# Programmatic Research Efforts



## Neurodevelopmental Disorders

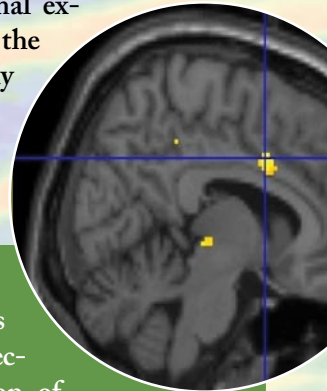
Both genetic factors and early postnatal events interact to increase susceptibility to psychiatric illness. The laboratory of Dr. Rita Cowell is interested in determining how demands for energy (like reduced oxygen levels) during brain development influence cells that are affected in neurodevelopmental disorders such as schizophrenia, epilepsy, and especially autism. Results from Dr. Cowell's laboratory show that a protein called PGC-1 $\alpha$  may control the way these cells maintain metabolic homeostasis. Other experiments involve exploring the way in which changes in the structure of genes influence the way that neurons produce energy; any reduction in cellular energy compromises a neuron's ability to make contact with its neighbors and establish functional connections and circuits. DNA structure is disturbed in a mouse model of Rett syndrome, a dramatic neurodevelopmental disorder with similarities to autism, and her lab is evaluating ways to augment neuronal metabolism in these animals as a potential novel treatment for this disorder.

## Substance Abuse

The Substance Abuse programs in the department operate together to provide substance abuse treatment, prevention and case management services for Jefferson County. These programs include Treatment Alternatives for Safer Communities (TASC), Drug Free (outpatient substance abuse treatment), prevention, and adolescent services provided at Family Court. Recent efforts have been undertaken in the Department to increase substance abuse research. In 2005, Foster Cook of UAB TASC received grant support to implement an enhanced treatment component for adolescents who are participating in the jurisdiction's Juvenile Treatment Drug Court. The goals of the project are to enhance the provision of substance abuse treatment to juvenile offenders to improve community outcomes. Dr. Karen Cropsey has two projects that investigate the use of medications and behavioral therapy to prevent relapse to opiates among criminal justice populations. She recently completed a smoking cessation trial using nicotine patches and group therapy for women in prison.

## Neurodegenerative Diseases

Dr. Gautam Bijur is investigating psychiatric and neurodegenerative diseases from the standpoint of metabolism. Dr. Bijur's lab is researching signaling pathways within the mitochondria, and studying how bolstering mitochondrial function may support neuronal health. Dr. Mathieu Lesort is investigating the role of mitochondria in Huntington's disease. This neurodegenerative disease is typically recognized as a movement disorder, but psychiatric disturbances are extremely common in Huntington's disease. Dr. Lesort's work has shown that abnormal extensions of the protein huntingtin, the dysfunctional protein that potentially underlies Huntington's disease, can cause large scale alterations in mitochondrial function and contribute to loss of brain plasticity.



Xiaohua Li, M.D., Ph.D. has been named Director of the Division of Behavioral Neurobiology in the Department of Psychiatry at UAB. Dr. Li is an Associate Professor of Psychiatry and has been a member of the department's faculty since 2001. Dr. Li

is an accomplished neuropsychiatry investigator and clinician. Soon after joining the faculty at UAB, she successfully received an NIH Career Development Award (K08), which supported her development as a clinician scientist with her primary research focusing on major depressive and bipolar disorders. During the NIH-supported development, she successfully competed for NIH R-series research grants, as well as grants from The National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression (NARSAD). Meanwhile, Dr. Li also recognizes the need for translating neuroscience research into clinical investigations, and early in her career participated in numerous pharmaceutical-funded clinical trials and she holds several investigator-initiated projects with various pharmaceutical companies. In addition to her multiple lines of research, Dr. Li is a board-certified psychiatrist specializing in major depressive and bipolar disorders, and she has been named an outstanding teacher in psychopharmacology by the Psychiatry Residents.



# Collaborative Care for Patients

## A Team Approach

By Cheryl McCullumsmith, M.D., Ph.D.

When a patient with HIV or heart disease develops depression, anxiety or another psychiatric illness, they need a psychiatrist with expertise in treating their psychiatric illness while simultaneously considering their medical condition. Psychiatrists who specialize in treating patients with both psychiatric and medical illnesses are called consult-liaison psychiatrists, or specialists in psychosomatic medicine, newly recognized by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology as a subspecialty of psychiatry. Our Division of Consult-Liaison Psychiatry in UAB's Department of Psychiatry includes psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses and social workers who meet the challenge of treating patient's physical and mental illnesses every day.

Our clinicians see patients throughout the entire UAB hospital system. We are asked to perform many services, including evaluations for capacity to make medical decisions, treatment for anxiety and depression, treatment of delirium after surgeries or prolonged medical illnesses, evaluation of patients being treated after suicide attempts, treatment of withdrawal from substances, even evaluation of potential malingering or unconscious feigning of symptoms. Some of the more intriguing consultation cases involve patients with symptoms such as confusion or agitation that cannot be readily explained. The consult-liaison psychiatrist has the challenge of sifting through a large medical chart looking for clues to the cause of the psychiatric problems. The cause may be as common as a urinary tract infection, as rare as a brain tumor, or as simple as a home medication inadvertently overlooked on admission. In the emergency room, consult-liaison psychiatrists evaluate patients in crisis, and work with our expert nurses to triage them to the appropriate level of care, be that follow-up with an outpatient psychiatrist or therapist, rehabilitation, or an admission to inpatient psychiatry.



In their liaison work, consult-liaison psychiatrists develop a special area of expertise with a medical population and establish a small clinic working directly with those medical clinicians and their patients. Sometimes, medical and psychiatric care can even be coordinated during the same visit. Certainly, communication between the medical and psychiatric teams has improved and patients receive thorough, encompassing care of their illnesses. Our division is developing several such liaison clinics and will continue expanding its reach into more medical specialty areas in the next few years. We have collaborations with several of the transplantation and surgical services. Here, our clinicians thoroughly evaluate patients prior to their surgery or transplant and guide appropriate medical and psychiatric follow-up to provide the best possible outcomes for patients and their physicians. Kristine Lokken, Ph.D., a clinical and research psychologist, evaluates candidates for bariatric surgery or liver transplant and then works closely with the surgical teams to support these

patients. She is also involved in clinical research on improving outcomes in these patients. Hal Thurstin, Ph.D., the Department of Psychiatry's Chief Psychologist, evaluates living kidney donors prior to their donations, and Carl Houck, M.D., works with the renal transplant service to guide treatment and care of potential recipients of renal transplants at UAB. Newer liaison clinics have been developed recently with the 1917 clinic, which provides comprehensive care to patients with HIV, and with the division of cardiac medicine working primarily with heart failure patients. We see patients at 1917 and are involved in research on depression and also on medication side effects and interactions in these patients. Rita Patton, M.D. and I are initiating a new liaison clinic with cardiology, working primarily with patients experiencing heart failure. In collaboration with Dr. Thurstin, we are working to provide comprehensive psychiatric and psychological services to patients with cardiac disease.



One of the most rewarding parts of working in an academic hospital is the opportunity to work with and train medical students and residents. Every day we round with and teach a team of medical students and second year psychiatry residents. We interact with and teach medicine and surgery residents throughout the hospital as we consult on their patients. We are initiating a fourth year residency concentration in psychosomatic medicine to enrich the residency experience.

We are developing a fellowship in psychosomatic medicine to enable us to help train a whole new generation of consult-liaison psychiatrists to be active at UAB and throughout the state. We believe this goal to be one of our highest missions.



**Cheryl McCullumsmith, M.D., Ph.D.** is the new Director of the Division of Consult-Liaison Psychiatry. The Division recently underwent a name change, and was formerly the Division of Medical Surgical Psychiatry. She is currently involved in clinical research on depression

in both spinal cord injury patients and HIV infected patients. Dr. McCullumsmith was recently accepted to the prestigious Early Women in Medicine seminar in Washington, D.C. which will be held in July 2008.



## Exceptional Match Day for Psychiatry

### Department Welcomes New Residents

**T**he UAB Department of Psychiatry celebrated filling the entering intern class with a record number of eight new residents on Match Day in March. Dr. Rebecca W. Jones and Dr. Jennie Mahaffey will be serving as Chief Residents of Psychiatry for 2008-2009. We welcome the following incoming residents to the department:

Dr. Dieter Bartschat a graduate of the Medical University of South Carolina College of Medicine, Dr. Zuomin Chen (Tongji Medical University), Dr. Reginald Francis (Louisiana State University School of Medicine in Shreveport), Dr. Nathaniel Hansen (University of Alabama School of Medicine), Dr. Kisani Ogwaro (University of Alabama School of Medicine), Dr. Graham Osula (University of Alabama School of Medicine), Dr. Roger Ridgeway (St Matthews University), and Dr. Patrick Tapia (University of Alabama School of Medicine).

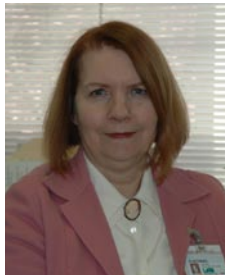
Child and Adolescent Psychiatry will be welcoming three new residents as well. Dr. John Rians (Texas A&M School of Medicine), Dr. Balaji Gopidasan (Madras Medical College), and Dr. Paul O'Leary (University of Alabama School of Medicine) will be joining the resident class this summer. Dr. David Atkinson and Dr. Sonya Pritchard will be serving as Chief Residents for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry for 2008-2009.

The Department is pleased to welcome such a bright group of doctors to our training program. They bring with them diversity in medical education from various institutions around the world. We look forward to welcoming each of them into the Department in June.



# New Faculty Join the Department

## New Additions Bring Fresh Perspectives



**Dr. Rita Patton** is a native of Decatur, Alabama. She received her B.S. in Biochemistry from Auburn University and her M.D. from the University of Alabama School of Medicine. Dr. Patton was in private practice from 1983 to 2007. She has also held several positions in the Birmingham area including Psychiatric Consultant at Eastside Mental Health Center and Secretary of the Alabama Psychiatric Society. Dr. Patton is currently on the Leadership Council for the College of Science and Math at Auburn University. She is certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology and the American Board of Adolescent Psychiatry. Dr. Patton's professional interests are in the areas of Affective Disorders, Adult ADHD, and Consultation/Liaison Psychiatry.

The UAB Department of Psychiatry hired one of its recent graduates, **Dr. Rusheng Zhang**, as an Assistant Professor in the Division of Adult Psychiatry. Dr. Zhang is originally from China and attended the Medical College of Qingdao University (Qingdao Medical College), then completed his graduate studies in endocrinology at Peking Union Medical College. He was a faculty member in the Department of Endocrinology at Peking Union Hospital before he moved to the United States to complete his internship and residency in Psychiatry at the UAB School of Medicine.



**Dr. Bates Redwine** grew up in Rome, Georgia where he attended Darlington School. He attended college in Spartanburg, South Carolina at Wofford College, graduating Magna Cum Laude. Dr. Redwine taught science at a private school in Atlanta for a year, before he went to medical school at the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta. He then completed his psychiatry residency at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. Dr. Redwine completed a fellowship in Geriatric Psychiatry at Emory University, then joined Birmingham's Frank Kay Clinic where he was in private practice for a little over eight years. He joined UAB's Department of Psychiatry in December 2007. He is particularly interested in ECT and other somatic treatments, dementia, and late-life depression.

**Dr. Emma Perez-Costas** joined the faculty of the Department of Psychiatry as an Assistant Professor in April of 2007. A native of Spain, Dr. Perez-Costas studied at the University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain) where she received her Bachelor in Science, Masters of Science in Cell Biology, and Ph.D. in Cell Biology. After obtaining her doctoral degree she joined the laboratory of Dr. Rosalinda C. Roberts as a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Maryland Psychiatric Research Center (Department of Psychiatry, University of Maryland at Baltimore), and she was appointed as an Instructor before coming to UAB. Currently, Dr. Perez-Costas is involved in several research projects, with the main focus on understanding normal brain development and neuropathology of schizophrenia using animal models and postmortem human tissue.



**Dr. Monsheel Sodhi** joined the faculty of the Department of Psychiatry as an Assistant Professor in August of 2007. A native of England, Dr. Sodhi studied at the University of London where she received her degree in Pharmacy, Masters in Neuroscience and Ph.D. in Genetics. She pursued postdoctoral training in Molecular Neuropathology at Oxford University, and during this time was awarded a three year fellowship from the Medical Research Council (UK), which funded her training in molecular pharmacology at Vanderbilt University. Dr. Sodhi has received two consecutive NARSAD Young Investigator awards for her work on the effects of RNA editing and epigenetics on serotonin 2 receptors and their role in schizophrenia, and was recently selected for funding by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP). She is currently building a program of genetic research focusing on schizophrenia, mood disorders and suicide prevention.





## Message from The Director of Development

EVE RHEA

Many of you know what it's like to live with a psychiatric illness or live with someone who suffers from a psychiatric disorder. I have visited with several people lately who have children with various mental illnesses. I have come away from these meetings feeling their passion for breakthroughs in treatment, as well as feeling their desperation for answers as to why their loved one is suffering with such a chronically disabling illness. It is staggering that one in five adults will be impacted by psychiatric illness in their lifetime. These illnesses are no longer something that we can look at from a distance; it is a reality that any of us could experience mental illness first hand. This is why research is so immensely important.

The Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurobiology here at UAB is actively involved with research on schizophrenia, depression, autism spectrum disorder, and a number of other psychiatric illnesses. You have read about some of this research in this issue. The only long term way to help children and adults affected by these illnesses is through research that seeks new breakthroughs. I am amazed by the researchers in the department that I speak with about their studies. They are passionate about their research and are eager to find these breakthroughs.

With the support of the community, the Department of Psychiatry at UAB will be able to recruit and retain some of the brightest physicians and scientists in the field of psychiatry. I invite you to become a charter member of the Friends of Psychiatry donor society. As a member of the society, you will receive personal departmental updates on research, clinical efforts, and recruitment from me and Dr. Meador-Woodruff. You will also have the opportunity to meet with our top researchers and ask them questions about their research. Members of the Friends of Psychiatry donor society can be proud of the personal investment they can make in our research efforts. Breakthroughs are not possible without the support of the entire community-both public and private. Please consider becoming a partner in our research efforts today.

If you are interested in learning more about how you can help support any of the programs that you have read about, or if you are interested in learning more about the Friends of Psychiatry donor society, please contact Eve Rhea at (205) 975-7298 or by electronic mail at [erhea@uab.edu](mailto:erhea@uab.edu)



**Apologies:** The UAB Psychiatry publications committee would like to apologize for failing to give credit to Mr. Arthur Umlauf when we used a picture of his sculpture entitled *Touch Some One* in our last edition. This beautiful piece seen on the left is one of many pieces Mr. Umlauf has created at his Hoover, Alabama studio. To him, this piece represents "someone or something, a book, a verse, or a higher power touching another in a way that changes their lives and how they will continue living and thinking." Mr. Umlauf is a talented artist and a member of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Birmingham where he was president in 2006 and 2007. If you would like to learn more about Mr. Umlauf's work please visit his web site at: <http://www.umlaufgallery.com/>.



# UAB Psychiatry

## Move to Callahan Eye Foundation on Track

The Department of Psychiatry has a unique opportunity to relocate our adult and child/adolescent outpatient clinics to the Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital. The location is ideal for the Department because of its location and layout. Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital is across the street from the Sparks and Smolian Buildings and is located at the corner of 8th Avenue and 18th Street. The clinic, which is located on the 3rd floor of the Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital, was formerly used for inpatient rooms and will be converted to individual clinician offices. The rooms are large and all will have windows allowing for good lighting and a positive environment. The clinic check-in areas and waiting areas will be located just a few steps away from the central elevators. This will allow for convenient check-in and check-out and should allow for very efficient service for patients. Improved parking is still being planned and would involve valet and self-parking, utilizing the Eye Foundation parking deck located on 7th Avenue.

This project has been delayed for some time due to other UAB Health System space issues, but is on track now and should be open by January 2009, if not sooner. The extra time has allowed for more planning so that we have a clinic that is better for everyone: patients, clinicians and staff.



UAB  
Psychiatry

SC 560  
1530 3rd Avenue South  
Birmingham, AL 35294-0017

U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 17