2005 AΩΑ Art Show

Photography, painting, music, poetry, and jewelry highlighted the School of Medicine at UAB’s 2005 Student Art Show and Competition.

The Alabama Alpha Chapter of the national medical honor society, Alpha Omega Alpha (AΩΑ), announced winners in March of the show it sponsors. All entries will be on display in the Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences of UAB Historical Collections, located on the third floor of Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences, through June 30.

The event, in its 5th year, originated from the chapter’s desire to increase medical students’ exposure to the arts and humanities, involve them in historical collections, and showcase student talent. “We train physicians who must be able to interact on many levels with their patients, and art provides a means for them to creatively explore and express their own humanity,” says Stephen Smith, PhD, director of student life at the School of Medicine.

An awards ceremony and reception were held at the Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences. Jurors for the competition were Brett M. Levine, director, UAB Visual Arts Gallery; Dr. Smith, medical student services; and Stefanie Rookis, curator, Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences, Lister Hill Library.

Founded nationally in 1902, AΩΑ promotes medical school scholarship, encourages high standards of character and conduct, and recognizes outstanding achievement in medical science, practice, and related fields.

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**Accolades**

Alan Percy, MD, associate director of the Civitan International Research Center (CIRC), has been named the 2005 recipient of the **Hower Award** from the Child Neurology Society (CNS), the academic and professional organization representing pediatric neurology in the U.S. The Hower Award is presented annually to a child neurologist and CNS member who is regarded as an outstanding teacher and scholar and has devoted a high level of service to CNS. Dr. Percy, the 32nd Hower recipient, joins a group of distinguished child neurologists.

Dr. Percy came to UAB in 1992 as director of child neurology and director of the Sparks Clinics. Shortly thereafter, he was named the inaugural William Bew White Professor. Dr. Percy relinquished his leadership position in child neurology in 2003 to devote more time to research programs within CIRC and to oversee the Sparks Clinics’ teaching and service aspects. He is recognized internationally and nationally as one of the leading authorities on **Rett syndrome** and childhood **inherited neurodegenerative disorders**. For this work, he was named Doctor Honoris Causa in 2002 by Göteborg University, Göteborg, Sweden. Together with colleagues at CIRC and Sparks Clinics, Dr. Percy recently launched a study in Anniston, Alabama, regarding the possible neurocognitive-neurobehavioral effects of **polychlorinated biphenyls** in the Anniston community, which has been adversely affected by extremely high levels of industrial pollution.

The author of more than 275 original papers, reviews, and chapters, Dr. Percy has served on numerous editorial boards. He was a member of the National Advisory Council of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke from 1993-1996 and president of the Child Neurology Society from 1997-1999. He is presently president of the Child Neurology Foundation and of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.
HONORS CONVOCATION
SALUTES ACHIEvements

The University of Alabama School of Medicine will salute UAB’s Class of 2005 on May 15 in the Birmingham-Jefferson Civic Center Concert Hall. Among the awards to be presented are the Hugh Dempsey Memorial Award for highest academic achievement in the class, the Alumni Award for Leadership and Community Service, and the Medical Assurance Award for Excellence in Patient Communications.

Other awards will be presented at a separate ceremony on May 13 in Margaret Cameron Spain Auditorium. Huntsville and Tuscaloosa-based medical students will hold award banquets at their respective campuses on May 13, as well.

UAB Chief of Thoracic Surgery Robert Cerfolio, MD, will serve as keynote speaker of the event. His topic is “Seize Opportunities by Working Hard.”

Former Spain Rehab Patient Hosts Benefit

The annual dinner benefiting UAB’s Spain Rehabilitation Center will be held May 14 at the Greystone home of a former patient. Homebuilder Aaron Freeman, who suffered a spinal injury in a dirt-bike crash 11 years ago, designed his new home to be completely wheelchair-accessible. His company, Freeman Building, Inc., constructed it.

The $150-per-person event at 981 Garland Cove is black-tie optional. Other pricing levels are available, up to $5,000 for benefactor tables. Cocktails, hors d’oeuvres, and a silent auction will begin at 6:30 PM, followed by a buffet dinner and, at 8:45 PM, a live auction. The silent auction will end at 10 PM.

Funds from the activities will help renovate Spain Rehabilitation’s water-therapy pool and dressing areas. For ticket information, call Cathy Newhouse at 205-934-4966.

Shortly after his family took occupancy, Freeman showed the home to Spain Center Director Annie Jackson, MD, one of his physicians during the year-long rehabilitation stay. Dr. Jackson asked him to open the home for the benefit, which typically attracts hundreds of people to a local showcase home each year.

In addition to the elevator and sense of openness, the home has wide doors, hallways, and kitchen aisles and low ovens to make it wheelchair-friendly. It also has a warmth of materials and layout.

Spain Rehabilitation Center includes federally funded centers for spinal cord and head injuries. It opened at UAB in the early 1960s.

Pritchett Endowed Lecture Is May 11

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factors for hematopoietic stem cells.

Dr. Lodish has served on numerous editorial boards, including the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Journal of Cell Biology, and Journal of Biological Chemistry and Nucleic Acids Research. He is lead author of the textbook Molecular Cell Biology. The 5th edition, published in 2003, has been translated into six languages.

He has served on advisory panels for the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, and American Cancer Society, the advisory board of the University of Basle’s Biozentrum and European Molecular Biology Laboratory in Heidelberg, and the board of trustees at Kenyon College and Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. Dr. Lodish is a recipient of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases Merit Award and the American Diabetes Association Sadie Award.

Paulette Shirey Pritchett, MD, for whom the lectureship is named, was a valued faculty member of UAB’s Department of Pathology from 1975 to 1984.

Gwaltney Family Pledges More Than $1.5 Million

AT $2.2 MILLION, UAB DIABETES RESEARCH INITIATIVE TOPS ONE-THIRD MARK

UAB has received a gift of more than $1.5 million to help establish a Comprehensive Diabetes Center. The donation will be used to fund an endowed chair to recruit and retain a premier researcher to serve as director of the center.

The gift — from Nancy Gwaltney of Alexander City, Alabama — represents the initiative’s single largest contribution to date, pushing the campaign over the one-third mark toward its goal of $6.5 million. It will be used to establish the Nancy R. and Eugene C. Gwaltney Family Endowed Chair in Juvenile Diabetes Research. UAB has committed to match private funds with an additional $6.5 million in space in the Shelby Interdisciplinary Biomedical Research Building, now under construction.

“This wonderful gift, along with others received thus far, reflects the community’s deep recognition that UAB is a world frontrunner in the race to find a
“The UAB Comprehensive Diabetes Center director will take the lead in developing a world-class facility for the research and treatment of diabetes, taking advantage of the excellent research and clinical programs already in place at UAB,” she adds.

Among the other gifts are $100,000 from the Junior League of Greater Birmingham and $50,000 from the Crippled Children’s Foundation, Dr. Garrison says.

UAB’s diabetes initiative was announced almost a year ago. At the same time, the university announced its intent to transplant insulin-producing cells into diabetics. Three patients have been transplanted successfully since then.

“Our goal is to continue these transplants and eventually to institute changes to allow them to be performed with ‘transplant tolerance’ — without the requirement of medications to suppress the immune system,” William J. Koopman, MD, chair of the Department of Medicine says. He adds that UAB has one of the world’s top transplant-tolerance research programs.

The fund-raising campaign is a partnership between UAB and community leaders interested in finding a cure for diabetes. David Silverstein and Benny LaRussa are chairing the community effort. Both are parents of children with type 1 diabetes.

ACCOLADES

Cancer Center Scientist Mona Fouad, MD, MPH, founding director of the Minority Health and Research Center at UAB, has won the Sullivan Best Practice Award for Reducing Health Disparities in the United States. She also has been honored with the American Medical Association’s Recognition of Excellence in Eliminating Health Disparities Award.

These national honors recognize individuals working toward eliminating health disparities among racial and ethnic minorities.

Dr. Fouad is associate professor of medicine in UAB’s Division of Preventive Medicine. She also is director of the Recruitment and Retention Shared Facility.