CONGRATULATIONS

Best Doctors In America Salutes 233 UAB Physicians

The 2005 Best Doctors in America includes a record 233 UAB physicians, comprising almost one-third of UAB’s medical staff. The physicians cited also make up more than two-thirds of all specialists from the Birmingham metropolitan area in the Best Doctors database.

Best Doctors is an independent, knowledge-based medical referral service located in Aiken, South Carolina. Its surveys ask peer physicians, “If you or a loved one needed a doctor in your specialty, to whom would you refer them?” Only about 3% to 5% of all specialists worldwide make the list, which currently names 33,000 in the U.S. — including 345 physicians in the Birmingham area.

University Hospital Nurse Recruitment: A Success!

With the growing nationwide shortage of nurses, University Hospital’s recent nurse recruitment results confirm that UAB is a top choice for many in the nursing field. “We try to maintain a supportive work environment for nurses, says Cynthia Barginere, RN, MSN, UAB Health System associate vice president and University Hospital chief nursing officer.

Since May 2004, University Hospital has hired 364 new graduate registered nurses and 421 full- and part-time nurses — a major accomplishment, considering the decreasing number of individuals entering the field. According to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, between 1995 and 2003 the number of first-time graduates taking the national licensure examination for registered nurses fell 20%, resulting in 19,820 fewer graduates taking the exam in 2003 than in 1995.

continued on page 3
of Alabama Health Services Foundation President Ray Watts, MD, says. “Collectively, we have one of the most outstanding academic multispecialty group practices in America, providing a level of care to patients throughout Alabama and beyond that is unsurpassed. I am extremely proud to be counted among these physicians.”

Robert R. Rich, MD, UAB senior vice president for medicine and dean of UAB’s School of Medicine, agrees: “This is yet another indicator of the extraordinary concentration of medical expertise available to Alabamians at UAB. I am proud so many UAB faculty physicians have achieved this distinction.”

To view the list, visit www.health.uab.edu/bestdoctors05.

Remembering Kurt Niemann

Kurt M.W. Niemann, MD, UAB professor of orthopaedic surgery, died October 4 after a courageous battle with pancreatic cancer. His outstanding career spanned 40 years and included training numerous surgical residents. He was holder of the John D. Sherrill Chair of Orthopaedic Surgery from 1971-1993 and a member of Alpha Omega Alpha. He published many scientific papers, contributed to orthopaedic advances, and served as president of the Southern Orthopaedic Association and Clinical Orthopaedics Society.

One of his most outstanding accomplishments was founding Alabama’s first after-hours sports medicine clinic to address sports injuries, paving the way for future clinics of its kind. Dr. Niemann and his wife were active in medical missionary work in Colombia, Ecuador, and Guatemala. In addition, he developed an exchange program with the University del Valle, Department of Orthopaedics, Cali, Colombia, and was honored for his efforts with the Amigo Dilecto Award. He also served as team physician for Mountain Brook Junior and Senior High School, the Birmingham Americans World Football League, and the Birmingham Vulcans. He was codirector of the Sports Medicine Clinic of Birmingham from 1975-1982 and medical director for the Sports Medicine Institute of Alabama from 1982-1983.

The family requests donations to the Kurt M.W. Niemann Endowment Fund, Department of Surgery, BDB, 503, 1530 3rd Ave S., Birmingham, AL 35294.

Nelson Is Senior Associate Dean For Faculty Development

Department of Pediatrics Professor Kathleen Nelson, MD, was recently appointed School of Medicine senior associate dean for faculty development. She is the first holder of the newly created position, which resulted from reorganization of the School of Medicine’s administrative structure.

“As senior associate dean for faculty development, Dr. Nelson is responsible for creating a supportive environment that facilitates the academic progress of School of Medicine and Joint Health Sciences faculty by enhancing their teaching, research, clinical, and administrative abilities,” UAB Senior Vice President for Medicine and School of Medicine Dean Robert R. Rich, MD, says.

“Our goal is to recruit, develop, recognize, reward, and retain excellent faculty,” Dr. Nelson says. “We are creating an environment that promotes a vital, productive, and collegial faculty. We are here to facilitate each faculty member’s academic advancement and encourage excellence with a comprehensive program that includes broad-based orientation for new faculty, meaningful mentoring geared to each individual’s goals, and substantive rewards and recognition for achieving career goals in support of the School of Medicine.

“Specifically, we can explain the path faculty must follow and the milestones they must achieve for promotion, as well as review their academic progress. Our office also will assist researchers in identifying funding opportunities and university collaborators, preparing grants, and accessing shared equipment, resources, and mentors.”

AAMC: MAJOR INCREASE IN MEDICAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, APPLICANTS

First-year enrollment in U.S. medical schools increased significantly this year, as did the number of medical school applicants, according to recent data from the Association of American Medical Colleges. The 2005-2006 entering class is the largest on record, with more than 17,000 first-time enrollees in the nation’s 125 medical schools, a 2% increase from 2004. Twenty-two allopathic medical schools expanded their class size by 5% or more during the past year; seven of these institutions boosted first-year enrollment by more than 10%.

The total number of applicants to U.S. medical schools for the 2005-2006 academic year increased 4.6% from last year to more than 37,000. Applications from Hispanic students rose by 6.4%; applications from Mexican Americans increased almost 8% over 2004. Asian applicants also increased more than 8%.

For details, visit www.aamc.org/newsroom/pressrel/2005/051025.htm
The office, situated in the Pittman Center for Advanced Medical Studies, 1924 7th Avenue S, provides easy access. “Here, we offer opportunities for faculty to meet in a non-academic, casual atmosphere to discuss common interests and issues through our monthly Med-Link meetings,” she says. “We encourage all School of Medicine and Joint Health Sciences faculty to join us on the first Thursday of each month from 5 PM to 7 PM for snacks, drinks, conversation, and relaxation to build collegiality.” Med-Link is an expansion of the MD-Link program for clinical faculty established by Nancy Dunlap, MD, PhD.

COUNSELOR, MOTIVATOR

As the former School of Medicine senior associate dean for students and a pediatric counselor, Dr. Nelson finds similarities in her past and current positions. “My prior positions have been to nurture development, whether that of budding pediatricians or medical students. My career has focused on helping students identify their goals and achieve their fullest potential,” she says. “Medical student services offered academic, personal, and career counseling. In a similar manner, I hope to help faculty acquire the skills they need to reach their fullest potential. With 30 years experience as a UAB faculty member, I believe that I have the perspective, insight, knowledge, and information on how UAB works to assist faculty in reaching their goals in the most efficient and effective manner.”

University Hospital Nurse Recruitment: A Success!

continued from page 1

“Our competitive advantage is our strong nurse-to-patient ratio, which is 1 nurse for every 5 patients, a ratio that has been mandated in California, and our platforms-of-care, which allow nurses to develop a specialized clinical practice,” she says. “In addition, we have been a Magnet health care organization for several years and have worked diligently to address all factors necessary to achieve prestigious Magnet nursing service status.”

Becoming 1 of only 8 Magnet Hospitals in the southeastern U.S., University Hospital joined this elite group of institutions in 2002. Magnet status is granted by The American Nurses Association’s Credentialing Center and recognizes hospitals across the nation that embody the best practices for recruitment and retention of nurses as “centers for excellence in nursing.”

According to Barginere, providing an environment where nurses have a degree of autonomy, where they are valued and respected, and where they have continuing education opportunities, competitive compensation, and scheduling options are among the reasons the hospital was tapped as a Magnet institution and chosen as a place of employment by many nurses.

University Hospital employs numerous outreach strategies to recruit and retain nurses. For example, in 2001, Nursing Career Specialist/New Hire Support Coordinator Terri Johnson, RN, BSN, was hired to serve as liaison between the hospital and schools of nursing within the state and surrounding region to help recruitment initiatives.

“When the North Pavilion was being constructed, we knew additional nursing staff would be needed, so we started a vigorous recruitment campaign. Our liaison visited nursing schools throughout the southeast, discussing benefits of a nursing career at UAB with sophomore and junior nursing students, instead of with seniors, the majority of whom had already decided where they would do their preceptorships, which is often where they stay after graduation,” Barginere says.

Innovative programs for new employees consist of a preceptorship that trains and orients them to ensure they are clinically proficient and a monthly new-hire support program that provides information and support to help acclimate new employees to UAB programs and culture. Nurses receive clinical educational support through unit-based educators, clinical nurse specialists, and advance technical nurses. In addition, Nursing Staff Development offers free access to continuing education courses and conferences.

The intern program is popular and competitive. Nurses accepted into the program complete a 6-month rotation on different units to determine where they would most enjoy working, and, beginning this year, the service will initiate a post-baccalaureate 1-year residency program.

continued on page 4
ment to hire Marketing Specialist Brandi Rhea to assist with the campaign.

“One of the hallmarks of our strong nursing service is a staff that contributes to the plan of care for each patient and works collaboratively with Medical Staff and other disciplines to provide a strong support system,” she concludes.

UAB Addiction Recovery Program For Health Care Professionals

continued from page 1
dependency or addiction. It offers adult inpatient or outpatient detoxification and stabilization, partial hospitalization, and day outpatient therapy, as well as continuing care initiatives for long-term support of patients and their families.

“Our major focus is the addicted health care professional, however, we do accept other patients. We treat primarily chemical addictions, although we occasionally see patients addicted to gambling, compulsive overeating, or sex,” says Dr. Lane. “We don’t specifically treat these conditions, but we address those issues and refer people to an appropriate program, when necessary,” he continues.

“Our primary mode of treatment involves group and individual therapy.” Other core program components include daily lectures, family workshops, recreation therapy sessions, a discharge plan, and when needed, psychological and psychiatric evaluation. In addition to referrals from health care professionals, the program accepts self-referrals.

For more information or to refer a patient call the Psychiatry Department’s referral service, ACCESS, at 934-7008.

Appointments

Tamera H. Matherne, MD, 801-7936, JT N 3rd Floor, Radiology, Effective July

Mukesh Patel, MD, 934-5191, THT 229, Infectious Diseases, Effective July

Harry Sun, MD, 975-7622, LHRB 727, Transplant Surgery, Effective July