ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chief of Pediatrics
Yoginder Vaid, MD was recently appointed Chief of Radiology at Children’s Hospital. Thank you, Dr. Stuart Royal, for your 27 years of remarkable service. Although Dr. Royal will continue his clinical service duties, he will also focus his time on international outreach. He has had a tremendous impact on our trainees and the children in the State of Alabama.

New UAB Clinic in Leeds
The current UAB Medicine-Moody clinic is being replaced with a new clinic in Leeds this summer. Additionally, UAB will house an outpatient diagnostic center adjacent to the clinic featuring MRI, CT, ultrasound, digital X-ray, bone-density scanning, and mammography. To learn more, click here.

Chief Quality Resident
We are proud to announce that Molecular Imaging Resident Devaki Surasi, MD was selected for the UAB Medicine Chief Quality Resident Program. Only eight residents were selected for this important inaugural program whose purpose is to further understanding of quality improvement concepts and techniques, as well as to develop the skills needed to effectively promote and establish high quality care services within the healthcare system as a whole.

RSNA Reception
We had a great turnout at the UAB Radiology Alumni Social at last’s years RSNA meeting in Chicago. It was a pleasure to visit with so many of our former residents who now work all over the US and as far away as Spain. We were happy to report exciting updates from 2014, and we look forward to providing more encouraging news at this year’s social. Continued partnerships between our alumni and UAB faculty are among our highest achievements. Thanks to your own generous support, we have raised over $30,000 for the Koehler Fund for Education and the Stanley Fund for Leadership.

2014 Quality Variance Award Winner
Congratulations to our Mammography Section for winning The Patient Centered Award for 2014. It is a tremendous accomplishment to receive a quality award two years consecutively, and mammography also received the highest overall Press Ganey scores for the entire year. In 2013, they were awarded for having the highest hand hygiene compliance rate. We are proud of this group’s hard work and dedication in providing excellent patient care!

Thank you
Thanks to all of you who contributed to the Angel Tree gifts this year. We are certain that our angels enjoyed a very special Christmas due to everyone’s generosity.
Robert Kessler, M.D. joined the Radiology Department in 2013 as Director of Neurochemical Brain Imaging and PET Neurotracer Development. Since UAB’s T24 Cyclotron was already in place, Dr. Kessler was able to quickly develop specialized brain PET imaging tests to track changes in the brain. With this ability to look at molecules and receptors in the brain, Dr. Kessler can use specialized PET scans to study a vast array of diseases in the brain, looking at everything from dementia to tumors and schizophrenia.

Dr. Kessler’s involvement in developing new tracers at NIH and at Vanderbilt University ultimately shaped his career path. 18F-Fallypride and 18F-FPPEB are radioactive molecules that bind specifically to dopamine and glutamate receptors. Dr. Kessler’s research concentrates heavily on the dopamine receptors in order to discover the underlying meaning of chemicals in the brain which referee one’s pleasures and reward-seeking behaviors. Through understanding the effects of dopamine release on receptors, and by monitoring these dopamine levels, Dr. Kessler can show how dopamine directly relates to addictions, impulses, and one’s ability to feel pleasure.

With UAB’s state-of-the-art equipment, Dr. Kessler has furthered our understanding of what happens at a molecular level in the brain when a disorder or addiction arises. Dr. Kessler also has begun working with the neurotransmitter glutamate to continue developing and perfecting tracers with the T24 Cyclotron. Glutamate, like dopamine, can be observed through the PET tracers that bind to glutamate receptors. The glutamate study will not only provide invaluable insight into the process of addiction, but will also contribute to research projects on topics such as depression, Alzheimer’s disease, and Parkinson’s disease.

Through his pursuit of knowledge and many years of hard work, Dr. Kessler has done an extraordinary job in answering questions about many challenging diseases! He is a true asset to the UAB Radiology Department, and we expect to see continued great discoveries in his future with us.

Recently, the UAB Cyclotron Facility was inspected by the Alabama State Board of Pharmacy in November, and with the exclusion of a few minor requests, the facility was granted the Institutional Pharmacy license, and the Nuclear Pharmacy License. Denise Jeffers, RPh, Director of Radiopharmaceutical Quality Assurance, continues to do an exceptional job in making continuous progress at our UAB Cyclotron Facility.