

WINTER 2014

MISSISSIPPI MEDICINE

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

J. Kim Sessums,
Doctor of Arts



► Model **PHYSICIAN** ► A Presence of **MIND** ► The Golden Age of **MEDICINE**



A LITTLE *Joy*

A group of second-year medical students brings a little joy to the world of pediatric patient Kaylin J. Smith while caroling at Batson Children's Hospital on Dec. 5. Kaylin, 6, jingles a bell in time to the a cappella efforts of Emily Bufkin, right foreground, Meghan Giurintano, kneeling, and, from left, Emily Deaton, Katie Scott, Carrie Shumaker (in Santa suit), Victoria Scott, Alex Ruhl and Cole Young.



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AAMC LAUDS SHIRLEY FOR LIFETIME OF SERVICE



Shirley

Dr. Aaron Shirley, one of Mississippi's civil rights icons, received the 2013 Herbert W. Nickens Award from the Association of American Medical Colleges on Nov. 2 at the AAMC's annual meeting in Philadelphia, Pa.

Honored for his lifetime of service in support of diversity in medical education and the elimination of health disparities, Shirley was invited to deliver a "thought leader" lecture at the conference.

Originally from Gluckstadt, Shirley completed medical school and an internship in Tennessee before entering private practice in Vicksburg. He set his sights on a pediatric residency out of state, but was invited to apply for a training slot at UMMC by

then-chair of pediatrics Dr. Blair E. Batson.

He became the first African-American resident — and the first black learner in any program — at UMMC in 1965. He went on to serve as a clinical instructor in the Department of Pediatrics for more than 40 years.

His career highlights in health care include co-founding the Jackson-Hinds Comprehensive Health Center, which became a model for federally funded community health centers nationwide, and development of the Jackson Medical Mall in partnership with Jackson State University, Tougaloo College and UMMC.

"For all of his adult life, he has been a courageous champion of civil rights and equal access to health services for African

Americans," said Dr. LouAnn Woodward, UMMC's associate vice chancellor for health affairs and vice dean of the School of Medicine, who nominated Shirley for the award.

Shirley said the national honor was "a surprise, but a very pleasant surprise. I will try to live up to the expectations that go along with this great award."

Herbert W. Nickens, for whom the tribute is named, was the founding vice president of the AAMC's Diversity Policies and Programs unit. "His passionate leadership contributed greatly to focusing national attention on the need to support underrepresented minorities in medicine," according to the AAMC.

FIRST FAMILY OF MSU FOOTBALL AIDS PEDS CENTER

Megan Mullen, wife of Mississippi State head football coach Dan Mullen, presented a \$25,000 donation for Friends of Children's Hospital in October.

The Mullens have created the Mullen 36 Family Foundation to benefit 36 different foundations in the state of Mississippi.

The first chosen beneficiary is Friends of Children's Hospital, and the donation will be included in the current campaign to raise \$2 million for the Children's Heart Center at Batson Children's Hospital.

In an Oct. 14 ceremony announcing the donation, Megan Mullen met with Dr. Ali Dodge-Khatami, professor of pediatric and congenital heart surgery, Terri Gillespie, chief nursing officer for Children's of Mississippi, Sara Ray, chairman of the board of Friends of Children's Hospital, Leigh Reeves, president of the board of Friends of Children's Hospital, and Dr. Jorge Salazar, chief of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery and co-director of the Children's Heart Center



Megan Mullen, second from left, presents a \$25,000 donation to Friends' chairman of the board Sara Ray, third from right, and president Leigh Reeves, second from right. Also present to accept the check are, from left, Dr. Ali Dodge-Khatami, Terri Gillespie and Dr. Jorge Salazar

RARE HONOR ADDS TO HILL'S PRESTIGE

Dr. J. Edward Hill, a family physician and faculty member at the North Mississippi Medical Center in Tupelo, has received one of the highest honors bestowed by the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP).

The UMMC School of Medicine alumnus was named the recipient of the John G. Walsh Award, which honors long-term dedication and commitment to the development of family medicine. The AAFP made the presentation in San Diego during its annual meeting in the fall.

The award is not given annually but is presented at the discretion of the AAFP Board of Directors.

"It is probably the most humbling honor I've ever received," Hill said.

"It came out of the blue, too. I didn't know any of the board members who made the selection, so it was really a surprise.

"Dr. Walsh was an exceptional person. I looked at the people who received the award before me, many of whom I know, and it humbled me even more."

Hill began his career in the Mississippi Delta, practicing there for 27 years and developing a maternal health program that reduced the fetal mortality rate to below the national average.

He served as director of the Family



Dr. J. Edward Hill of Tupelo addresses the Congress of Delegates of the American Academy of Family Physicians, which honored him with the John G. Walsh Award for his commitment to the development of family medicine.

Practice Residency Program at North Mississippi Medical Center from 1995 to 2001 and again from 2009 to 2013.

His leadership positions have included chair of the council of the World Medical Association and chair of the Board of Trustees of the American Medical Association.

"I've had a blessed career, that's for sure," Hill said.

He was also chairman of the board of trustees and president of the Mississippi

State Medical Association, president of the Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians and president of the Southern Medical Association.

Hill has been president of the Mississippi affiliate of the American Heart Association and member of the advisory board for the county Head Start program.

A board-certified family physician, Hill completed his family medicine residency while he was a commissioned officer in the U.S. Navy and a general medical officer in a naval destroyer group.

FAMILY PHYSICIANS TAP DOWELL AS STATE LEADER

Indianola native Dr. William Wade Dowell, an alumnus of the UMMC School of Medicine, was elected the 2013 president of the Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians (MAFP) in July.

As the previous president-elect of the 1,000-plus member MAFP, Dowell succeeded outgoing president Dr. Susan A. Chiarito of Vicksburg.

A diplomate of the American Board of Family Medicine, Dowell practices at

Indianola Family Medical Group. His expertise covers the gamut of family medicine, including operative obstetrics.

A member of the Mississippi State Medical Association and the Delta Medical Society, he has a special interest in sports medicine and has served as team physician for Indianola Academy, Mississippi Delta Community College and the University of Mississippi.



Dowell

UMMC STRETCHES MISSION WITH GRENADA VENTURE



UMMC Grenada employees, from left, Dr. Jarriet Ting, hospitalist; Kathy Beck, chief nursing officer; Sarah Longest, chief information officer; Pam Chandler, ER manager; Molly Brown, administrative director/risk manager; and David Putt, advisor to the vice chancellor at UMMC and the hospital's interim CEO

In August, UMMC entered an agreement with the Grenada County Board of Supervisors to lease the 156-bed Grenada Lake Medical Center, a partnership that will provide GLMC with management and advanced-care support.

In return, the arrangement will create opportunities for UMMC to stretch its services and education mission to meet the needs of rural Mississippians.

UMMC officially began managing the hospital Sept. 1, working closely with the county-appointed board of trustees, said David Putt, GLMC interim chief executive officer. The Medical Center began leasing GLMC in January, when the name of the hospital officially became UMMC Grenada.

Under the 20-year agreement, UMMC will pay about \$1.8 million yearly to retire GLMC's \$37.4 million debt.

Grenada has a population of approximately 13,000, but is the closest medical center for many more in the surrounding counties. It's situated halfway between Jackson and Memphis, 45 miles from Batesville and approximately 50 miles from Oxford.

The hospital treats an estimated 1,500 patients each month in its emergency department.

"I believe this (partnership) is good for GLMC because it gives us the opportunity to bring certain medical services to their market that were not available to them before, such as Telehealth services," said Kevin Cook, CEO of University Hospitals.

"They also have some unique components, like their ambulance service, that add to our institution."

Pablo Diaz, executive director of the Grenada Economic Development District, said the partnership is "an extremely positive development.

"The community at large is receiving UMMC with open arms and is very optimistic about what the future will bring."

MEDICAL CENTER HONORED FOR DIVERSITY RECORD

UMMC is one of 56 institutions to receive the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award, given annually by INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine.

The award is the only national honor highlighting universities in the United States for their commitment to diversity and inclusion. UMMC was featured in the November issue of

INSIGHT Into Diversity, the oldest higher education publication in the nation focused on issues in diversity.

"We are very proud as an institution to receive this honor because it is the entire university that's put a focus on diversity and inclusion," said Dr. Jasmine Taylor, associate vice chancellor for multicultural affairs.

"The ultimate goal for all of these efforts is our mission. We want to deliver quality patient care that improves the health of all Mississippians.

"That's what all of this is about – improving patient care, research and training."



Taylor



Dr. Hannah Gay

HIV BABY STILL 'FUNCTIONALLY CURED'

A Mississippi toddler born with HIV and treated with a combination of antiviral drugs unusually early remained free of active infection 18 months after all treatment ceased, according to an updated case report published Oct. 23 in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Dr. Hannah Gay, UMMC associate professor of pediatrics (infectious diseases), and her colleagues at the Johns Hopkins Children's Center and the University of Massachusetts Medical School first presented their findings on the case in March during a scientific meeting in Atlanta.

The published report adds detail and confirms what Gay and her colleagues say is the first documented case of HIV remission in a child. The case's specifics also fit the definition, recently established by an HIV expert group, of a functional cure in the young girl.

"We're thrilled that the child remains off medication and has no detectable virus replicating," Gay said. "We've continued to follow the child, obviously, and she continues to do very well."

"There is no sign of the return of HIV, and we will continue to follow her for the long term."

The child was born to an HIV-infected mother and began combination antiretroviral treatment 30 hours after birth. The infant remained on antivirals until 18 months of age, at which point she was lost to follow-up for a while

and, physicians say, stopped treatment.

Upon return to care, about 10 months after treatment stopped, repeated standard HIV tests detected no virus in the blood, according to the report.

The investigators say the prompt administration of antiviral treatment likely led to the Mississippi child's remission because it halted the formation of hard-to-treat viral reservoirs — dormant HIV hiding in immune cells that reignites the infection in most patients within mere weeks of stopping drug therapy.

As a result, a federally funded study set to begin in early 2014 will test the early treatment method used in the Mississippi case to determine whether the approach could be used in all HIV-infected newborns.

Doctor of ARTS

In Brookhaven,
Dr. Kim Sessums
stays true to form

By Gary Pettus

In Brookhaven, a southwest Mississippi town of about 12,500, a woman walked into an OB/GYN clinic brandishing a tool used to cut down trees. She was looking for Dr. J. Kim Sessums.

At the front desk, she plunked down the jagged blade, startling the nurses. Then she pulled out an old photograph.

“Can Dr. Sessums paint this picture of my father’s store on this saw?” she asked.

That’s how it is for a small-town doctor who’s also a big-time artist. Sessums’ clients, and one would-be customer, have included a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, a renowned American painter, a world-famous evangelist, sports hall-of-famers, the National Park Service and a woman with a saw.

Also: Daffy Duck.

The image of Daffy lives at Ole Brook Pediatric Dentistry in Brookhaven, a clinic owned and operated by Dr. Joey Sessums, daughter of the artist.

Also adorning the office are Sylvester the cat, Bugs Bunny, Elmer Fudd, etc., plus an alphabet mural and a whimsical sculpture of a “repurposed porpoise.”

“He did it all,” said Joey Sessums, a graduate of the UMMC School of Dentistry. “The design, colors, artwork.”

The children love it, she said. And no one else could have done this. Her father was always going to decorate her office, perhaps from the moment she discovered the drawing of the chicken.

“I found it in my mom and dad’s bedside table,” she said. “He had made it years ago, when he was about the age I was at the time.” A kid.

“I asked him, ‘How could you draw this when you were so young?’”

The real question was why.



At Pelahatchie High School, home of the Chiefs, someone had painted an image of the mascot onto the gym floor.

The artist was Howard Sessums, the school’s basketball coach and a former court standout at Mississippi College who was drafted in 1955 by the New York Knicks.

ON THE COVER: Dr. Kim Sessums of Brookhaven, physician and artist, stands between two of his works. In the foreground is “Pentecost”, featuring a human form framed by an arched structure that suggests wind or spirit. Behind him is a tribute to the parents he lost as a young boy, with elements that include a twisted ironing board and newspaper stories about his father.

Alternating between prescription pads and drawing pads, Dr. Kim Sessums finds a few moments in his clinic office to resume working on a portrait commissioned by one of his colleagues.





Dr. Joey Sessums, right, a pediatric dentist in Brookhaven, has a special bond with the interior designer and artist for her newly-renovated office: He's her father.



Dr. Kim Sessums checks on a family at King's Daughters Medical Center in Brookhaven: Sarah Lyons, left, and Garrett Lyons, right, are the parents of Gannon Ridge Lyons, born the previous day, on Sept. 12, 2013.

If Kim Sessums inherited his artistic skill from his father, they didn't have much time to talk about Kim's own future as an artist or as a basketball player, or about the future in general.

One day in 1963, when Kim was 5, Howard Sessums had been looking at some cattle before pulling his Volkswagen onto the road and into the path of a streaking truck.

"He died instantly," Kim Sessums said.

There were two other children: Kevin, 8; and Karole, 4.

About 15 months later, esophageal cancer took Nancy Carolyn Sessums, the woman who had tried to feed them and wash and iron their clothes on her own; their mom.

The children's new home was in rural Scott County on a gravel road between Forest and Harpersville.

"People were always staring at us," Sessums said. "I guess they thought of us as these little exotic orphan kids living with their grandparents."

Joyce and Malcolm Britt, who ran a Western Auto store in Forest, were their mother's parents. For entertainment they had one catfish pond, one TV channel and no money.

Over the years, the three kids learned to depend on their own imaginations, each other and Liza Minnelli.

“He is one of the most talented people I’ve ever met, and I’ve met a lot of them.”

Larry Lugar

“I grew up listening to the Cabaret soundtrack with my brother,” Sessums said. “Bette Midler was all over the house, too.

“I didn’t know that was a weird childhood. I thought everyone was doing that.”

His brother wrote plays and the three siblings acted them out.

“We would create other worlds in the back pasture,” Sessums said.

He created them, also, with pencil and paper.

Come to the cabaret.



Larry Lugar admits he’s jealous.

“Not in the sense that I have animosity toward him,” Lugar said. “I am envious of his talents.”

As the owner of a bronze foundry near Memphis, Lugar has worked with Sessums and his sculptures for a dozen years.

“His two-dimensional work is excellent, as is his three-dimensional. He does traditional bronzes, but also more cutting-edge, experimental pieces,” Lugar said.

“He is also a great tennis player, a jack of all trades. He has done

well in his medical practice and domestic life. He is one of the most talented people I’ve ever met, and I’ve met a lot of them.”



Plaster cast of Sessums’ Eudora Welty sculpture

Alexa Miller, on the other hand, has never met Sessums. But she has seen his work displayed on his web site.

“Artists make art for all kinds of reasons,” said Miller, a medical education consultant who teaches at Brandeis University.

“For (Sessums), a really important

reason seems to be that he wants to honor and commemorate a person’s individuality. He is able to see something in them and translate it; then, others can see it, too.”

Dr. Helen Barnes discovered Sessums when he was a student of hers at the School of Medicine in the 1980s.

“If someone is sick in my family, if I’m mad, frustrated, I can walk around a gallery and get a quieting, soothing feeling,” said Barnes, UMMC associate professor emeritus of obstetrics and gynecology, and one of the first African-American women to practice medicine in Mississippi.

“That’s what I get from Kim’s drawings.

“He can feel the need a person has. He could walk down the street and see somebody and it wouldn’t matter how bedraggled and dirty that man is, if the man looked down, Kim would say hello to him. He would listen to him.

“You see that compassion in his art.”

In particular, Sessums’ sculptures of Andrew Wyeth, Billy Graham and Eudora Welty capture something a photograph can’t sometimes, Lugar said.

“His images are certainly recognizable, but there is also a depth of feeling there. And that is rare.

“And I cannot figure out how he hangs out with people as different as Andrew Wyeth and Billy Graham.”



The Rev. Billy Graham was in a bad mood. The time was 1997, in the aftermath of President Bill Clinton’s Monica Lewinsky scandal.

The evangelist had publicly forgiven the president, which had produced a flood of hate mail that made Graham jumpy.

Perhaps that explains what happened next.



When Sessums arrived at Graham's cabin in North Carolina, Ruth Graham still had not told her husband about the commission. The ice Sessums had to break that day was the size of a glacier.

Watched closely by Graham's body guard, Sessums began wielding his sculpting knife. He had already worked up a clay model from photographs, and, somehow, every feature was in its proper place, as Sessums recalls. Except for two.

"I said, 'Rev. Graham, I'm going to have to cut your ears off and move them.'"

The guard gave a start; when Sessums looked up, Graham was sitting there with both hands over his ears.

"I said, 'No, Rev. Graham; the sculpture's ears.'"

The glacier melted.



For the three children, rural life in 1960s Mississippi did have its rewards: the warmth of homemade quilts; backyard fishing; butter beans they picked themselves.

But they were also fed a diet of the popular attitudes of the day, and they found them to be as twisted as their grandmother's hand, marred by a stroke.

"There was a culture in rural Mississippi where it wasn't understood that all people were the same," Sessums said.

He saw separate bathrooms for blacks and whites, and the crumbling homes of field hands whose windows had no glass and whose children had no shoes.

In spite of what he calls the "meager setting" of his youth, it was lush compared to theirs, he said. Later, as an artist looking for subjects worth his time, he remembered them.

There is a sculpture standing in the Vicksburg National Military Park and commissioned by the National Park Service: a monument to U.S. African-American troops who fought in Vicksburg during the Civil War.

A wounded soldier, his head down, stands between the supporting arms of a fellow soldier and a field hand. The second soldier, his chin up, looks ahead, while the field hand stares back through the vacant windows of the past.



Eudora Welty was not optimistic about sculptors. She had gotten ahold of a bad one once and so was reluctant to try them again, as if they were oysters.

This is the atmosphere Sessums walked into, inside the Jackson home of one of his favorite writers – the woman whose gifts and personality he would try to distill into a chunk of bronze.

One day, in the future, he would create a free-form, multi-media

portrait of her that featured a zebra skin – "because Miss Welty stands out from the herd. She's not a quarter horse; she's a zebra."

On this day, the zebra was leery of being turned into a bust – until she heard about her sculptor's medical background. As it turned out, she had once lived next-door to some medical students; she loved it when they threw parties.

As Sessums worked on the model, Welty asked him how he found enough time for his medical practice and for his art.

"I told her the art was created between pap smears," Sessums said.

"She said, 'That's great. I think we should call the bust Between Paps.'"

Sessums had read her books and stories; now, they were reading each other.



It was Barnes who introduced Sessums to Welty. The physician and writer were friends.

That meeting would lead him, eventually, to North Carolina: The mother of Sessums' pastor knew Ruth Graham and had seen Sessums' bust of Eudora Welty. She recommended him.

Kristy Sessums was on that trip with her husband. She sat in the kitchen, visiting with Ruth, while, in another room, Billy Graham clenched his ears.

Kristy and Kim Sessums have four

children and have been married for 35 years, ever since they were in college, following their romance at Forest High School.

Behind their home, in the building converted into a two-story studio, Sessums has produced some of his best-known portraits, including such home-grown sports figures as Dave “Boo” Ferris, Johnny Vaught, Bailey Howell and, most recently, Kent Hull, an All-Pro center who died two years ago.

Many of those figures reside in Jackson, in the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and Museum.

As Sessums worked on these pieces and others, he and Kristy would talk sometimes; she’d bring him a screwdriver or a can of paint or a dab of criticism.

“I never say I don’t like it,” she said. “I may say, ‘I don’t quite understand what it is.’ Or that it isn’t quite right. I don’t know if it helps him, but he keeps asking.”

One of her favorite pieces, “Mugwump,” is a sculpture of a man and a mule at cross purposes.

“I don’t know why I like it,” she said. “I just do.”



Sessums may have been born an artist, but medicine grew on him.

After high school, his interests in architecture and basketball led him from Mississippi State University, where he was a walk-on, and

then to Belhaven College (now a university), where he was recruited to play.

His interest in making ends meet led him to hospitals. He found work as a patient transporter at the old Doctors’ Hospital in Jackson, a job that may not have paid much, but it did pay off.

“I was intimidated by the amount of knowledge needed to become a doctor,” he said. “But I became intrigued at the interaction between



A free-form piece honoring his parents hangs in Dr. Kim Sessums’ studio.



In the studio behind his home, Sessums created this clay model of the trophy that honors the late Kent Hull, the Greenwood native who starred as an offensive lineman for Mississippi State University and the NFL’s Buffalo Bills. A model of the Kent Hall Award was presented in September to the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and Museum in Jackson, which commissioned it. A bronze sculpture, created from the clay work, will be awarded each year to the state’s top collegiate offensive lineman.

physicians and patients.

“I thought, ‘I can take care of people.’”

Along with his art and photography



Photo courtesy of Vicksburg National Military Park

This detail from Dr. Kim Sessums’ monument honoring African-American Civil War soldiers reveals the fighter on the left looking ahead, toward a better future.



Photo courtesy of Vicksburg National Military Park

Dedicated in February 2004 at the Vicksburg National Military Park, the nine-foot tall bronze sculpture was the first National Park Service monument to honor African-American Civil War soldiers. It commemorates the service of the 1st and 3rd Mississippi Infantry and all Mississippians of African descent who participated in the Vicksburg Campaign.

courses at Belhaven, he dived into more science classes as well. He found a job as a surgical tech, and in 1980, he found himself in medical school.

While enrolled at UMMC, he made extra money by drawing portraits and sketches. He visited art museums, read books about art. But it was on a trip to South Carolina that he became married to it.

“I was on a residency interview,” said Sessums, who finished medical school in 1984.

At the Greenville County Museum of Art he took in the world’s largest public collection of watercolors by Andrew Wyeth, who often painted subjects with their backs to the viewer.

“I can do a portrait of you and it won’t even show your face?” Sessums said.

“It had such an impact on me, I couldn’t sleep that night. I knew I was going into medicine, but I also knew I wasn’t going to give up art.”



By the late 1990s Sessums’ reputation had spread at least as far as Chadds Ford, Pa.

That’s how Sessums came to be sitting in the same room with his idol, who had commissioned his own bust.

When Andrew Wyeth saw the completed sculpture – “The Road Less Traveled” – he told Sessums: “We’ve done it. I think we’ve really got something here. This is why I waited.”

Wyeth died about a decade later, several years after Welty.

The ministry of Billy Graham remains as intact as the ears on his head.



Sessums’ brother Kevin is now a prominent magazine writer and editor, and the author of the book

Mississippi Sissy, an account of their childhood. He lives in San Francisco.

Karole Sessums, their sister, runs a company that designs and builds websites for other companies. She has a home in Jackson but lives on the road.

Their brother found his place in Brookhaven, a town so small that no one was delivering babies when he arrived in 1988 – which is one reason he settled there.

He and his fellow resident at the time, Dr. Steve Mills, had wanted to go where they were needed. Once their Brookhaven OB-GYN Associates opened, other specialists followed.

Sessums is there to stay in spite of his fame as an artist, a fact his patients finally realized.

“I can do art anywhere,” he said.

Kristy Sessums calls it his “release valve.”

“Medicine is very stressful,” she said. “But he doesn’t have to make a living with his art, so it gives him an outlet to explore whatever he wants to.

“There is no pressure. I believe it’s an escape for him.”

What he can’t escape, in a way, is the 1960s.

“I still have a hard time getting over that,” he said. “I would like to say that in 2013 it’s changed, but I see patients who grew up in houses where no one cared if they went to college.

“I see patients who had multiple sex partners by the time they turned 15.”

If art won’t allow him to escape from his past, it can, at least, help him confront it.

Inside his studio, you can’t miss the sculpture: an amalgam of newspaper clippings about Howard Sessums, a twisted ironing board and a brilliant splash of blue color.

“Ironing things out and looking for a piece of blue sky” – this is what he calls it. **M**

A FRAME OF MIND

Art teaches physicians to see the big picture

If you're a physician, you don't have to draw, paint or sculpt to be an artist; often, the only thing you have to do is your job.

Between art and medicine, there is a profound link, and there are even lessons a physician can learn from studying and creating art, experts say.

Medicine is, in fact, practiced by artists; or vice versa.

"By viewing art, by becoming engaged in it, you develop the skill to learn how to look and listen," said Alexa Miller, a medical education consultant who teaches at Brandeis University in Massachusetts.

"You learn to hold multiple possibilities in the mind at one time, to make sense of the world and respond to it. That's important in art training."

It's important in medical training as well. Taking note, more and more medical schools and residency programs are incorporating the humanities.

Those works are tools to "stimulate dialogue, discussion, and awareness ...," particularly in areas of doctoring, the experience of illness, and end-of-life issues," as reported by researchers in the Family Practice Residency Program, White Memorial Medical Center, Los Angeles in 2005 ("Visual Thinking Strategies: A New Role for Art in Medical Education").

Attention to visual arts in particular can sharpen students' skills in observation, critical thinking, communication and description, Miller said.



Miller

"When a doctor is listening to what a patient is trying to describe but doesn't quite have the words for it, that doctor must give the patient the words— and must not change what's being described. What the artist does is similar.

"Physicians who are artists at an expert level look at a patient the way an artist would look at a work of art."

This is what Dr. Kim Sessums of Brookhaven does, she said. "He is interpreting a person."

And he does so in his medical practice and in his art.

To do so requires skill in what is called "right-brain" thinking – using the part of the brain that is nonverbal and spatial, as opposed to the left brain's logical and analytical deliberations.

Miller illustrated the difference by describing an olive oil tin in her kitchen: "The left-brain way would see a square shape and the words 'olive oil.'

"An artist would also see the shadow behind it and notice there is a reflection off the top of the tin onto the wall. An artist would take in a lot more information about its proportions, colors, tone and the relationships between the object and its surroundings.

"Physicians observing patients that way would take in everything and describe it before they begin judging: The doctor realizes that the patient comes from a certain place, family and culture."

Engaging in the arts can build empathy – a quality that's important in medicine, said Jane Hesser, an artist and psychiatric social worker at Women and Infants Hospital Rhode Island.

"If a physician interested in the arts asked me if I thought it would be beneficial to his or her doctoring to be engaged in the arts, I would say, 'Yes,'" Hesser said. "And I would say the key to it is mindful engagement – you are aware when you are engaging in the arts or when you're making art.

"You can learn specific skills, such as gathering accurate observations.

"But you're not going to become a better doctor by just looking at a painting."

Larry Lugar of Eads, Tenn., a bronze foundry owner, has worked with such sculptor/artists as Sessums; these clients nurture the relationship between medicine and arts, he said.



Hesser

"I know one doctor who believes that art is a very important part of healing; it can't just be oil changes and tune-ups. Healing deals with people's emotions and psyches, not just their organs.

"When that's taken into account, they heal more completely."

The humanities in general hold value for everyone, Miller said. "It's a questioning way of seeing the world that tolerates ambiguity.

"That's what people need to do to be able to function well in work, in democracy and in society; and to be able to empathize with people who are very different from them." **M**

- Gary Pettus



50 YEARS IN MEDICINE

Still-active physicians extend legacy of healing

by Bruce Coleman

Long before the Affordable Care Act and Medicare, before AIDS and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, before Dr. James Hardy transplanted the first lung and multiple editions of Dr. Arthur Guyton's Textbook of Medical Physiology had been published, graduates of the School of Medicine had entered the advanced specialty training that ultimately would leave an indelible impression upon the health of the state and the nation.

These alumni honed their craft under the tutelage of some of the most legendary names in health-care history and settled into their respective communities to practice what they had been taught so well at 2500 North State Street. They treated generations of families, formed special bonds with their neighbors and improved the well-being of the populations they served.

And many of them are still actively practicing medicine more than five decades later.

Four of these emissaries of health care explain what still fascinates them about medicine in general – and their respective specialties in particular – and how that interest has helped them forge a lifelong legacy of healing that has lasted longer than they could have ever imagined.



In the early 1960s, Dr. Louis Wise became one of the first dermatologists to establish a practice in Mississippi, and he has no plans to end it. From his office window in Jackson's Fondren district, he has watched the Medical Center's massive growth over the ensuing five decades.



Dr. Louis Wise

Around lunchtime on a crisp November day, after having seen his last patient of the morning, Dr. Louis Wise rifles through a small filing cabinet nestled behind his desk in his fourth-floor office in the Fondren Building and nimbly plucks out a manila folder.

From his office window, Wise has enjoyed a bird's-eye view of the Medical Center, as it grew from a T-shaped structure into a sprawling health sciences campus during the last 52 years.

“I enjoy seeing people and dealing with people. It’s sort of a satisfying thing to be able to diagnose a problem that they have.”

-Dr. Louis Wise

Wise’s practice predates his own building: By the time he was 30 and had completed his dermatology residency at Tulane Medical School in 1961, the construction company that had promised his office would be ready still hadn’t finished the new structure. Wise was able to move into the building that October – the third occupant, and to date, the longest-tenured – and has remained in the same location ever since.

To say Wise has been a fixture in the north Jackson community would be more than an understatement. He says that, more often than not, former patients stop him at the local grocery store to speak to him in the checkout line.

“I’ve had close relationships with a whole lot of my patients,” he said. “I enjoy seeing people and dealing with people. It’s sort of a satisfying thing to be able to diagnose a problem that they have, particularly if they’ve had it for a good while and didn’t know what to do about it.”

The roots of his medical training reach beyond

Jackson and the Medical Center. He attended the University of Mississippi’s medical school when it was in Oxford, then finished his degree at Tulane. He came to UMMC in 1957 for a one-year internship and developed an interest in dermatology and internal medicine.

In truth, Wise was set to take an internal medicine residency at UMMC under Dr. Robert Snavely when he received a fateful call from Dr. Vincent Derbes, head of dermatology at Tulane.

“I was in the newborn nursery examining a baby when Dr. Derbes called and asked me if I would take a residency,” Wise said. “I didn’t think twice.”

He took to dermatology so splendidly that Wise was named the first recipient of the school’s Peterkin Award for outstanding residency work in dermatology. Dr. Herbert Christianson, chief dermatologist at the Ochsner Clinic and a dermatology professor at Tulane, offered him the opportunity to join his clinic, but

Wise turned him down.

“I grew up in Yazoo City,” Wise said. “I knew several people who were practicing in Jackson that asked me to come back. My wife and I decided we would prefer Jackson to New Orleans.

“There were very few dermatologists in the state then.”

His association with the Medical Center has been about as close as his office location is to the main campus. Before Dr. Sabra Sullivan took over the dermatology program full-time, Wise would do consultation work for Dr. Blair Batson in UMMC’s dermatology clinic, once a week.

He helped teach students rotating through the dermatology clinic and led consults at UMMC. But his legacy extends further than the borders of what is now considered the “Fondren district.”

As he built that legacy over the years, the practice of dermatology changed quite a bit from when he first set up shop.

The biggest change to the profession, according to Wise, has been the approach.

“When I was in the training program at Tulane, they never did discuss anything about doing procedures specifically for cosmetic reasons.

“If someone came in and asked, ‘What can I do about all these wrinkles?’ They’d just tell them, ‘You’ve got mature skin.’”

Some of these changes have led him to streamline his practice, to a degree; but seeing patients every day remains part of his routine, one that has kept him interested, involved and entertained for more than half a century.

“Practically every patient that I’ve seen that has come here for years is constantly saying, ‘I hope you’re not going to retire.’”



Dr. Robert Elliott

Dr. Robert Elliott navigates the pedestrian traffic in the bustling Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, purchases coffee from a vendor and finds an open table in a relatively quiet corner to take a telephone call.

He has a little more than an hour to make his way to a connecting flight that will take him to an American Cancer Society workshop where he is scheduled to give a presentation on cancer cell metabolism.

The bustling environment is a metaphor for his career. As founder of the 16,000-square-foot Elliott, Elliott, Head Breast Cancer Research and Treatment Center in Baton Rouge, La., he has built one of the most innovative breast cancer health centers in the country. As a result, the surgical oncologist has been a man in high demand for a number of years.

Elliott, now 77, graduated from the School of Medicine in June 1961. Almost all of his surgery and residency training were under the legendary Dr. Hardy, with the exception of a one-year fellowship at Washington University in St. Louis.

That single year, he said, changed the direction of his life.

“I was very fortunate for the opportunity Dr. Hardy gave me to go to St. Louis and learn about electron

nanoscopy and cell biology,” he said. “When I first started out in surgery, I limited my practice to breast cancer surgery. At the time, my colleagues had their doubts about the idea of limiting a practice so much.

“It hasn’t been easy; we’ve had our ups and downs, but we were always able to survive because we’ve always had a good patient following. I’ve always believed a higher power has been responsible. But persistence pays off if you believe in what you’re doing.”

That faith has been shared by countless women, many of whom are now alive because Elliott had the courage to limit his surgical specialty so many years ago.

“My patients don’t want me to retire – they just love me



*“It’s not like
a job; it’s a hobby
to help folks.”*

-Dr. Robert Elliott

and want me to continue helping them,” Elliott said unabashedly. “Every day, I wake up with the desire to learn something new. I have always been a prodigious researcher and publisher.

“It’s not like a job; it’s a hobby to help folks.”

Elliott’s “hobby” has stood him in good stead – last August, he was part of the second class to be inducted into the School of Medicine’s Hall of Fame, following his mentor, Hardy. But he said his satisfaction with his career comes from patient plaudits rather than plaques.

“Seeing women overcome their breast cancer diagnosis, go into remission, come back to see me and find they’re still in remission, that’s worthwhile,” he said. “The little notes and cards and letters they send make you think what you chose for your life was well worth it.

“It all boils down to the appreciation of your patients.”

It's that human connection Elliott conjures when speaking to budding residents about surgery.

"I tell the students to follow their dreams if they have the tendency (toward surgery)," he said. "A lot has changed in the field of surgery, but there will always be a place for it. It's a very rewarding field, a field of almost immediate accomplishment – to see a patient doing well within a couple of days.

"It doesn't get any better than that."



Dr. Stacy Davidson

It's no secret that the Mississippi Delta is not universally known as a mecca for health-care practitioners. What is a secret, at least as far as Dr. Stacy Davidson is concerned, is that perhaps it should be.



Davidson, 80, started his medical training at Ole Miss and moved with the school to Jackson, where he became a member of the first class at the Medical Center. He graduated from UMMC in 1957, took a one-year residency at Jefferson Davis Hospital in Houston, Texas, did part of his residency training at Tulane and returned to UMMC for advanced ophthalmology training under Dr. Sam Johnson.

He made a happy discovery about his education on the day he reported to Jeff Davis Hospital.

"I found I had the best educational background of anybody when I went for residency training in Houston," he said. "I was very pleased with

what I had been exposed to by my training at the Medical Center.

"A lot of things have come from that training, and I appreciate everything the medical school did for me."

All the while he was receiving that training, Davidson's wife stayed put in Cleveland. He finally was able to join her full-time in 1959 when he started the Davidson Eye Clinic, which is still going strong today.

"God's been good to me and I've had good experiences everywhere I went," Davidson said. "I've been very fortunate to have such a good life, having been here a long time in Cleveland.

"I just want to pay back some of the price for the land I occupy here on earth."

For those with ocular problems in the Delta, Davidson has done that and more. He recalls nights when he was called at home to provide assistance for patients who couldn't get out of their own bed.

"I get the most thrills and the most personal feeling of satisfaction out of helping patients see better, including economically compromised people," he said. "It's been a wonderful experience living in Cleveland and I've appreciated the folks that have been so special to us.

"We're happy here."

He said a major incentive to practicing in the Delta was the opportunity for his children to further their education.

"One of the main reasons I came to Cleveland was because of Delta State University," he said. "I felt like, if something ever happened to me, my children could walk to college. It's a good school and they have all kinds of cultural activities going on that are nice to be a part of."

Davidson said he also is grateful for the good health he has enjoyed that has allowed him to practice for so long. He overcame a bout with colon cancer more than 20 years ago – "I was out of work a week or 10 days then, took radiation and I've been cancer-free ever since" – and in concession to age, he doesn't operate anymore. But he still sees patients every day.

His advice to students interested in committing their careers to medicine: Ask one question.

"I just want to pay back some of the price for the land I occupy here on earth."

-Dr. Stacy Davidson

“If they’re really interested, pick out a doctor they have faith in and ask him, ‘Would you do this again?’” Davidson said. “I think the answer from most folks would be positive.

“I know I would do it again.”

* * *

Dr. Howard Clark

The Clark Family Clinic and his own home may be the only places more familiar to Dr. Howard Clark than the gridiron at Morton High School.

When Clark, 86, first came to Morton in 1956, he had a desire to play an important role in the community and to be involved with youth. He knew the easiest way to do that would be football.

“I started off the first Friday night ready to go to the football game in Columbia,” Clark said. “At the last minute, someone came in to have a baby. So I missed the game.

“But I haven’t missed one since.”

That includes last November, when Morton High took the field in the state playoffs.

Clark comes by his commitment to the community honestly. It’s what interested him in a medical career from the beginning.

After finishing the two-year medical program at Ole Miss, Clark earned his M.D. at Tulane in 1955. He came to the brand-new Medical Center in Jackson for a rotating internship, where he was exposed to every facet of the medical practice.

It was here that he discovered the value of family practitioners.

“I did deliveries, surgeries – whatever was wrong with people,” he said. “You deliver babies, then follow them on up until they go to the nursing home.

“In Morton, I’ve delivered three generations of babies.”

The opportunity to be engaged in the community has led Clark to a conclusion: “The spice of life is practicing in a small town.

“I feel for the people who are practicing in the city. I like to get out into the community – that’s where the fun is.

“You get to know the people – these people know me and I know them and I’ve watched them grow up,” he said.

He seldom misses the opportunity to continue his education, either.

“Continuing education presentations, that’s my vacation,” he said.

As one of the pillars of the Morton community, Clark’s foremost message to youth is the importance of taking care of the whole self, not just one aspect.

“You can’t just concentrate on one – that would leave a vacuum in your life. You’ve got to work to grow that kid up to be a great American in every aspect, mind, body and soul.



“I like to get out into the community – that’s where the fun is.”
-Dr. Howard Clark

“I can get to the youth by being around them, helping them, being a role model and trying to impress upon them the importance of developing those qualities long-term.”

It’s a lesson the Sunday school teacher plans for quite some time to come.

“People say, ‘When are you going to retire?’” Clark said. “I say, ‘That’s not my call, that’s the Good Lord’s call.’ I’ll be seeing patients this afternoon, and I’ll be enjoying everyone that I see.

“Chances are, I’ll be seeing someone (whose) parents I delivered and watched grow up.” **M**

She has
teaching
on the

BRAIN

The education of Dr. Kimberly Simpson

By Gary Pettus

Near her hometown of Warminster, Pa., at Grace United Presbyterian Church in Horsbarn, she learned from the man who was called there to preach.

She saw him guide people through grief and divorce, treating them with compassion and understanding, choosing words that were simple and gentle. He could explain things.

She learned from him the way few other people could, because he was her father.

And then she found the object of her calling – the seat of all those profound emotions her father had helped others sort out in his own.

She chose to reveal its secrets the way he might – clearly, considerately. She could explain things.



For her brainchild there are categories, like “Cervical Levels of the Spinal Cord.”

A classroom trivia contest with a focus that is single-minded, so to speak, it’s Dr. Kimberly Simpson’s PowerPoint version of a popular TV quiz show.

Answer: This nerve innervates the ipsilateral sternocleidomastoid and trapezius muscles.

Question: What is the accessory nerve (CN XI)?

And that’s just for one point.

Simpson, a neuroanatomist, researcher, associate professor of neurobiology and anatomical sciences at UMMC, adapted the game to explain a three-pound mystery (and its minions) known as the human brain.

This is her calling.

As part of that calling, teams of students may earn valuable prizes: Hershey’s Kisses and lollipops. Knowing the answers, or questions, also boosts them on the road to their M.D.s or Ph.D.s.



Dr. Kimberly Simpson, right, and her father, the late Rev. Dr. Edward Simpson, celebrate together in 2003. The occasion was the completion of residency training by Dr. Robin Simpson, Kimberly Simpson’s sister.



Dr. Kimberly Simpson, associate professor of neurobiology and anatomical sciences at UMMC, teaches a course in medical neurobiology that is acclaimed by medical students and graduate students alike.

“The candy helps, of course,” Simpson said.

Neuro Jeopardy! is part of the lab review session of Simpson’s course in medical neurobiology, which is acclaimed by medical and graduate students.

“They rave about it,” said Dr. Michael Lehman, chair of the Department of Neurobiology and Anatomical Sciences.

“What they are responding to is her enthusiasm and professionalism. Students can distinguish between professors who are just going through the motions and those who are truly committed to their learning and success.”

Some of the reviews:

- “I came in kind of intimidated and scared of the class, but it really changed the way I studied – for that class and even for others. Dr. Simpson diversified the experience for everybody. She’s been fantastic.” – Mike Smith, a fourth-year Ph.D. candidate in neuroscience
- “In my career as a medical student, no one person has made a bigger impact in my educational pursuits than Dr. Simpson. She is a faculty member UMMC should fight to keep.” – Zach Pippin, third-year medical student

UMMC is on it. In May, Simpson received the Medical Center’s first-ever Regions Bank TEACH Prize, which includes a \$10,000 stipend.

Supported by Regions Bank, the annual Toward Educational Advancement in Care and Health Prize honors a faculty member who persistently hones the practice of education like a carver with a block of wood that never stops growing.

“In my career as a medical student, no one person has made a bigger impact in my educational pursuits than Dr. Simpson.”

Zach Pippin

“It’s coming up with new formats to engage their attention,” Simpson said. See: Neuro Jeopardy!

“The TEACH Prize really made me feel that what we’re doing matters,” she said. “That we’re making a difference.”

The desire to make a difference was as vital to her upbringing as the parietal lobe is to the reception of sensory information.

She and her two sisters learned it from their parents. One sister is a physician; the other is a first-grade teacher.

They learned to be generous.

“My father’s most precious resource was his time,” Simpson said, “and he gave it to us.

“My parents always put our needs ahead of theirs.”

In Horsham, Pa., her father, the Rev. Dr. Edward Simpson, also

tended to the needs of his flock, while her mother Nancy worked as a secretary. Their home was in nearby Warminster, a small suburb of Philadelphia, Pa., with a four-star public golf course and a symphony orchestra.

Music and sports were, and are, big deals in Warminster. But young Kimberly Simpson was more interested in the intricate organ that enables people to enjoy them.

“It’s exploring life at the cellular level, seeing how the system works. It’s discovering how cellular events change behavior and how they relate to a disease,” Simpson said. “I find that gratifying.

“My father always believed he had a calling, and I believed I had a calling for this.

First, she was called to Pennsylvania’s Ursinus College. There, as a biology major in the early ’90s, she heard that she had arrived just in time for “the decade of the brain.”

It was like telling a marshmallow addict that it was the decade of S’mores.

Discoveries about our most complex organ were unfolding and being foretold.

“For me, that was great,” Simpson said. “There was, and continues to be, a lot of uncharted territory in the brain.”

She decided to explore it as a researcher, rather than as a physician. “I thought I could help more people,” she said.

Her reasoning: If science can find out exactly what makes a disease appear, science might also discover what makes it disappear.

But after Simpson began her



graduate studies in neuroscience, she was confronted by a crisis that no amount of research could make go away.

Dr. Barry Waterhouse, one of her mentors, has a photo of her as a student enrolled at what is now the Drexel University College of Medicine. Simpson, a hardhat clamped on her head, is striding down a walkway; menacing fingers of electrical wires stretch from the ceiling.

The image symbolizes the financial uncertainties looming over students enrolled at the college's predecessor.

"Our fate was hanging in the balance for up to a year. All the time, Kim is in the midst of her thesis research," said Waterhouse, now professor of neurobiology and anatomy, and vice dean of biomedical graduate and postgraduate studies at Drexel.

"For a while, we thought the school was going to close."

Like everyone else there, Simpson survived. But she did more than that, Waterhouse said.

"She became a terrific graduate student, one of the strongest, if not the strongest, I've had. In the field I'm in, her work is recognized as being very important."

At Drexel, the institution that took over the medical program, Simpson also began stretching her teaching muscles, as a lab instructor.

"She has a real gift," Waterhouse said.

Simpson brought that gift with her to UMMC in 1999, a year after she was married. One big reason for the move here: Dr. Rick Lin.

A professor of neurobiology and anatomical sciences at UMMC, Lin had also been at Drexel, where Simpson worked with him as a researcher.

"She cares about the medical field, as a researcher and a teacher," Lin said. "Whatever she is doing, she puts a 100 percent effort into it."

After Lin's arrival here, he offered Simpson a job as a post-doctoral fellow. "It was a chance for us to continue the line of research we were already doing," Simpson said.

Their research has led to a possible link between antidepressants and autism. But Simpson, as an assistant professor, began making a reputation as a teacher as well.

As she taught, she remembered how she had felt as a graduate student.

"There were frustrations," she said. "At times I thought, 'How was I supposed to know that?'"

"I guess that's why I have a heart for students."

She also remembered her father's sermons on Sundays: "His message was always simple.

"I guess that's the key thing in medical education – don't bury the message."

Dr. Kimberly Simpson, far left, reviews a model of the brain with a group of second-year medical students who have taken the medical neurobiology course. They are, from left, Sam Yelverton, Toi Spates and Eden Johnston.

Terica Jackson of Jayess, for one, never had any trouble finding it.

“Her drawings in medical neurobiology brought everything to life,” said Jackson, now a fourth-year medical student.

“She would draw things out and talk things out. She wanted you to learn.”

Simpson’s course has something for everyone, said John Bridges of Yazoo City, president of the third-year medical class. “It has lectures, small-group learning.

“It stood out among all the courses I took as a first-year student. It helped you think as a physician.”

It doesn’t hurt that Simpson’s husband is one: Dr. Eric Zoog, now the Emergency Department chief at Baptist Health Systems in Jackson.

They’ve made a home in Brandon and have two children. Simpson has found her place here.

“Growing up in the church back home did shape me,” she said, “but it was after coming down here that I really came to understand how spiritually-based living is not just a church thing.

“I saw people living out what they believed. People down here are so caring about each other. I immediately connected to that.”

She also connected with her students, whatever their needs.

While Simpson must teach future doctors in a course slanted toward them, she must also teach future scientists, who don’t think like physicians at all, said Dr. Ian Paul, director of the Graduate Program in Neuroscience and professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior.

“I saw people living out what they believed. People down here are so caring about each other.”

Dr. Kimberly Simpson

For this, she is exceptionally qualified, said Paul, who has collaborated with Lin and Simpson on research projects.

“Kim recognizes the difference because she’s a scientist and she’s married to a physician.”

One way to illustrate the difference is the horse-zebra analogy: A medical student who hears hoof beats is taught to consider horses, not zebras.

A graduate student learns to consider zebras, horses, giraffes and any other hoofed creature that isn’t extinct.

“A scientist has a year or two to come up with an answer,” Paul said. “A physician has a day or a couple of hours.” So, if it sounds like a horse, it probably is one.

Aware of the zebra rule, Simpson eventually developed a teaching assistant program: Senior level graduate students who had

already taken the course served as coaches for her grad students.

The TAs taught graduate students to “go with their gut,” Paul said.

“Not surprisingly, some of their scores were the best in the class.”

Xu Hou, another fourth-year graduate student, is a former T.A.

“I could tell Dr. Simpson spent a lot of time on this course,” she said. “And she spent 50 percent of her time outside the classroom for her students.”

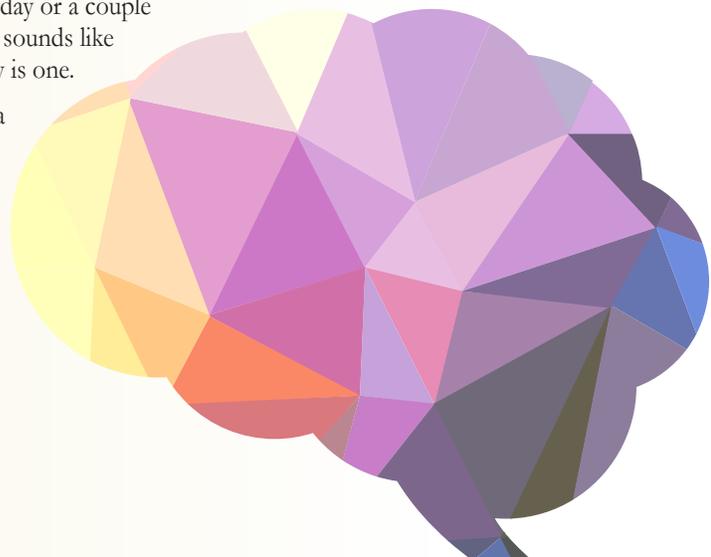
Word of Simpson’s feats reached Pennsylvania. In 2012, Drexel University honored her with the Graduate Citation Award for her research and teaching.

“It’s the highest distinction the College of Medicine bestows on a biomedical science graduate,” Waterhouse said.

For her part, Simpson shares the credit with a core group of faculty, her teaching assistants, clinicians who participate in the classes and her mentors, including Dr. Duane Haines, former director of the medical neurobiology course.

“I’ve learned from the best,” she said.

The best, of course, includes the late pastor of Grace United Presbyterian Church in Horsham. **M**



Barksdale Scholars

Awards salute family's lineage of physicians

In 2013, seven more future physicians benefitted from the commitment of Mississippi's Barksdale family, which continues to fund scholarships for medical students at UMMC.

The latest crop of Barksdale Scholars, members of the medical school class of 2017, was honored in November: Jedd Jack Audrey, Matthew Todd Valentine, Kendra Shavon Robinson-Taylor, Mary Ruth Windham, Yolanda Erettet Ross, Blythe Hope Bynum and Bailey Andrew Hansen.

The scholarship awards began in 1999, thanks to a \$2 million gift from Sally Barksdale and her husband James Barksdale, a former Netscape CEO and a native Mississippian.

The Barksdales named the scholarships in honor of the physicians in their family: Dr. Bryan Barksdale and Dr. Don Mitchell of Jackson and Dr. Fred McDonnell of Hazlehurst.

"The Barksdale family makes a tremendous contribution to the health of Mississippians through their ongoing commitment to the Barksdale Scholars," said Dr. James Keeton, vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the School of Medicine.

"They have partnered with the University of Mississippi Medical Center's School of Medicine in educating the best and brightest medical students."

The medical scholarships are made possible by the Barksdale Family Account in the University of Mississippi Foundation. The scholarships are

awarded to first-year students based on achievement, need and a history of underrepresentation in medicine.

Recipients agree to practice in Mississippi for at least five years.

"Their presence is far-reaching and extends beyond the lives of the patients they care for," Keeton said.

"UMMC's research tells us that for every medical doctor who moves into a community, the economic impact is significant.

"The outcome is the equivalent of approximately \$2 million annually, resulting in the creation of 20-25 jobs, increased economic development, improved quality of life for the people

of the community, and the attraction of new businesses."

The Barksdale Foundation has also furnished funds to create the Barksdale Honors College at the University of Mississippi and established the Barksdale Reading Institute to foster literacy statewide.

More than 80 graduates of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College at Ole Miss have attended the School of Medicine between 2001 and 2013, according to an estimate from the Honors College.

- Gary Pettus



Barksdale Scholar contributors, back row from left, Dr. Fred McDonnell, Donna Barksdale, Jim Barksdale and Dr. Don Mitchell, congratulate the first-year medical students and Barksdale scholar recipients during a November luncheon. The Barksdale Scholars include, from left, Jedd Jack Audrey, Matthew Todd Valentine, Kendra Shavon Robinson-Taylor, Mary Ruth Windham, Yolanda Erettet Ross, Blythe Hope Bynum and Bailey Andrew Hansen.

Smith Chair

First Smith Chair awarded to Dr. Louis Harkey

Becoming a national figure in neurosurgery would have probably been enough for most people. But for Dr. Robert R. Smith, the former chair of UMMC's Department of Neurosurgery, a distinguished academic career wasn't nearly enough to satisfy his wide-ranging interests.

He also was instrumental in establishing a cultural exchange with Russia that brought international acclaim to Mississippi and, after leaving UMMC in 1992, began a "second life" in private practice where he remained as engaged as ever, ultimately bringing the first gamma knife to the state.

For all that he meant to neurosurgery in Mississippi, Smith, who died in 2003, was honored in August with the awarding of the first Robert R. Smith Chair of Neurosurgery. The endowed chair, created with monetary gifts from many of Smith's former residents, colleagues and friends, was presented to Dr. H. Louis Harkey

at a reception at the Fairview Inn in Jackson.

Harkey, a former resident of Smith's, followed in his footsteps and became chair of the department in 2008.



Smith

"Dr. Smith was a rare neurosurgical breed, a clinician scientist who had excellent clinical skills and bedside manner," said Harkey. "Yet he also devoted years in the laboratory trying to better understand neurovascular conditions about which he was passionate."

Harkey said the completion of the Smith Chair will provide funding needed to reinvigorate translational neurovascular research at UMMC, bringing findings "from the laboratory bench to the bedside" to improve care.

A native of Vicksburg, Smith earned his B.S. at Mississippi State University and his M.D. at UMMC in 1961. After an internship at Brooke General Hospital in San Antonio, Texas, he returned to Jackson to complete his residency in neurosurgery at UMMC in

1967, training under the likes of Dr. Julian R. Youmans, Dr. Forrest Tutor and Dr. Orlando Andy.

After his residency Smith joined the faculty and became chair of the department in 1979.

During his tenure at UMMC he made many contributions to neurosurgical research and teaching, especially regarding the treatment of neurovascular disease.

In 1988, Smith joined a group of doctors on a medical research trip to St. Petersburg, Russia. The enduring relationships he made eventually led to his becoming a founding member of the Mississippi Commission for International Cultural Exchange, which organized the exhibition "Palaces of St. Petersburg: Russian Imperial Style" in Jackson in 1996.

Smith might not have been a neurosurgeon at all if it hadn't been for Dr. Marshall B. Allen. Allen, who retired as chief of neurosurgery from the Medical College of Georgia in 1994, was a resident in neurosurgery at UMMC and lived across the street from a medical student named Robert Smith. With daughters about the same age, the two became friends and Allen invited Smith to scrub in on some cases.

“Dr. Smith was a rare neurosurgical breed, a clinician scientist who had excellent clinical skills and bedside manner.”

Dr. H. Louis Harkey



Dr. Louis Harkey, second from right, chairman of the Department of Neurosurgery, receives a medallion recognizing him as the first Robert R. Smith Chair of Neurosurgery in an Aug. 1 ceremony at the Fairview Inn in Jackson. Among those on hand were, from left, Smith's grandson Ben Carroll, Smith's daughter Laura Carroll and Dr. James Keeton, UMMC's vice chancellor for health affairs. In 2003, former residents of Dr. Robert R. Smith, who died that year, started an endowment to create a chair honoring the Vicksburg native, an expert in cerebrovascular disease.

“That’s why he went into neurosurgery,” said Allen. “We just got closer and closer.”

They remained friends throughout their careers and, in the end, Allen made the gift that put the Smith Chair endowment over the top.

At the dedication, Dr. James E. Keeton, vice chancellor for health

affairs and dean of the School of Medicine, said, “the value of these gifts goes far beyond their monetary value. . . . They will make an impact on neurosurgery in the state of Mississippi for years to come.”

- Tom Fortner

Leave a Legacy

For more information about how to create a legacy that will benefit generations to come, contact Sara Merrick, UMMC executive director of development and alumni affairs at 601-984-2300.

Lehan's Legacy

Endowed chair honors legendary chief of cardiology



Dr. William Little, third from left, professor and chair of the Department of Medicine, is awarded the inaugural Patrick H. Lehan Chair of Cardiovascular Medicine during a reception Nov. 13. Little is joined by, from left, University of Mississippi Chancellor Dan Jones, Little's wife Connie, and Dr. James Keeton, vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the medical school.

They don't make medical school faculty members like Dr. Patrick Lehan anymore. If they did, life would be a lot more interesting.

Lehan, who was arguably the pre-eminent cardiologist in Mississippi for more than 30 years, was known not only as a superb clinician and educator at UMMC but also as a fellow who could curse a blue streak and who didn't necessarily do things by the book.

"He was more colorful than faculty are allowed to be today," said University of Mississippi Chancellor Dan Jones, carefully choosing his words in remembering Lehan.

He was also a beloved mentor to anybody who had the good fortune to be his student. During a 36-year run on the UMMC faculty, he trained 75 cardiology fellows, a benchmark unlikely to ever be exceeded.

"He was cardiology in Mississippi," said Dr. Michael McMullan, a cardiologist with Jackson Heart who was one of those who fell under the spell of the charismatic Lehan.

Lehan's legacy was the focus recently when many of his colleagues and trainees gathered to celebrate the completion of the funding for the Patrick H. Lehan Chair of Cardiovascular Medicine and its awarding to the first recipient, Dr. William C. Little. Little, an eminent cardiologist in his own right, joined UMMC as the chair of the Department of Medicine last summer after a long tenure at Wake Forest University.

Lehan, known by those around him as "Chief," was professor of medicine

and headed the Division of Cardiology from 1970 to 1995. Under his leadership, UMMC's training program in cardiology was regarded as one of the best in the Southeast. He died in 2002.

The chair named in his honor was in large part funded by many of his trainees, the majority of whom have remained in Mississippi to practice.

Little earned his medical degree from Ohio State University and completed his residency at the University of Virginia and his fellowship in cardiology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He has been a prolific researcher with more than 240 peer-reviewed articles, 35 of which have been cited more than 100 times.

Little said he and his wife, Connie, were intrigued by the possibilities they saw when they visited Jackson and UMMC.

"It was clear that something was going on here and we wanted to be part of it."

- Tom Fortner



Lehan

RADIOLOGIST'S SOFTWARE PROMISES TO AID MILLIONS WITH LIVER DISEASE

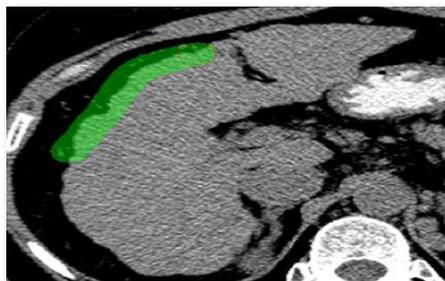
New software by a UMMC radiologist that detects liver disease on CT scan images could lead to earlier detection and treatment of cirrhosis in potentially millions of patients.

Dr. Andrew Smith, assistant professor of radiology, got the idea during downtime on a flight for a radiology conference a couple of years ago.

"We know that the liver gets nodular in cirrhosis, and this is most obvious at the surface," said Smith, director of radiology research and an abdominal imaging specialist. "I thought if we can define the edge in an existing CT image of the liver, we can look for and measure nodularity.

"I wanted something like the tool in Photoshop that can recognize and outline the edge of an object against a different background. Once we learned to detect the liver surface, we developed tools to measure the amount of nodularity."

Scientists and physicians have long known that liver nodules, especially as they approach 1-2 millimeters in size, signal cirrhosis. But there was no way to accurately and reproducibly detect and measure them on routine CT scan images, so patients currently need an invasive liver biopsy to make the diagnosis.



A CT image of the liver

"A liver biopsy is the bronze standard for diagnosing cirrhosis right now," Smith said. "We call it bronze, not gold, because livers are heterogeneous and a biopsy is a tiny sample, so they don't always accurately show what's going on across the organ.

"Detecting and measuring liver surface nodularity on CT scan images offers a much less invasive test and allows us to screen for varices and liver cancer, common complications of cirrhosis."

To write the software, he enlisted Ohio-based software development firm ImagelQ, a spin-off of the Cleveland Clinic. The team incorporated algorithms to detect the liver surface and measure nodularity.

Smith and developers at ImagelQ have been fine-tuning the program since March, putting it through multiple revisions so it can be ready for clinical trials.

Smith is processing hundreds of scans to validate the program, comparing the results with biopsies taken from the same patients.

Beyond screening general patient populations, radiologists could use the program to stage patients with known hepatitis risks. In follow-up, physicians could use it to tell how well therapies for liver disease work.

It's a research tool, too.



Dr. Andrew Smith

"It could be used in drug clinical trials, which would move us away from doing multiple biopsies on participants," Smith said. "The fact that UMMC supports innovation like this is very important."

He spun off Radiostics LLC, his technology startup, from UMMC in 2013. With it, he plans to further develop the liver surface nodularity quantification software, launch prospective clinical trials and work on other ideas for advanced CT image processing he's got cooking for detecting stroke, osteoporosis and cystic kidney and liver disease.

The company joins a growing list of biotech spinoffs at UMMC.

HEART STUDIES TIE BODES WELL FOR IMPROVED TREATMENT

A coalition announced in mid-November by the American Heart Association establishes formal research ties between the University of Mississippi and Boston University and their renowned population studies of cardiovascular disease.

The AHA-sponsored collaboration, with a placeholder name of Heart Studies v2.0, will add breadth to the two major population investigations, the Jackson and Framingham heart studies. It will allow researchers to more deeply analyze information collected in the studies' extensive databanks.

Such research holds the promise of more effective and personalized medical treatments based on an individual's genetic makeup, environment, history, particular disease sub-type and other variables.

"Thanks to the American Heart Association,

this collaboration will allow the continued development of the science to better understand the causes of heart disease and stroke," said Dr. Dan Jones, University of Mississippi chancellor and former Jackson Heart Study principal investigator.



Jones

"It moves us closer to the day when this leading cause of death can be prevented in more people."

The coalition will be funded for five years at approximately \$5-6 million annually with a five-year extension possible. In general, the funds will be invested in a combination of specific grant programs, infrastructure and a challenge program.

The Framingham Heart Study, founded in 1948 at Boston University, is the nation's longest-running cardiovascular disease

investigation. Its researchers have collected massive amounts of health data over the years from thousands of participants.

The Jackson Heart Study is the largest study in history to focus on the genetic factors related to cardiovascular disease in African Americans, a group which faces increased risk for heart disease and stroke.

The JHS draws together UMMC, Jackson State University and Tougaloo College. It has followed 5,300 African-Americans in Jackson for 13 years, while also analyzing the effects of lifestyle factors.

Jones helped establish the JHS in the late 1990s and served as AHA president from 2007-08. JHS researchers have identified links between social conditions and specific risk factors for diseases, uncovered differences in metabolic syndrome between blacks and whites, and identified how location of fat in the body affects African Americans – a topic previously characterized mainly in white people.

NORQUIST LEADS GROUP SEEKING TO BETTER HEALTH CARE

Dr. Grayson Norquist, professor and chair of psychiatry, was named chair of the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Board of Governors by the U.S. Government Accountability Office on Sept 19.

The PCORI is an independent, nonprofit organization authorized by Congress that funds research to provide patients, their caregivers and clinicians with the evidence-based information needed to make better health-care decisions.



Norquist

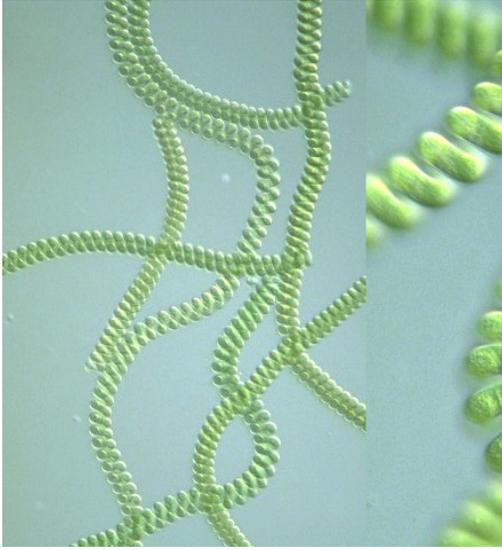
Norquist, whose appointment became effective Sept. 23, has been a member of PCORI's board since it was first appointed by the GAO in 2010.

"Gray has dedicated his career to researching and improving health care for society's most vulnerable populations," said Dr. Joe Selby, PCORI executive director.

"The board, and the communities they represent, will be well served by his leadership in engaging patients and

stakeholders and commitment to funding rigorous research."

Norquist's research focuses on the use of telemedicine to reduce disparities in mental health treatment for those living in the Mississippi Delta and to improve the quality of care they receive at local community health centers.



Immulina magnified



Dr. Gailen Marshall displays immulina in its capsule form.

ANCIENT ALGAE TREATMENT COULD BOOST SENIORS' HEALTH

If the algae spirulina built better health for centuries across ancient cultures, it might improve immune systems in today's seniors.

A clinical trial still enrolling participants is under way in the Division of Allergy and Immunology to test the theory.

Spirulina is a type of blue-green algae rich in linoleic acids, B vitamins and a variety of minerals. While many recognize spirulina's overall benefits for health, the UMMC study focuses on a more defined and at-risk group.

The pilot study at UMMC aims to identify whether and how much of the spirulina extract immulina it takes to improve the immune response of adults 60 and older. Seniors stand a greater risk for complications from colds, flu and other common infections.

"As people age, their susceptibility to mortality from influenza increases," said Dr. Gailen Marshall, professor and R. Faser Triplett Sr. M.D. Chair in Allergy

and Immunology. "Even the flu vaccine becomes less effective for them."

Similarly, people's immune systems weaken with age.

"If we can improve people's immune system response with immulina, they may respond more robustly to the vaccine, which would better prepare their bodies to fight off the actual, live flu virus," Marshall said.

He plans to enroll 50 people into the study. He began taking volunteers in August and will accept more on a rolling basis.

"I've collaborated for a couple years with Dr. Larry Walker and Dr. David Pascoe at Ole Miss," Marshall said. "They'd been working with immulina for a while and have considered it for use in cancer patients."

If the results show promise, Marshall will apply to the

National Institutes of Health to fund an investigation of immulina's abilities to boost the effectiveness of flu vaccines in seniors.

"That study would also consider whether immulina's effects are different based on gender and race," he said.

Those interested in the immulina pilot study can call the Division of Allergy and Immunology at 601-815-5374.



ADVICE *and Dissent*

{ When a patient's right is a medical wrong }

By Gary Pettus

The case of the woman who died in childbirth still haunts and mystifies Dr. Michelle Owens.

It was an unusual case in some ways, but the patient's lack of trust was not, and it contributed to the outcome, Owens and others believe.

"During her checkups, she'd just smile at you and then say, 'Yeah, you know I'm not going to do that,'" said Owens, UMMC associate professor of obstetrics-gynecology.

"When we ask patients to do something, we really believe it's going to make a difference; when they don't listen, it is frustrating."

For some physicians, patient non-compliance is so frustrating, and common, that they've been pushing back against a decades-old ethical principle in medicine: patient autonomy – the resolute respect for a competent patient's decision-making ability.

"There is a growing opinion ... that patient autonomy has gone too far, that the way we practice it in the United States is not always a social good," said Dr. Ralph Didlake, professor of surgery and director of the Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities at UMMC.

Commentary in the April 2008 issue of *Minnesota Medicine* argues that patient autonomy has been "too successful."

It claims that, at times, autonomy can prevent physicians from acting for the patient's good, has dwarfed other important principles, and because it is seen as the only permissible ethical tool available, has been used even when it was wrong for the job.

Those involved in the case of the expectant mom at UMMC would probably say that it was wrong for that job.

The woman was educated and

apparently of sound mind, had health insurance and no apparent religious objections to the care prescribed. She was warned that she suffered from conditions that put her at risk for bleeding, but she refused to believe it.

She bled to death on the way to the hospital.

Autonomy – the issue at the root of the case – is the flip side of paternalism, which shaped the typical physician-patient relationship of 40 or 50 years ago, when a doctor's word was law.

Didlake is among those who believe the turnaround has benefitted physicians as well as patients.

"It holds us a little more accountable," he said. "I believe we practice better medicine when we honor the patient's autonomy."

To illustrate to his students how much medicine has changed since

the days of I Love Lucy, Didlake shows them clips from movies such as *The Big Bluff*, a 1955 melodrama in which a physician doesn't tell his patient she's dying; he even enlists her family in the ruse.

"By the 1970s, the overwhelming policy among physicians was to disclose," Didlake said.

It was the counterculture, authority-busting movement of the 1960s that helped birth autonomy.

"Also, over the years, more and more professions became professionalized like medicine," Didlake said. Within this rising flood of expertise, doctors' potent social status became diluted, as did acceptance of their infallibility.

Other, more recent, developments buoyed this shift: "The physician is no longer the keeper of all information," Didlake said.

Or, as Owens put it: "When a patient decides not to do what I ask, do they not believe me, am I not conveying the message? Or do they go to Dr. Yahoo and find what they need?"

Patient access to medical information, especially through technology and social media, is a good thing, and there's not enough of it, says patient advocate Regina Holliday, a Maryland resident who blogs about a movement known as participatory medicine.

"Once we have total access, we can be more effective," she said. "Patients want to be part of the treatment team. They know their condition like nobody else, because they're living it.

"In many cases, patients are not treated as an equally valued team member."

Holliday's activism grew from her late husband's tragedy: Frederick Holliday II, a kidney cancer patient, fought for 11 weeks to get "appropriate care" before his death in 2009, she said.

Today his widow speaks publicly about the benefits of giving patients a final say in their care.

"Peace of mind is one," she said. "They are able to get second opinions and seek alternative treatments. It is the right of all patients to refuse a diagnosis and recommended treatments if they are of sound mind."

If a patient's competency is not in question, "then you just have to respect her decision," said Jonathan F. Will, associate professor of law at Mississippi College, founding director of the Bioethics & Health Law Center there and affiliate faculty member of UMMC's own Center for Bioethics.

"It comes down to this: Who knows what's in my best interest, me the patient, or the physician? There are factors other than best medical

outcomes that make me me."

Religious beliefs, the stage of a patient's life, the family's wishes and finances are also at stake, Will said.

Still, for others, it's simply an unwillingness to take some, or any, of their medicine, out of fear, denial, or something else.

This is how patient non-compliance usually plays out for Kim Dukes, nurse manager for UMMC's Surgical Intensive Care Unit: "Some patients sell their insulin for drug money. Or they trade it for other drugs.

"Usually, it's someone who has no money for medication after a stroke," Dukes said.

But the non-compliant mom was a new one on her and others, forcing many at UMMC to take a harder look at autonomy, even though they agree with its basis – respect for individual rights.

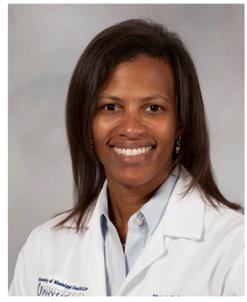
"You have to find a balance between giving patients a medical school lecture and giving them that level of comfort that what you're asking them to do makes sense," Owens said.

"When a patient won't comply, you have to ask, 'What are the barriers? What is the problem?'"

For Didlake, it mostly comes down to taking time to listen to the patient.

Patients will experience a disease differently because of their personal stories. And that's what the physician must discover in order to conquer what Owens calls the "barriers."

"Illness is how you experience a disease and that is determined by context," Didlake said. "Maybe our challenge is to more deeply understand these patients and their illness, rather than just their diagnosis." **M**



Owens



Dukes



Didlake

The DERMATOLOGY Gap

{ Homegrown training a tonic
for specialist shortage }

By Matt Westerfield

When cancer survivor Niki Rickles of Vicksburg called to make an appointment for a screening at the University of Mississippi Medical Center Cancer Institute's Melanoma Clinic in May, she was originally told she couldn't be seen until August.

"They called me back the next day and asked if I could come in that Friday instead," Rickles said during a recent follow-up appointment to the clinic at the Jackson Medical

Mall Thad Cochran Center. "I was very surprised. It's nice to know I can find a melanoma expert so close to home."

Her luck, however, is the exception to the rule. A shortage of dermatologists in Mississippi usually means long waits for would-be patients, who may end up going out of state for care or leav-

ing skin problems untreated.

But a new Department of Dermatology at UMMC, complete with its own residency program, aims to meet that problem head-on by expanding services and training homegrown dermatologists.

"Give me 10 years and we'll have world-class clinical and basic science research in dermatology."

Dr. Robert Brodell

"There appear to be just north of 40 actively practicing dermatologists in the state of Mississippi for three million people," said Dr. Robert Brodell, professor and chief of dermatology. "So we are tremendously underserved." Brodell said that's partly because dermatology residency training

has never been available in the state.

"It's been frustrating for primary care doctors who know that they need help but find that they can't get help from a dermatologist for months," he said. "We are not going to improve this situation overnight, but we will start chipping away at the problem."

Six years ago, the Division of Dermatology in the Department of Otolaryngology and Communicative Sciences was created to help lay the groundwork for a future department. Brodell joined the Medical Center last summer to shepherd that process and develop a residency training program.

Working in private practice for 27 years in his hometown of Warren, Ohio, Brodell had long been interested in becoming a full-time academic physician. He jumped at the chance to join the Jackson dermatology community and UMMC.

The new department received formal approval last fall and is training its first two residents.

Dr. LouAnn Woodward, associate vice chancellor for health affairs and vice dean of the School of Medicine, says dermatology is one of the most competitive specialties nationally. In fact, there are only 360 slots in the entire country.

"Only the top students match," Woodward said, "and we have a great track record in matching our students into dermatology. So without a residency program, we're guaranteeing that we export some of our very best students.

"In the past, we just had to tell them, 'We've got nothing for you.'"

Brodell said there's no problem having applicants interested in training in dermatology; the challenge is having adequate training for the residents.

During the three-year residency, which ensues after one year of primary care training, residents would be required to have training in pediatric dermatology, dermatopathology, surgery, and general dermatology areas, "and that can only be provided by groups of people with specialized talents," Brodell said.

To provide that training, Brodell has recruited three new faculty members with expertise in areas such as Mohs surgery, occupational dermatology and lymphoma. They add to what he describes as an already stellar faculty.

As for reaching more patients, the nascent department is expanding its reach across campus as well. The residents will rotate through the recently opened Melanoma Clinic, a multispecialty clinic conducted one day each month at the Jackson Medical Mall, and the new "Suite K" Dermatology Clinic, which recently

opened in the University Physicians Pavilion.

"It's really important for the Department of Dermatology to have a presence on campus," Brodell said. "For instance, there could be circumstances where patients who are admitted to the hospital have a

"We're shooting high, and we'd like to think that with the start of July this year, we're going to have a world-class place to learn dermatology," Brodell said. "Give me 10 years and we'll have world-class clinical and basic science research in dermatology." **M**



Dr. Robert Brodell, professor and chair of dermatology, joined the Medical Center in 2012 to establish a freestanding department and a dermatology residency training program.

minor dermatologic problem, one that really doesn't require the cost of having a specialist come to the floor.

"But on the day of discharge, it would be wonderfully convenient if they could just sweep by Suite K and have their dermatologic situation taken care of on their way home."

Additionally, the residents will rotate through the established clinics at Grant's Ferry in Flowood and the Face and Skin Center in Ridgeland. Dr. Nancy McCowan, an expert in complex medical dermatology and cosmetic dermatology, is program director of the residency.

MELANOMA CLINIC ESTABLISHED AT UMMC

The University of Mississippi Medical Center has established the first multidisciplinary melanoma clinic in the state of Mississippi. This allows patients to see a dermatologist (Dr. Will Black), an oncologist (Dr. Natale Sheehan), a plastic surgeon (Dr. Ricky Clay) and a head and neck surgeon (Dr. Randy Jordan) in one visit. Patients will be advised about all approaches to the care of melanoma, including the width of removal, recommendations on the use of interferon and the utility of a sentinel node biopsy, and in stage 4 melanoma, a recommendation about targeted therapy. To schedule an appointment, contact Sheehan at 601-984-5590.

A WEIGHT *Lifted*

{ Revived bariatric surgery program 'is about living' }

By Gary Pettus

For Elizabeth Beasley, these numbers sum up her long struggle with obesity: the 50 pounds she gained after she had lost 40, her type 2 diabetes, her blood pressure, her countless diets, her 40th birthday.

They all add to this one, perhaps final, hope: bariatric surgery.

Fortunately for her, the bariatric surgery program at the University of Mississippi Medical Center has been revived; Beasley signed up to become one of the first patients to undergo the weight-loss treatment late last year.

"This is not about being skinny," said Beasley, operations director of the University Physicians Grants Ferry Clinic in Flowood. "This is about being healthy.

"This is about living."

Five years ago, UMMC suspended its program in bariatric surgery, which is performed on the stomach and/

or intestines; for the most part the Medical Center treated patients post-op only.

Dr. Kenneth Vick, associate professor of general surgery, explained: "In this health-care climate, we have to pick and choose where we aim our money and resources. There were other important things we needed to address at the time, including transplants and the care of the pediatric population."

The other issue: Members of the surgery staff were so good at their jobs, other programs lured them away, he said.

For his part, Vick has been performing bariatric surgery at UMMC's neighbor, the G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VA Medical Center, which he'll continue to do. Now, he'll also be the surgeon – the only one for a while, at least – in UMMC's restored program, which has been in the works for a couple

of years and will offer surgery to employees first.

The risk of mortality is low, Vick said.

"The rate is less than 1 percent, probably less than one-half percent," he said. "It's about the same as a hip replacement."

All bariatric surgery candidates must lose some weight before surgery, Vick said.

"That's largely to shrink the liver. When you gain weight, the size of the liver increases and can cover part of the stomach that we usually work on. That increases the chances of damaging the liver during surgery."

Patients must take psychological tests that reveal their readiness to lose more than just excess weight. They'll have to shed a few habits as well.

"Surgery is a tool, but it's not the answer," said Adam Dungey,

administrator of weight management services for the bariatric program.

"You must be willing to make a lifestyle change."

That means sticking with an exercise program, consulting with dietitians, eating nutritious, healthy meals and more in the years following surgery. It takes 12 to 18 months to achieve maximum weight loss after the operation, which lasts from an hour to 90 minutes.

It's expensive, and the cost varies widely, from \$12,000 to \$35,000, according to the National Institutes of Health. Many health insurance plans don't cover it.

"Patients like Elizabeth Beasley, who are extremely motivated and have a good understanding of the process, tend to make the best candidates," Vick said. "They understand the surgery is not a cure-all and that it has to be used in the right way to achieve good results."

The timing couldn't be better for her and others like her, Vick said, in great part because of the arrival of Dungey.

Before he joined the program on Sept. 1, Dungey was the ambulatory operations director at the UMMC Cancer Institute. For seven years, until 2009, he had built a bariatric program at another Jackson-area hospital.

The benefits of the operation can be tremendous – not only for current patients, but for others in the future.

"As we collaborate with the Mississippi Center for Obesity Research, we hope UMMC can have an even greater impact on the understanding and treatment of obesity," Vick said.

That impact would be especially striking here in the state that

Using a computer image, Dr. Kenneth Vick, associate professor of general surgery at UMMC, left, discusses bariatric surgery with surgery candidate Elizabeth Beasley.



competes with Louisiana as the most obese in the union. Because of that, and in spite of the cost, Dungey is expecting no shortage of patients.

"Our goal is to have 50 the first year, but we plan to do more," he said.

Bariatric surgery is reserved for people who have tried just about everything else to lose weight, only to gain it all back and more.

"It happened to me once I left my parents' home," Beasley said. "My mom had watched every morsel I put in my mouth."

From her mid-20s on, Beasley's weight went up and down, finally sticking on up.

"It's limiting my life," she said. "I remember this trip to the beach one day. I couldn't even get in the water and swim."

Patients like Beasley can expect to lose 55 to 65 percent of excess body weight through the surgery method known as sleeve gastrectomy.

It will be the preferred method here, although Vick also will offer gastric bypass and gastric banding surgery. In any case, to qualify, the patient

must have a certain body mass index (BMI), the measure of body fat based on height and weight.

The minimum BMI for bariatric surgery patients is 40 – the number for someone standing five feet, six inches and weighing more than 248 pounds, for instance.

Anyone with a BMI of 35 is also a candidate if obesity-related conditions are present, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, arthritis, etc. They almost always are.

Those conditions are likely to fade after surgery, Vick said.

"With type 2 diabetes, 70 to 80 percent of patients can see complete remission of the disease."

This is good news for Beasley, who in her mind sees two images of herself: the one on the beach, unable to dive in, and the one in the water, moving through the waves toward a new life. **M**

MEDICAL CENTER WELCOMES NEW FACULTY

Dr. Stephen E. Helms,

associate professor of internal medicine at the Northeast Ohio University College of Medicine, Rootstown, and assistant clinical professor in the Department of Dermatology at the Case Western Reserve College of Medicine, Cleveland, Ohio, has joined the Medical Center faculty as a professor in the Department of Dermatology.

After receiving the A.B. from Youngstown State University, Ohio, in 1970, Helms earned his M.D. in 1973 at the Ohio State University College of Medicine, Columbus.

He did an internship from 1973-74 at the St. Elizabeth Hospital Medical Center, Youngstown, Ohio, then entered an anesthesia residency program at the Cleveland Clinic from 1974-75 before completing his residency training in dermatology at the University of Pittsburgh, Pa., from 1975-78.

Board-certified in dermatology in 1978, Helms was in private practice in Warren, Ohio, for more than 30 years in addition to serving part-time at NEOMED and the Case Western Reserve University College of Medicine.

A fellow of the American Academy of Dermatology, Helms is an active member of several professional organizations and has given more than 150 invited lectures at professional meetings nationwide.

He has authored or coauthored more than 30 articles in peer-reviewed professional publications and four chapters in medical textbooks. He serves as a journal reviewer for *Practical Dermatology*, *American Family Practice* and *Fundamental and Clinical Pharmacology*.

His special interest is in contact dermatitis and he has participated in clinical research studies involving long-term safety of low-dose Doxycycline (Oracea) and Etanercept (Enbrel).

Dr. Ali Dodge-Khatami, a specialist in cardiovascular surgery from Switzerland, has joined the Medical Center faculty as a professor of surgery.

After having premedical studies at the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, from 1985-86, Dodge-Khatami earned the Swiss Federal Diploma of Medicine at the University of Geneva, Switzerland, in 1991.



Helms

He had residency training in thoracic surgery, neurosurgery, emergency medicine and general surgery from 1991-93 at the Hopitaux Universitaires de Geneve, Switzerland, and in general surgery and cardiovascular-thoracic surgery from 1993-96 at the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire Vaudois, Lausanne, Switzerland.

He then had fellowship training in cardiovascular-thoracic surgery at RUSH-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center, Chicago, from 1996-98 and congenital cardiac surgery at Children's Memorial Hospital, Chicago, from 1998-99.

Dodge-Khatami served as senior registrar at the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children in London, England, from 1999-2000, before joining the faculty of the Academic Medical Center at the University of Amsterdam as a cardiothoracic surgeon.

In 2003, he received the Ph.D. from the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, based on clinical and animal laboratory research on tracheal reconstruction and healing.

In 2003, he joined the University Children's Hospital, Zurich, Switzerland, as a staff cardiovascular surgeon committed to congenital heart disease, and in 2008, he became professor of cardiovascular surgery, chief of pediatric cardiac surgery and head of the Program for Congenital Heart Disease, University Heart Center, at the University of Hamburg-Eppendorf School of Medicine, Germany.

An active member of several professional organizations, including the Swiss Society of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, the European Association of Cardio-Thoracic Surgery and the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, Dodge-Khatami has authored or coauthored more than 90 articles in peer-reviewed professional publications and six book chapters.

A reviewer for several professional publications, he has presented at professional meetings across Europe and the United States.

Dodge-Khatami has gone on humanitarian missions for the development of pediatric and congenital heart surgery in Georgia, Macedonia, the Russian Federation, Honduras, Vietnam, the Ukraine and Libya.



Dodge-Khatami

Dr. Charles Snow O'Mara

clinical professor of surgery at UMMC, has been named professor of surgery at the Medical Center.

O'Mara received his B.S. degree from the University of Mississippi and his medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine. Two years ago, he earned his M.B.A. from the University of Texas at Dallas.

During his post-graduate medical training, he was chief resident in the Department of Surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Md., and was a registrar in thoracic surgery at Frenchay Hospital in Bristol, England. At Northwestern University in Chicago, he was a fellow in vascular surgery.

O'Mara has held various faculty positions at Johns Hopkins, Northwestern University and UMMC. He has staff appointments at three Jackson hospitals: Mississippi Baptist Medical Center, St. Dominic Hospital and UMMC, where he also has served on the advisory board of the MIND Center since 2011.

His many honors include Young Surgeon of the Year for the Mississippi Chapter of the American College of Surgeons in 1988 and Critical Care Physician of the Year at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center.

O'Mara is principal investigator for two clinical trials involving carotid stenting, including one funded by the National Institutes of Health. He is author or co-author of two dozen published articles, three dozen textbook chapters and 18 abstracts for the Journal of Vascular Surgery.

O'Mara has made nearly 50 presentations to the likes of the Bristol (England) Surgical Congress, the International Symposium on Wound Healing in Paris, the American College of Surgeons and the Association for Academic Surgeons.

Dr. Josephine Wyatt-Ashmead

a pediatrician and neuropathologist, has joined the Medical Center faculty as a professor of pathology.

She attended UMMC from 1972-76, then transferred to the University of Pennsylvania Medical School, where she received her M.D. in 1977.



O'Mara



Wyatt-Ashmead

Following a residency in anatomic pathology at the University of Pittsburgh Health Center in 1978, she completed simultaneous fellowships in neuropathology, perinatal pathology and gynecologic pathology, also in Pittsburgh.

She is board-certified in anatomic pathology, neuropathology and pediatric pathology. Wyatt-Ashmead has served as a perinatal pathologist at hospitals in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, Colorado, Mississippi and England.

She has had numerous academic appointments and was on faculty as an assistant professor at Case Western Reserve University, the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, UMMC, Hammersmith Hospital and St. Thomas' Hospital in London.

Wyatt-Ashmead has participated in research on pathology and other topics. In addition, she has contributed to and is currently working on contributions to several textbooks, including Lethal Skeletal Dysplasias and Pediatric and Perinatal Autopsy Manual.

Wyatt-Ashmead has coauthored or authored more than 60 papers. Most recently, she has presented research on lung hypoplasia and skeletal muscle disorders in Germany. She continues to serve on several committees, including the Perinatal Pathology London Network and as pathologist on the Skeletal Dysplasia Group.

Dr. James K. Rowlett

associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School/Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, has joined the Medical Center faculty as a professor of psychiatry.

Rowlett received his B.A. from Morehead State University in Kentucky, and his M.S. and Ph.D. from the University of Kentucky in Lexington.

He did his postdoctoral training at UMMC before joining the faculty of Harvard Medical School and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. He also was adjunct faculty at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Rowlett's memberships and committee service have included the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, the American Psychological Association, the National Research Council, the National Institutes of Health and various other national and regional organizations.



Rowlett

NEW FACULTY continued

The list of his editorial activities is extensive; the publications he has worked with include Biological Psychiatry, Psychopharmacology and the Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior.

Among his honors are the Director's Award from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, election as a fellow in the American Psychological Association and the Joseph Cochran Young Investigator Award from the College on Problems of Drug Dependence.

Rowlett is involved in several research projects touching on a variety of issues, including drug abuse, age-associated cognitive decline, type 2 diabetes and anxiety disorders.

He has made presentations to such organizations and institutions as the Universidad Central del Caribe, Bayamon, Puerto Rico; Emory University; the National Institute on Drug Abuse; and the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

Rowlett is the principal author or coauthor of more than 100 research articles in peer-reviewed journals and other peer-reviewed publications. His abstracts, posters and exhibits presented at professional meetings number nearly 20 within the last three years alone.

Dr. Gregory Timberlake, director of trauma

services and medical director of surgical intensive care at UMMC from 2001-11, has rejoined the Medical Center faculty as a professor of surgery.

A native of Washington, D.C., Timberlake earned his M.D. at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, in 1977.

He completed an internship at University of Virginia Hospitals and residency training in general surgery in 1983 at the Naval Regional Medical Center, San Diego, Calif. He later completed a fellowship in trauma/critical care at the Tulane University Medical Center and Charity Hospital of New Orleans in 1986.

Before he first joined the Medical Center, Timberlake had appointments at a wide range of institutions, including Iowa Methodist Medical Center in Des Moines, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, F. Edward Herbert School of Medicine, in Bethesda, Md., and West Virginia University Hospital in Morgantown, W.Va.

He joined the U.S. Navy in 1973 and retired as Rear Admiral (Upper Half) in 2010.



Timberlake

A member of dozens of professional organizations, including the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma and the American College of Surgeons, Timberlake has authored and coauthored dozens of research articles for peer-reviewed publications.

Dr. Neelesh A. Tipnis, a pediatric gastroenterologist, has joined the Medical Center faculty as an associate professor of pediatrics. He will serve as the Paul H. Parker Professor and Chair of Pediatric Gastroenterology.



Tipnis

A native of Rockford, Ill., Tipnis received the B.S. in natural sciences (bacteriology) from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1993 and earned the M.D. at the Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, in 1997.

He had a general surgery internship at the University of Texas-Houston Medical School from 1997-98, pediatric internship and residency training from 1998-2001 and a fellowship in pediatric gastroenterology and nutrition from 2001-04 at the University of California-San Diego Medical Center.

He is board-certified in general pediatrics and pediatric gastroenterology.

Tipnis served as an assistant professor of pediatrics at the Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, from 2004-11 and as an associate professor of pediatrics at the University of California-San Diego from 2012-13.

A three-time selection on the Best Doctors in America list, Tipnis is an active member of the American Neurogastroenterology and Motility Society, the American Gastroenterology Association and the North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition, among others.

An internationally invited speaker, Tipnis has authored or coauthored more than a dozen articles in peer-reviewed professional publications, nine book chapters and more than 30 abstracts. He has reviewed articles for several journals, including the Journal of Pediatrics, Pediatrics, the American Journal of Gastroenterology and the Journal of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition.

Tipnis will develop the region's only center for pediatric gastrointestinal motility and functional bowel disorders to study severe forms of pediatric reflux, abdominal pain, feeding difficulties and constipation.

MITCHELL TACKLING MISSISSIPPI'S SEVERE PHYSICIAN SHORTAGE

Dr. John Mitchell was a college sophomore when he made, and took, the most important dare of his life.

"I was at Ole Miss and my friend and I were on the steps of the Lyceum looking through the courses in the catalog, wondering what we were going to do," he said.

"I said, 'That looks pretty good – I will if you will.' So we walked into the Lyceum and registered for pharmacy."

That whim led Mitchell to his first taste of medicine, triggering a craving that lured him into medical school, a family practice and, lately, an appointment that has further distinguished his long career.

As the recently named director of the Office of Mississippi Physician Workforce (OMPW) at UMMC, he is still making dares.

This time, his challenge is to his fellow physicians: Go where you're needed the most.

"It's a daunting task," said Mitchell of Pontotoc, who recently served as chair of the OMPW advisory board.

"But we're going to make the best of it and we're going to try and make Mississippi a better state."

The task – assigned to the OMPW by state legislators when they created it in 2012 – is to shave the shortage of primary care doctors in a state with the lowest per capita supply in the nation.

Leading that mission now is Mitchell, a family physician hospitalist with North Mississippi Medical Center in Pontotoc and former faculty member with the center's family medicine residency program.

Nurturing the creation of residency programs elsewhere in the state is one of his responsibilities; to that end, he was rewarded with some good news shortly after his appointment: A newly-accredited one is about to get busy.



Dr. John Mitchell

Located at Forrest General Hospital in Hattiesburg and approved by the Accreditation Committee for Graduate Medical Education, the program began taking applications from medical students this fall; it should welcome its first class of family medicine residents in July.

It's only the third family medicine residency program in the state, counting those at UMMC and North Mississippi Medical Center in Tupelo.

As many as six physicians will receive residency training each academic year at Forrest General.

It is one step in improving access to health care for all Mississippians, Mitchell said.

Dr. Diane Beebe, the recent interim director of OPW, praised her successor's devotion to that aim.

"He has a passion and a vision and understands the needs of this state," said Beebe, professor and chair of UMMC's Department of Family Medicine.

"I am delighted he is willing to take this challenge with us and look forward to

great things."

Mitchell's early years did not necessarily prepare him for this challenge, or at least they didn't prepare him for medical school.

He grew up in rural Mississippi, in a small town in Lafayette County, brought up by parents who didn't finish high school.

"I never had an inkling I would go into medicine," Mitchell said. "I thought in order to go to medical school, you had to be rich, have an ancestor who was a physician or be exceptionally brilliant, and I was none of the above.

"In college, I majored in hunting and fishing, and went to school on the side."

His studies improved once he got into pharmacy school, the result of that impulsive decision he made his second year at Ole Miss.

After graduation, he worked at pharmacies in Oxford and Pontotoc, and then in Fort Polk, La., once he joined the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps.

It was at Fort Polk that Mitchell saw military doctors up close and in action,

continued

and realized he'd found his true calling. "I figured if they can do this, then I could do it as well, if not better, than many of them," he said.

He was right. After beginning medical school at UMMC in 1982, he joined the Mississippi Army National Guard Medical Corps and remained in the Guard throughout his family medicine residency in Tuscaloosa, Ala.

His experience in the service taught him some lessons that may give him a leg up as director of the OMPW.

"I used to want everything yesterday, but it doesn't work that way," said Mitchell, whose credentials include the completion of a primary care faculty development fellowship at Michigan State University.

Besides helping establish residency programs, his duties include fostering the development of a physician workforce in all specialties where they're needed, evaluating the current workforce and determining what the state has now and what it will need.

With this information, Mitchell could

figure out how many medical school graduates the state should be churning out from UMMC and from William Carey University's College of Osteopathic Medicine in Hattiesburg.

Right now, Mississippi needs to add more than 1,300 primary care physicians, whose specialties include family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics and obstetrics/gynecology. Even that would only bring the state up to the national average.

"Desperate times are great motivators," Mitchell said.

FORMER MARINE ENLISTS AS ADULT HOSPITAL CEO

Kevin Cook, a former Marine Corps officer, has been named chief executive officer of the University of Mississippi Medical Center's adult hospitals.

The Miami, Fla., native took over from Dr. Janet Harris, chief nursing executive officer, who had served as interim CEO since 2011.

But he almost spent his career as an F-18 fighter pilot.



Kevin Cook

the military," Cook said. "My senior year of college I was president of the student body at Hobart, and I didn't think I'd done a very good job.

"I knew that going into law school, I wouldn't learn a whole lot more about leadership, but I thought going into the Marine Corps, I would."

Twenty years ago, he joined the Marine Corps because he wanted to learn how to become a leader. He completed Officer Candidates School at Quantico, Va., in 1991 after graduating from Hobart and William Smith College in Geneva, N.Y.

"When I was in college, I thought a lot about going to law school, but I was also fascinated with

He would spend the following eight years in the corps and "never regretted the decision for a minute."

But his goal to become a fighter pilot was grounded by medical issues from the high-G flight maneuvers. Instead, he earned his M.B.A. from Boston College.

"At the time, it was disappointing, but it's worked out," he said of his military days.

After resigning his commission, Cook took a job as director of operations for a health-care organization in Texas before accepting his first position in Mississippi as an administrator at River Region Health System in 2002, where he oversaw projects to improve hospital efficiency.

In 2006, he made the switch to Cincinnati, taking on the role of CEO for Mercy Hospital Mt. Airy.

From there, he became the regional CEO of Mercy hospitals in Scranton, Pa., before eventually overseeing several Mercy hospitals in Toledo, Ohio.

But he was happy to return to Mississippi.

Married and the father of four, Cook saw his 18-year-old daughter enter the University of Mississippi in the fall. His 20-year-old son recently completed basic training in the Marine Corps at Parris Island.

"I love this part of the country," he said. "This is my third time living in the state, between being stationed in Meridian and working in Vicksburg."

Because of UMMC's unique position as the only academic medical center in the state, joining the Medical Center was an opportunity for Cook to participate in the growth and evolution of the health of Mississippians.

"For me, health care is not just about treating acute, episodic disease. It's about making an impact on literally the social fabric of the community in a profound way," he said.

APPOINTMENTS



Dr. Alan Jones, UMMC professor of emergency medicine, has been named chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine.

Jones earned his undergraduate degree with honors in molecular biology at Millsaps College and his medical degree at UMMC. He completed his residency in emergency medicine and served as chief resident at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte, N.C.

Following residency training he completed a clinical trials research fellowship, and while serving on the emergency medicine teaching faculty at Carolinas he completed coursework for a master's degree in public health from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

He returned to UMMC in 2011 as a full professor and vice chairman of emergency medicine. He also serves as the department's director of research and its research fellowship program.

He succeeds Dr. Richard Summers as chair of the department.

Jones has authored numerous scientific publications and is currently either a principal investigator or co-investigator on four National Institutes of Health R01 grants. He recently began a one-year term as president of the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine.

Dr. Richard Summers,

professor of emergency medicine, has been appointed UMMC associate vice chancellor for research.

He previously served as professor and chair of UMMC's Department of Emergency Medicine. He is also an accomplished physician-scientist with nearly 300 publications to his credit. He has established a national reputation for his work on quantitative models of human physiology on behalf of NASA's Digital Astronaut Program, particularly in regard to measuring the effects of microgravity on space travelers.

An honors graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi in mathematics and chemistry, Dr. Summers completed medical school at UMMC.



In addition to his clinical training, he completed a post-doctoral research fellowship in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics under the mentorship of Dr. Arthur Guyton and Dr. Tom Coleman. He holds a secondary faculty appointment as professor in that department.

He succeeds Dr. John Hall, professor and chair of the Department of Physiology and Biophysics, as associate vice chancellor for research. Hall held the position since 2005. Hall has also been named the director of the Mississippi Center for Obesity Research.



Dr. Srinivasan Vijayakumar

has been named director of the UMMC Cancer Institute. He succeeds Dr. Lucio Miele.

"Dr. Vijay – as most of us know him – has been a mainstay of our cancer programs for the last six years," said Dr. James E. Keeton, UMMC vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the School of Medicine.

"As professor and chairman of the Department of Radiation Oncology and

deputy director of the Cancer Institute, he has been a thoughtful and reliable leader who has been instrumental in the growth and development of our cancer programs in each of the three mission areas."

Vijayakumar earned his medical degree and completed his initial specialty training in India before coming to the United States to complete his residency in radiation oncology at the University of Chicago.

Before joining UMMC in 2007, he was a faculty member at the Cleveland Clinic, the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois and the University of California Davis. He has authored numerous articles, book chapters and a widely read book on prostate cancer, now in its third edition.

While the incidence of cancer in Mississippi is similar to that in other states, the Magnolia State has one of the highest death rates in the nation.

"That makes the work of the UMMC Cancer Institute – in prevention, treatment, discovery and outreach – all the more urgent," Keeton said. "We have been assembling a strong, effective team in each of these areas, and I am confident that Dr. Vijayakumar will sustain our momentum going forward."



Dr. Herman Taylor, the pioneering researcher who has led the Jackson Heart Study for the past decade and a half, stepped down as director and principal investigator Nov. 18.

Taylor is continuing as an in-house consultant to the JHS through June of this year.

The Jackson Heart Study, with funding from the National Institutes of Health, is a broad-based collaboration among Jackson State University, Tougaloo College and the University of Mississippi Medical Center. The study is renowned for its important scientific findings about the risk factors for cardiovascular disease in African Americans.

Dr. James E. Keeton, UMMC vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the School of Medicine, said Taylor has provided dynamic and steadfast leadership from the outset of the study.

"Under Dr. Taylor's guidance the project grew from a newly christened start-up to a well-regarded and groundbreaking study with an international network of collaborators," Keeton said. "I am grateful he has agreed to remain associated with the JHS as a consultant through the current academic year, smoothing the transition to new leadership."

Taylor, the Shirley Professor for Health Disparities in the Division of Cardiology, was recruited in 1998 to direct the study. He commended the entire study team for their extraordinary efforts in building a superior program that is making significant contributions to the health and well-being of African Americans and to the body of scientific knowledge on many cardiovascular-related diseases.

Until new permanent leadership is identified, Dr. Adolfo Correa, a physician-scientist Taylor recruited in 2011 as chief science officer of the JHS, will serve as interim director. Correa holds both an M.D. and Ph.D. and is a dually appointed professor of medicine and pediatrics at UMMC.

BARNES DECLARED ONE OF 10 'WOMEN OF VISION'

The Women's Fund of Mississippi honored Dr. Helen Barnes, former UMMC faculty member, as one of 10 "Women of Vision" at the organization's 10th anniversary celebration Oct. 24.

A Jackson native, Barnes earned her medical degree at Howard University in 1958 and later returned to her home state to provide medical care to poor women in the Delta.

She joined the UMMC faculty in 1969 and was instrumental in founding UMMC's Primary Care Clinic for Women at the Jackson Medical Mall Thad Cochran Center.

Barnes was one of the first African-American women to practice medicine in Mississippi and to teach at the Medical Center. She was one of the first black Mississippians to enter and graduate from medical school.

Barnes retired in 2003 but remains active.



Dr. Helen Barnes (pictured here in 2007), is among 10 women who were honored in October as "Women of Vision" by the Women's Fund of Mississippi.

FACULTY MEMBERS SECURE CHAIRS AFTER 20 YEARS ON BOARD



UMMC faculty with 20 years of service to the Medical Center received chairs during the Fall Faculty Meeting Oct. 19 at the Norman C. Nelson Student Union. Dr. LouAnn Woodward, back row, far left, associate vice chancellor for health affairs, and Dr. James Keeton, back row, second from left, vice chancellor for health affairs, and Dr. Dan Jones, back row, far right, University of Mississippi chancellor, presented the chairs to, front row from left, Dr. Rodney Baker, pharmacology and toxicology; Dr. Magolia Castilla, pediatrics; Dr. Charles Gaymes, pediatrics; Dr. Andrew Grady, animal lab facilities; and back row from left, Dr. Charles Moore, medicine; Dr. Ian Paul, psychiatry; Dr. Laura Schenk, nursing; Dr. Mary Smith, pediatrics; and Dr. Melanie Wilson, microbiology.

CORBETT, MARTIN PERK UP NEUROLOGY TEXTBOOK

Dr. James Corbett, professor and former chair of neurology and coauthor of the textbook *Practical Neuroophthalmology*, announced that the second edition hit the market in July.

Corbett coauthored the book with Dr. Timothy Martin, associate professor of ophthalmology at the Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

The authors updated the content and added color photos, richer graphics and more incisive diagrams.

Martin was Corbett's last neuro-ophthalmology fellow, back in 1990, before Corbett moved from the University of Iowa to Mississippi the following year. The duo worked the last two years on their textbook aimed at neurology and ophthalmology residents.

Corbett and Martin produced a pragmatic work, a brief study in what physicians need to know to use and understand neuro-ophthalmology.

"It's an explanation of the kind of

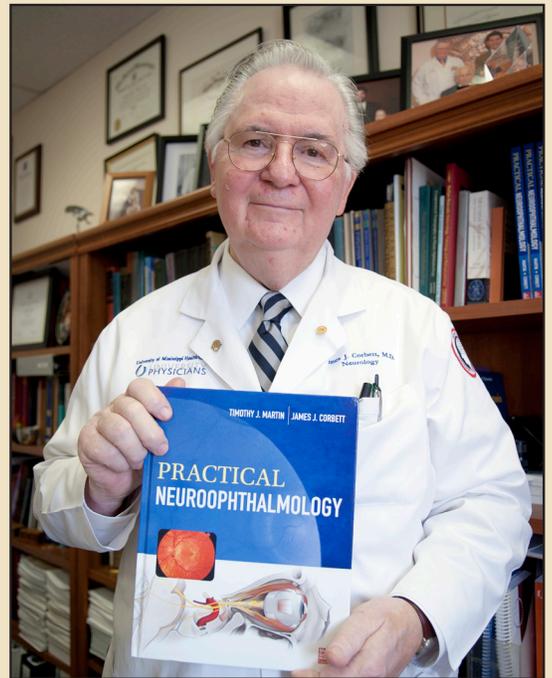
clinical detail that's useful for the person who's never going to be a neuro-ophthalmologist and may have never had any interest in it, but needs to know the nuts and bolts of a given problem," he said.

"And if they can't get the specific information out of our book, there's a bibliography that will lead them to it."

The first edition, published in 2000, was part of a larger set of textbooks covering the essentials of ophthalmology. This is Corbett's third textbook.

An Illinois native, Corbett received his M.D. in 1966 from Chicago Medical School and did two years of internal medicine residency in Providence, R.I., where he had earned his undergraduate degree from Brown University.

He moved to Cleveland to complete a neurology residency at Case Western Reserve University, and had

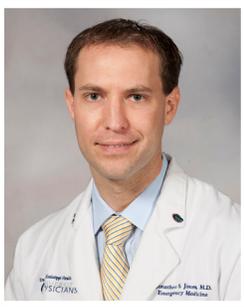


Dr. James Corbett

a brief neuro-ophthalmology fellowship at the University of California San Francisco.

His career includes positions at Portsmouth Naval Hospital, the Wills Eye Hospital and Jefferson Medical School in Philadelphia, Pa., and the University of Iowa.

Corbett served as chair of neurology at UMMC from 1991-2008. He continues to practice neuro-ophthalmology and teaches students and residents.



Jones

EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS CITE JONES' DEDICATION

Dr. Jonathan S. Jones, associate professor of emergency medicine, received a 2013 National Junior Faculty Teaching Award from the American College of Emergency Physicians.

Jones was one of seven faculty chosen by the ACEP's Academic Affairs Committee, said Dr. Andrew Sama, ACEP president. The award acknowledges Jones' dedication and innovation in teaching.

Jones was recognized in October at the Fellow Convocation and Awards Ceremony at the ACEP's 2013 Scientific Assembly in Seattle.

CALIMARAN SELECTED FOR PUBLICATION POST

Dr. Arthur L. Calimaran, associate professor of anesthesiology, vice chair for education and program director of anesthesiology, was recently appointed associate editor of the Society for Education in Anesthesia's Publications Committee.

Calimaran will serve in the position along with Dr. Jonathan Hastie of New York's Columbia University.

The society is the largest organization committed to excellence in anesthesia education, serving as a resource for many leading anesthesiology educators.

Calimaran also serves in several national anesthesiology organizations and is an examiner for the American Board of Anesthesiology.



Calimaran

KENT STATE NAMES HALL DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS

Dr. John E. Hall, professor and chair of physiology and biophysics, has been elected to the Kent State University College of Education, Health and Human Services Hall of Fame and is a recipient of the KSU Distinguished Alumni Award.

Hall, director of the Mississippi Center for Obesity Research and former vice chancellor for research, was honored the weekend of Oct. 5-6 at Kent State, where he earned his bachelor's degree.

The award is the highest honor bestowed upon former students who graduated within the last 50 years from a program in the college.

It recognizes an alumnus who has made significant contributions to society, whose accomplishments and careers have brought honor and distinction to Kent State University and who has advanced the field of education, health and human services.



Hall

AGGARWAL FETED BY GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Dr. Avichal Aggarwal, assistant professor of pediatric cardiology, received the 2013 Mahatma Gandhi Award from the government of India and the Non-Resident Indians Welfare Society of India on Oct. 4, the 144th birthday of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Rt. Hon. Baroness Sandip Verma, junior minister of Energy and Climate Change in the United Kingdom, presented the award.

The tribute recognizes people of Indian origin for their significant contributions in their respective fields in the country of their residence and in the service of the wider global community.



Aggarwal

BHAJEE ACCLAIMED AS PATHOLOGISTS' RESIDENT OF THE YEAR

Dr. Feriyl Bhajee, UMMC chief resident of anatomic and clinical pathology, received the College of American Pathologists Resident of the Year Award at a ceremony Oct. 13 during the college's annual meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Bhajee was honored for her dedication to the highest standards of patient care and medical student and resident education.

The award recognizes her achievements as a next-generation pathologist who represents and communicates the specialty's value across interdisciplinary care teams in her program and, more broadly, to the public sector, from patients to policy makers.

The CAP established the Resident of the Year Award in 2010 to recognize the outstanding contributions by a CAP junior member to the specialty of pathology, pathologists, laboratory medicine and patients.



Bhajee



Brunson

EBONY MAGAZINE SALUTES MSMA LEADER BRUNSON

Dr. Claude Brunson, professor of anesthesiology, was named president-elect of the Mississippi State Medical Association (MSMA) during the group’s annual meeting Aug. 17.

Brunson, who serves as senior advisor to the vice chancellor for health affairs, also was elected delegate to the American Medical Association.

For his rise to the MSMA’s top post, he was included in EBONY magazine’s 2013 Power 100 List, the publication’s “annual celebration of black America’s foremost movers, shakers and leaders.” He was listed in the “Health and Science Trailblazers” category.

The 2013 Power 100 List was published in the magazine’s December/January issue and can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/HwsITz>.

RESEARCHERS HONORED FOR THEIR GRANT SUCCESS WITH CEREMONY



Medical Center faculty who have obtained significant extramural funding for their distinctive research programs display the medallions they received during the annual Excellence in Research Awards Ceremony and Reception Oct. 11 in the Student Union.

Honored faculty include, front row, seated from left, Dr. Michael Lehman, bronze; Dr. Robert McGuire, bronze; Dr. Andrew Smith, bronze; Dr. Azeddine Atfi, silver; and Dr. Merry Lindsey, silver; standing, from left, Dr. Luis Martinez, silver; Dr. Radhika Pochampally, silver; Dr. Kounosuke Watabe, silver; Dr. Jian-Xiong Chen, gold; Dr. Michael Garrett, gold; Dr. Alan Jones, gold; Dr. Babbette LaMarca, gold; and Dr. Yin-Yuan Mo, gold.

Faculty not available for the photo include Dr. Christopher Anderson, bronze; Dr. Ching-Jygh Chen, bronze; and the late Dr. Xiao-Ming Ou, silver.



Members of the School of Medicine Class of '63 who received commemorative medals are, from left, seated: Dr. Bobby Dill of Columbus; Dr. J.T. Davis Jr. of Memphis; Dr. Nancy Watts Burrow of Brandon; Dr. Kimble Love of Hattiesburg; Dr. Louis McCraw of Lake Oswego, Ore.; and Dr. Alvin Brent of Ridgeland. Standing, from left, are: Dr. Charles Hubbert of Memphis; Dr. Jim Day of Granite Bay, Calif.; Dr. Albert Breland of San Diego, Calif.; Dr. David Samuelson of Wharton, Texas; Dr. Millard Ramsey of Lookout Mountain, Tenn.; Dr. Robert May of Canton; and Dr. Charles Marascalco of Vicksburg. (Photo by Deryll Stegall)

Alumni Reunion

MEDICAL SCHOOL

by Gary Pettus

For his 50th medical class reunion, Dr. J.T. Davis Jr. brought a note from his teacher.

"Dear J.T. – Let's try to find a patient... who needs either a left lower lobe or whole lung transplant. We are all set and the operation is relatively simple. How about it? JDH"

The message was from Dr. James D. Hardy, the pioneer transplant surgeon, who wrote it back in the late '60s when Davis was a thoracic surgery resident at UMMC and organ transplants were still front-page news.

For Davis, this fragment of history, lost and forgotten until it dropped out of an old textbook last year, brought home to him the passing of years.

“Unbelievable, I’m so proud I came from here.”

- Dr. Charles Marascalco

“Everything (has changed),” he wrote in his bio for the event, “but my shoe and sock size.”

It was a feeling shared by many of the other alumni Davis joined for the Aug. 23-24 Medical Class Reunion Weekend – a time to consider what UMMC had been and what it has become.

Staged by the Office of Alumni Affairs at UMMC, the reunion events recognized members of the classes of ‘63, ‘73, ‘83, ‘88, ‘93 and 2003; but most of the fuss was reserved for the ‘63 crop.

“This is really about them,” Dr. James Keeton, vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the School of Medicine, said in his welcoming address.

More than a dozen from that class were on hand to receive commemorative gold medals during a reception and ceremony at the Old Capitol Museum attended by a total of 56 people.

Earlier, 72 alumni and their guests reported for the welcome lunch and tour of the campus, a prelude to the final day of festivities at the Country Club of Jackson, where 154 alumni and invitees gathered.

Davis, a practicing specialist in vascular surgery and wound care in Memphis, was among the few who did not take the campus tour; since leaving UMMC in the early ‘70s, he’d been back before, he said, and found the advancements almost too daunting to revisit.

“I probably couldn’t get into medical school now,” said Davis, a

Corinth native, “the students now are so bright.”

When Davis was a student, his class was only the fifth one to complete four years at the School of Medicine in Jackson, which opened in 1955 to supplant Oxford’s two-year program.

Of the 64 students who sat for the ‘63 class portrait, 25 have passed away, according to the Office of Alumni Affairs.

Three women and no African-Americans were members of the class. In contrast, the current class (2017) numbers more than 140 and includes 51 women, 13 African Americans and a total of 17 minorities.

The institution that embraces their medical school employs 9,100 people, making it the second-largest industry in the state, and excels in transplants, trauma and children’s services. Its four major areas of research concern cancer, cardiovascular health, dementia and obesity, Keeton said in his remarks to the alumni.

As for the School of Medicine, the accreditation process in 2012 uncovered no areas of non-compliance, a rare and extraordinary occurrence for any program.

“This is a fantastic place, a necessary place,” Keeton said. “I hope you love it as much as I do.”

Apparently, Dr. Charles Marascalco, Class of ‘63, does.

“Unbelievable,” he said, describing his impressions of modern-day



During a reception at the Old Capitol Museum in Jackson, Dr. J.T. Davis of Memphis, left, is one of the Class of 1963 members to receive a gold medallion from Dr. James Keeton, right, vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the School of Medicine.



School of Medicine 2003 alumni Dr. Bernie Sy of Lebanon, Tenn., second from left, and Dr. George “Trey” Abraham, far right, of Madison discuss the night’s activities with their wives, Christine Sy, far left, and Kayla Abraham. Trey Abraham is an assistant professor in UMMC’s Division of Pulmonary/Critical Care, while Kayla Abraham is a UMMC assistant professor of occupational therapy.



Dr. Charles Marascalco, right, Class of 1963, and his wife Bobbie Marascalco traveled from their home in Vicksburg for the Medical Class Reunion weekend.



Dr. Jim Day of Granite Bay, Calif., left, Class of 1963, is one of the recipients of a commemorative gold medallion from Dr. James Keeton, right, vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the School of Medicine.



Dr. Billy Long, Class of 1973, left, a Jackson-area gastroenterologist, chats with reunion guest Emily Johnson.

UMMC. "I'm so proud I came from here.

"I couldn't believe all the statistics Jimmy Keeton reported," said Marascalco of Vicksburg, a retired gastroenterologist.

It was also a special place in the '60s, when he and Davis were students and residents.

"Dr. (Arthur) Guyton and Dr. Hardy were world-class mentors," Davis said, referring to two of his former professors.

To this day, Guyton is renowned for his textbook on physiology, while Hardy performed the world's first animal-to-human heart transplant and the first human-to-human lung transplant in the early '60s.

Last year, during a move, Davis picked up an old medical textbook and was amazed to see a handwritten note fall from its pages – the long-buried note from Hardy.

"It was probably written in fall or early winter of 1968," Davis said. "I probably put it in the leaf of the book while I was still in training."

He was able to link the note to a 1969 lung transplant he participated in as part of a team led by Hardy. That connection is revealed in something else he brought with him: a front-page newspaper clipping dated Jan. 19, 1969, the day after patient Frank McCurley of Crosby received a new left lung at the Medical Center.

As part of the surgical team, Davis removed the donor lung and turned it over to the recipient's surgeons.

It was only the second lung transplant ever at UMMC, The Clarion-Ledger/Jackson Daily News reported.

"I was surprised when I found the note from Dr. Hardy," Davis said. "It brought back fond memories."

As with any reunion, personal memories dominated the thoughts of former classmates, in conversation and in bios they wrote for the benefit of their fellow alumni.

Dr. Charles Hubbert of Memphis, a practicing psychiatrist and neurologist, described what happened on his graduation day: "I developed pylorospasm from a psychosomatic diversion of the excitement of finishing school. ..."

In other words, he had to get his stomach pumped in the ER.

Dr. David Samuelson of Wharton, Texas, a retired internal medicine specialist, said the "funniest thing" that happened to him as a student was getting "sick from the formaldehyde in anatomy lab."

Dr. Louis H. McCraw, a practicing plastic surgeon from Lake Oswego, Ore., remembered taking a nap on a cadaver bin during his freshman year.

And Dr. S. Kimble Love of Hattiesburg, a practicing pediatrician, described his best memory: "My wife's face at graduation."

As senior class president for the Class of '63, Love was one of 13 members who received a gold medallion from Keeton in the House Chamber of the Old Capitol.

Before reading a list of the names of his "fallen classmates," Love expressed what many in the room must have been thinking: "Those 50 years went by fast." **M**

In Memoriam

Dr. John Roger Austin (1970) of Memphis, Tenn.; July 24, 2013; age 68

Dr. Helen Dayton (1950) of Dade County, Fla.; June 18, 2013; age 91

Dr. Charles "Charlie" Farris (1948) of New Orleans, La.; Aug. 19, 2013; age 87

Dr. Mari Fielding (1990) of Lakeland, Fla.; Aug. 10, 2013; age 59

Dr. Geddes "G.B." Flag (1940) of Gulfport; July 12, 2013; age 96

Dr. James Brooks Griffin (1978) of Ridgeland; June 22, 2013; age 60

Dr. James "Jamie" Hemphill (1965) of Knoxville, Tenn.; Aug. 2, 2013; age 72

Dr. Charles Laney (1975) of Madison; Aug. 4, 2013; age 64

Dr. C. Brent Meador (1987) of Jackson; Sept. 6, 2013; age 62

Dr. Stanley Nelson (1964, residency) of Fairway, Kan.; May 29, 2013; age 84

Dr. John Patterson (1952) of Pontotoc; Aug. 20, 2013; age 87

Dr. James Ratcliff (1954) of Ridgeland; May 13, 2013; age 81

Dr. Hildon H. Sessums Jr. (1980) of Vicksburg; Nov. 4, 2013; age 58

Dr. William "Bill" Spragins (1971) of Hollandale; Oct. 30, 2013; age 67

Dr. George Dan Van Cleve (1993) of Jackson; Oct. 3, 2013; age 51

Dr. Garland Seale Stewart Jr. (1971) of Columbus; May 19, 2013; age 67

Dr. Thomas "Tommy" Vinson (1975) of Columbus; Sept. 29, 2013; age 64

Dr. Charles White (1971, plastic surgery residency) of Memphis; Oct. 22, 2013; age 78

Dr. Jim C. Barnett (1947) of Brookhaven died on July 26, 2013 at age 86.

He was a country doctor, public servant, mental health advocate and distinguished military veteran.

A former state representative, the Edinburg native served in the Mississippi Legislature from 1992 to 2008. He worked on various legislative committees, including Appropriations, Public Health and Welfare, Universities and Colleges, Military Affairs and Game and Fish.

His public service included stints as chairman of the Mississippi Aeronautics Commission, chairman of the State Board of Mental Health, chairman of the State Health Coordinating Council and director on the Board of the Mississippi Economic Council.

A mental health facility carries his name: the Jim C. Barnett, M.D. Homes in Brookhaven.

Barnett, who earned his undergraduate degree at Millsaps College in Jackson, was an avid outdoorsman and pilot. He logged more than 10,000 hours of flight time. He and his wife Roberta were aboard the first around-the-world flight of the Concorde supersonic jet.

A new Brookhaven Airport terminal building was named after him in 1986.

Although he earned his medical degree from the Southwestern Medical College of the University of Texas in 1949, he was a passionate Ole Miss fan. He attended the medical school in Oxford when it was a two-year institution and later worked for several years as a clinical instructor at UMMC in Jackson.

A veteran of the U.S. Navy, he joined the military in 1943, when he was 17. During the Korean War, he served in combat as a Navy Flight Surgeon, received two Battle Stars and was recommended for the Navy Cross.

As a family practice physician, he practiced medicine in Lincoln County for 36 years, serving also as chief of staff of Kings Daughters Hospital, president of the South Central Medical Society and president of the Southern Medical Association (1990).

Dr. William Meek Gillespie Jr. (1950) of Meridian died on July 31, 2013 at age 86. The Charleston native was an outstanding musician who as a boy performed in a band with jazz legend Mose Allison and played jazz clarinet as a student at Ole Miss.

After a two-year stint in the U.S. Navy, he enrolled at Ole Miss and attended the two-year medical school there in Oxford.

A graduate of the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, he was chosen by UMMC's world-renowned Dr. Arthur Guyton to research and co-author pioneering cardiovascular work.

Gillespie spent much of his 50-year medical career in Meridian, serving as chief of staff at Anderson Memorial Hospital for several terms.

A member of the Mississippi Medical Association, he was also a charter member of the American Academy of Family Practice.

Dr. Bernard S. Patrick (1948) of Jackson died on Sept. 23, 2013 at the age of 86.

His loved ones referred to him as an author, composer, musician, aviator, sailor, athlete, chess master, car mechanic and retired surgeon.

A fourth-generation physician and Booneville native, he grew up in Corinth, where he excelled on the high school football team.

He attended Tulane University and the School of Medicine in Oxford, when it was a two-year program. In Oxford, he was drum major for the Ole Miss Marching Band.

After earning his medical degree from the University of Illinois in 1950, he served two years as U.S. Air Force Flight Surgeon during the Korean War before completing his residency in neurosurgery at the Illinois Neuropsychiatric Institute.

He practiced medicine in Memphis before moving to Jackson to join the faculty of UMMC, where he taught neurosurgery for 10 years.

He published 34 papers on such issues as cranial tumors, diagnosis in disc disease and treatment of facial pain. In 1962, Patrick introduced to the mid-South the standard operation for ruptured cervical discs.

For 24 years, he also worked in private practice at St. Dominic Hospital in Jackson, where he developed his sub-specialty of facial pain management.

Patrick served as president of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons. In 2005, at the age of 78, he received the Distinguished Neurosurgeon Award from the Southern Neurosurgical Society and was named Outstanding Neurosurgeon by the Mississippi Neurosurgical Society as the First Lifetime Member.

2013 MEDICAL ALUMNI HALL OF FAME AWARDS

Six men who devoted more than two centuries to the medical profession were honored Aug. 17 at the 2013 Medical Alumni Hall of Fame Awards.

During a reception and dinner at the Fairview Inn in Jackson, top billing went to Dr. Owen B. "Bev" Evans, chairman emeritus in the Department of Pediatrics, and the fourth-ever recipient of UMMC's Distinguished Medical Alumnus Award.

His five fellow honorees were inductees in the University of Mississippi Medical Alumni Chapter's

Hall of Fame: the late Dr. A. Wallace Conerly, Dr. J.J. (Buddy) Connors, Dr. Robert L. Elliott Jr., Dr. Norman C. Nelson and the late Dr. Winfred L. Wisner.

About 150 well-wishers packed the Fairview's dining room in tribute to the physicians who logged a total of 200-plus years in the practice of medicine, research and administration, many of them at UMMC.

"To the individuals being honored tonight, we all owe you a sense of debt and gratitude," said Dr. LouAnn

Woodward, UMMC vice dean and associate vice chancellor for health affairs.

"(Your) work is what really laid the foundation for the successes we have today and for the successes we will have tomorrow."

Held in conjunction with Mississippi State Medical Association's 145th session, the alumni salute toasted those who "brought honor and distinction to the School of Medicine and UMMC," said Dr. Scott McPherson, then-president of the Medical Alumni Chapter.

EVANS

Evans received his due for advancing the health care of children in Mississippi by aiding in the founding of the Blair E. Batson Hospital for Children, designed and built under his direction.

"I would never have had this opportunity if I had not come here," said Evans, who is also professor emeritus of pediatric neurology.

The chair of the UMMC's Department of Pediatrics from 1989 to 2010, he also fostered and promoted the Mississippi Children's Cancer Clinic, a surgical suite, the Eli Manning Children's Clinics, the Colonel Harland Sanders Children's Emergency Department and the Selby and Richard McRae Children's Trauma Unit.

As a Distinguished Medical Alumnus, he joins the ranks of Dr. J. Edward Hill, Dr. Dan Jones and Dr. Lucius "Luke" Lampton.

Working as a physician is a "privilege," Evans told his audience. "Our task should be to convince young people it is a privilege to do what we do."



The other honorees were only the second group to receive Hall of Fame Awards, presented to alumni who have upheld "the good name of University Medical Center," McPherson said.

CONERLY

Accepting the award on their late father's behalf were his sons Charlie and Al Conerly.

"My dad lived for this university," Charlie Conerly said. "This would mean a lot to him. I hope he's proud, because we sure are."

Serving as the Medical Center's CEO from 1994

to 2003, their father forged a legacy that includes a practically new physical plant, dramatic increases in budget and a multimillion dollar endowment.

Conerly helped shape partnerships with leaders of the African-American community, Jackson State University and Tougaloo College that created the nonprofit Jackson Medical Mall Foundation.

In 2009, Gov. Haley Barbour awarded him the Governor's Medal for Service to Mississippi, about three years before Conerly's death at age 76.





Several eminent Medical Center leaders were honored during the UMMC Medical Alumni Awards Dinner, August 17, at the Fairview Inn in Jackson. Dr. Owen B. “Bev” Evans, seated, front row, far right, was named the alumni chapter’s Distinguished Medical Alumnus. The other recipients were winners of the chapter’s 2013 Hall of Fame Awards: Dr. A. Wallace Conerly, Dr. J.J. (Buddy) Connors, Dr. Robert L. Elliott Jr., Dr. Norman C. Nelson and Dr. Winfred L. Wiser. Front row, seated, from left, are Wiser’s daughter Joan Van Hooser, Nelson and Evans. Back row, standing, from left, are Elliott; Wiser’s son Nick Wiser; Connors; Nelson’s son Norman Nelson, Jr.; and Conerly’s sons Al Conerly and Charlie Conerly.

CONNORS

In his words, Connors “started out to be just a regular old doctor.”

But his career has been anything but ordinary, and he is renowned today for his devotion to treating patients who suffered strokes.

“It has been the passion of my life and it continues to be,” Connors said.

Now a professor of radiology, neurology and neurological surgery at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Connors founded the Neuro Vascular Coalition, the largest multidisciplinary



neuroscience organization in the world.

During his six years as director of interventional neuroradiology at LSU Medical Center in New Orleans, he completed the first textbook in the world to describe interventional stroke therapy, carotid stenting and intracranial angioplasty.

He also developed the now-standard FDA-defined technique for intracranial angioplasty and stenting.

ELLIOTT

A Greenville native, Elliott has for the last 40 years worked in Baton Rouge, La., where he pioneered



minimally invasive breast surgery and his research lab team developed several cancer vaccines.

“One thing I’ve learned when I’ve gone around the country – you graduate from this place and you can compete with anyone,” Elliott said.

His clinic has been a leader in the early detection of breast cancer and recently made a tremendous impact on research in cancer metabolism.

For their valued time together, Elliott thanked Dr. Henry Laws II, a 2012 Hall of Fame honoree and his surgery colleague years ago in Anniston, Ala. He also acknowledged the forbearance of his wife Dr. Mary Elliott.

“I especially thank her for letting me be a risk-taker and a follower of my dream, which has been at times a hell of a nightmare for her,” he said.

NELSON

In his introductory remarks about Nelson, McPherson said, “When I showed up here (at the Medical Center), he was the man.

“He liked people and they liked him back.”

Summing up Nelson’s career, McPherson said his 21 years as the UMMC vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the School of Medicine were marked “by his optimism about medicine in Mississippi, his warm and fruitful relationship with state leaders and his focus on the long-term good of the institution rather than on short-term benefits.”

During Nelson’s time at UMMC, enrollment rose by more than 60 percent, employment almost doubled, research funding more than tripled, endowments rose more than a hundredfold, and the budget multiplied nearly nine times.

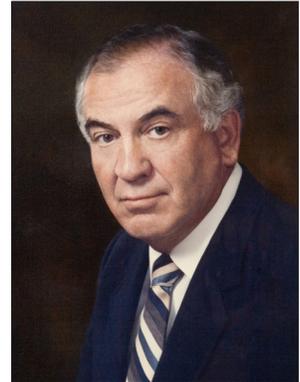
Because he found alternative ways to pay for needed construction on campus, the Medical Center was able to fund the building he wanted for the students: the Norman C. Nelson Student Union.

Nelson watched from his wheelchair as his son Norman Nelson Jr. accepted the award on his behalf.



WISER

A recipient of the Surgeon of the Year Award from the Society of Gynecologic Surgeons, Wisner was already widely recognized as one of the outstanding gynecological surgeons in the country when he became chairman of UMMC’s Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology in 1976.



During his 20-year tenure, he shaped the department as a practice partner with physicians throughout the state and was the only person to be named outstanding director of a residency program twice by the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists.

He spearheaded the development of a statewide system of perinatal care that has served as a model for other states and is credited with making possible the Medical Center’s comprehensive Winfred L. Wisner Hospital for Women and Infants.

He died on Nov. 23, 2006 at age 80.

“This would have meant so much to him,” said his son Nick Wisner. “Winfred Wisner was a great father, he was a great physician and he was a great man.”

Also speaking on behalf of her father, Wisner’s daughter Joan Van Hooser said, “He was a professional appreciator. That’s why he was so stinking good.

“He would have had an appreciation for an elegant meal like this one.”

But he also appreciated “opening a can of beanie weenies on the side of a creek in Tennessee where he grew up,” she said.

“And he was so busy appreciating everything else, he didn’t understand that he was appreciated too.”

1940s



Dr. Robert Royce (1940), a retired professor of urology, Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, Mo., recently shot his age in golf; he is 96.

A native of Isola in the Mississippi Delta, Royce lives in a St. Louis suburb and spends many weekends at his ranch in the Ozarks.

His major activities include writing a book and working in his rose garden. He attends church regularly, plays golf two to three times a week and explores the woods and countryside on his ATV.

Royce graduated from the medical school when it was a two-year program in Oxford, training his last two years at Washington University. He completed an internship at the University of Chicago before joining the Army Medical Corps and serving as a battalion surgeon during the World War II Battle of the Bulge.

At Washington University, he was a member of the clinical faculty, leader of the urologic residency training program and acting head of the Division of Urology for two years. He retired from the Division of Urology in 1994 and remains a clinical professor emeritus.

Royce received the 1997 Washington University School of Medicine Alumni Faculty Award and the Justin Cordonnier Award for service to the Division of Urologic Surgery.

In 2009, Washington University named a professorship after him: the Robert Killian Royce, M.D., Distinguished Professor of Urologic Surgery.



Dr. Ralph L. Brock (1945) of McComb closed his private practice in 1995 at age 70 and then supervised three outpatient clinics for another two years.

Brock graduated from the medical school when it was a two-year program in Oxford, in September 1945, before earning his medical degree at the Tulane University School of Medicine in 1948. He joined his father and

brother in their general, or family, practice in July 1949 after finishing a rotating internship at New Orleans' Charity Hospital.

Brock was a captain and a Physical Medicine Officer in the U.S. Army, 1951-1953, but spent the rest of his career practicing medicine in McComb.

He is now busy with several projects, including genealogical research on families related to himself and his late wife. Brock is also teaching himself to play the piano and is active in his church and Rotary Club.

His medically-related activities now are mainly limited to receiving requests for free medical advice, he said, including a recent one from a lawyer friend who "asked me to look at a bump inside his ear lobe and tell him what he needed to do about it."

1950s

Dr. Charles Rodney Smith (1951) has retired after 55 years of practice in the field of psychiatry, working mainly with children. He earned his medical certificate from the University of Mississippi in 1951 when the medical school was a two-year institution in Oxford.

He has taught in the schools of medicine at Tulane University and Louisiana State University.

His pursuits include reading, playing the piano and travel.

1960s



Dr. Robert Yelverton (1967) of Tampa, Fla., recently retired as chief medical officer of Women's Care Florida, LLC, a group of more than 140 obstetrics/gynecology physicians in west-central Florida.

He was recently elected District Chair of the American College and Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) District XII (Florida) and serves on the ACOG's national executive board.

A native Mississippian, Yelverton has served on the medical staff at St. Joseph's and St. Joseph's Women's Hospital for 33 years and in 2005 was

awarded the St. Joseph Hospital Distinguished Physician of the Year Award.

Yelverton now serves on the St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation Board, as chair of the Medical Advisory Committee for the Florida Birth-Related Neurological Injury Compensation Association (NICA) Board of Directors and as a committee member of the Florida Pregnancy Associated Maternal Mortality Review Committee.

He is a member of the Hillsborough County Healthy Start board of directors and chairs their Fetal Infant Mortality Review Committee. He is the acting medical director of the Healthy Start of Florida Strong Start Program.

1970s



Dr. David Hutchins (1971) is credited with developing the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences Center for Vulvar Disorders, the first of its kind in the state. The clinic has attracted patients and consultations from around the country.

Hutchins has a team of specialists to assist in various aspects of treatment, using a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach for each woman's individual needs.

He was also instrumental in developing a geriatric gynecology clinic and it is his wish that young physicians continue to recognize and treat the needs of the growing segment of the over-55 population.

He lives with his wife of 46 years, Patricia, in Little Rock, Ark.



Dr. Jordan Henry Hankins (1975) has for the past 13 years served as professor of radiology and medical director of nuclear medicine at the University of Nebraska College of Medicine in Omaha.

He is the president-elect of the Missouri Valley Chapter of the Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging.

Hankins did his residency in diagnostic radiology at UMMC and a residency in nuclear

medicine at the Bowman Gray School of Medicine, North Carolina Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem, where he also did his fellowship in diagnostic radiology.

1980s



Dr. E. Coy Irvin (1982) of Florence, S.C., has been named chief medical officer for McLeod Health, a network of five hospitals.

He has been serving as vice president of medical affairs and chief medical officer for McLeod Regional Medical Center in Florence since joining the organization in June 2010.

In his new, expanded leadership role, Irvin will focus on improving the health system for physicians, patients, residents and medical students.

Irvin, who practiced family medicine for close to 25 years, joined McLeod Health from Baptist Health in Pensacola, Fla., where he served as chief medical officer.

He and his wife Angie have two daughters and four grandchildren.



Dr. Jeff M. Burnham (1983) of Baton Rouge, La., served as the primary care team physician in all 20 varsity sports at Louisiana State University for 20 years.

He was the head team physician for 10 years and became the director of the Sports Medicine Fellowship program at LSU five years ago.

At one time he was the off-season karate instructor for the LSU football program.

Married for 36 years, he has two sons and four grandchildren. His son Jeremy is a third-year resident in sports orthopedics at the University of Kentucky in Lexington; his son Jordan is a second-year resident in UMMC's ophthalmology program.

Dr. Timothy Folse (1985) was the keynote speaker at an October conference on cancer survivor transition in Kansas City, Mo.: "Bridging the Gap, Caring for Adolescent and Adult Survivors of Childhood Cancers."



Folse, a Collins native, is the clinical director for the St. Jude LIFE & After Completion of Therapy (ACT) Clinics. He joined St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis in 2008 after practicing family medicine for 20 years.

He also completed the first two years of his family medicine residency at UMMC, transferring afterward to the University of Tennessee-St. Francis.

1990s



Dr. Brian Credo (1993, fellowship) is an associate professor of clinical pediatrics at the Tulane University School of Medicine in New Orleans, where he teaches medical ethics and serves as senior staff physician at the Tulane Student Health Center.

Credo is a member of the Strategic Planning Committee for the Renewal of Catholic Education and delivers lectures on teen violence and suicide prevention to parent and civic groups across the region.

He has been chosen for inclusion on the Best Doctors in America list on multiple occasions.

The son of New Orleans jazz artist Chuck Credo, he plays lead guitar with the New Orleans oldies band Steady Eddy.

Dr. C. Joseph Cadle (1995) is the national director of Clinical Client Engagement and serves as the primary physician liaison for more than 25 of Kaiser Permanente's largest national accounts.

Based in Atlanta, Ga., Cadle also serves as assistant to the executive medical director for external relations, marketing and sales for Kaiser Permanente's Georgia region and supervises a team of 20 clinicians.

A board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist practicing with Kaiser Permanente for more than 12 years, he served as chief of the OB-GYN department in 2007 and 2008. Before that, Cadle helped establish Kaiser Permanente's electronic health record.

He joined Kaiser Permanente in 2001 after two

years of private practice in Rome, Ga.

A native of Mississippi, Cadle finished medical school and residency training at UMMC.



Dr. Erik Richardson (1997) of Oxford has been elected by the Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians as its District 9 director.

During his two-year term, he will act as liaison between the MAFP and Benton, DeSoto, Grenada, Lafayette, Marshall, Panola, Tate, Tippah and Yalobusha counties.

At the UMMC School of Medicine, he was a Culley Scholar. He completed his family medicine residency at the University of Alabama School of Medicine.

A diplomate of the American Board of Family Medicine, Richardson is also president-elect of the University of Mississippi School of Medicine Alumni Association.

He practices at White Oak Family Medicine Clinic in Oxford.

Send us your lives

We're looking for more and more class notes. If you didn't get your news in this issue, send it for the next. Let your classmates know what you've been doing since graduation or the last class reunion. Be sure to include the name you used in school, the year you graduated, and if possible, a digital photo of yourself.

We also welcome your story ideas, subjects you'd like to see covered in these pages or a graduate you know who would make an interesting profile.

Send class notes, story ideas and photos to gpettus@umc.edu or mail to

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The Healing Touch

Joely Henderson, childlife specialist, and patient Aiden Johnson explore one of the 30 pieces of American folk art donated by the New Orleans-based Gitter Gallery to Batson Children's Hospital. The collection was unveiled in November on the first-floor hallway leading to Batson and Wiser Hospitals. Doug Gitter, who owns Gitter Gallery with his wife Cathy, said he made the donation because of the healing power of art. "If, for a moment in time, it can help take the child away from the injury, adversity or illness that brought them here in the first place, then it will have accomplished not only the artist's mission, but my mission as well," he said.

