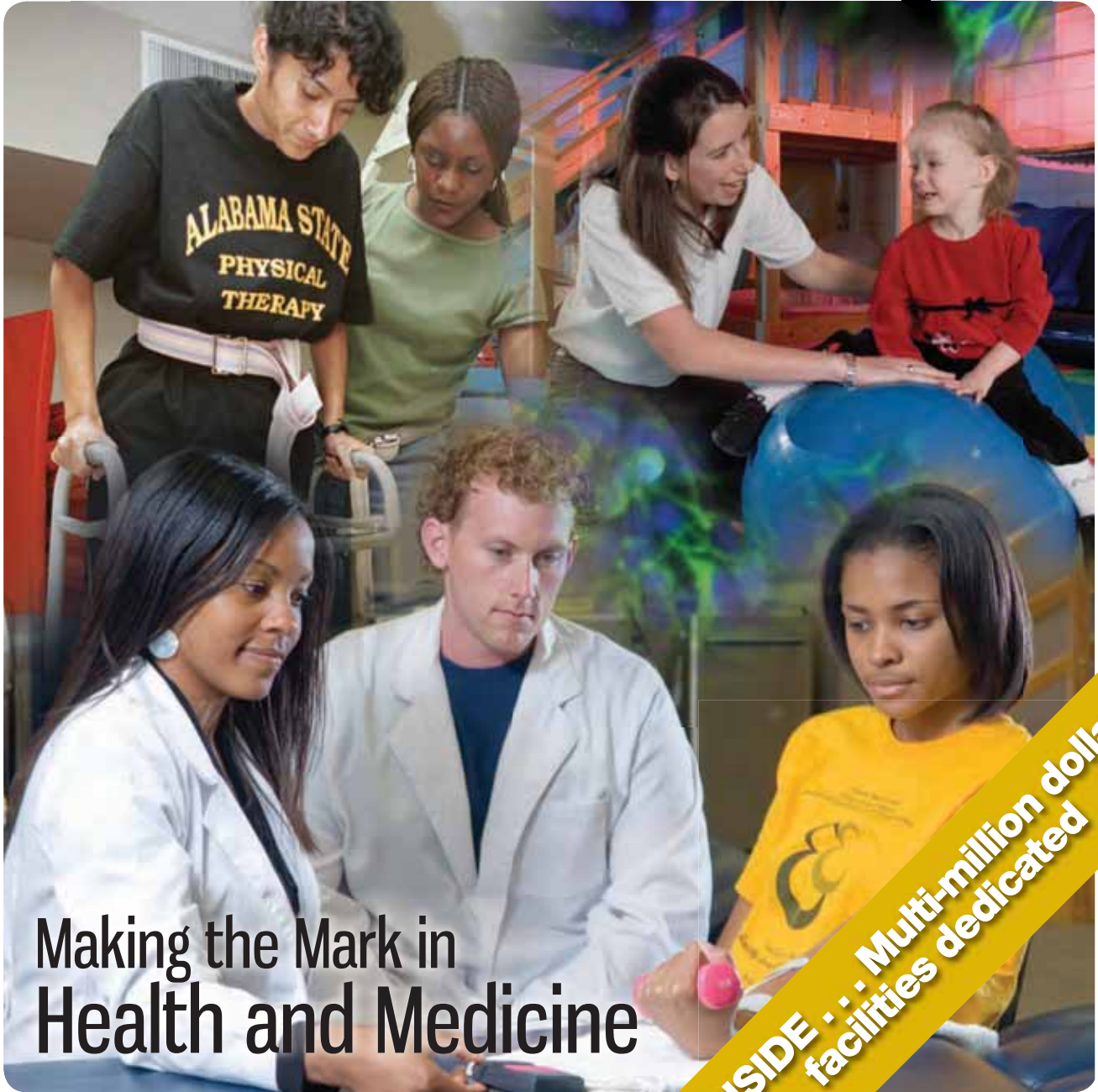


SUMMER 2009  
VOL. 2 NO. 4

# ASU Today

MAGAZINE



Making the Mark in  
Health and Medicine

**INSIDE . . . Multi-million dollar  
facilities dedicated**

# ASU Today

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## FROM THE EDITOR



Our summertime issue of *ASU Today Magazine* continues to touch on our theme of celebrating the magazine's 25th anniversary. In our cover story, we highlight Alabama State University alumni who have excelled in the fields of health and medicine.

This story is timely because of ASU's increasing recognition in the life sciences, as our students and faculty members continue to blaze new paths in such areas as nanobiotechnology, microbiology

and most recently in the field of alternative fuels research and energy conservation.

Our lead story follows many different people, but we start with Drs. Jefferson Underwood II and John Winston Jr., both ASU alumni who were two of the first black physicians to integrate the public hospital system in Montgomery.

We also look at other ASU graduates who followed in the footsteps of ASU pioneers. Some have become CEOs of health care organizations or hospitals, while others have excelled as physicians, dentists, medical researchers, health care advocates and in other fields.

Also in this issue are stories that highlight the recent dedication ceremony of two of Alabama State's newest buildings – the \$30 million Ralph D. Abernathy Hall and the \$27 million Life Science Building.

As an added bonus to the dedication story, we share the story of the surprise gift given to ASU by the family of civil rights icon Ralph D. Abernathy (class of 1950). The family treasure will be displayed in ASU's College of Education building, which bears Dr. Abernathy's name.

We also celebrate the university's Spring Commencement exercises, WVAS-FM Radio's 25th anniversary and various other campus and alumni events to keep you updated on the latest happenings at ASU.

We invite you to celebrate with us as we reflect upon ASU's continued advancements and strive to maintain a legacy of excellence!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John F. Knight Jr." in a cursive, flowing style.

John F. Knight Jr.

Editor

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ON THE COVER: *Various snapshots of ASU students and graduates who are making the mark in health and medicine.*



# 734 DEGREES CONFERRED

By Kenneth Mullinax

Perry “P.J.” Morgan had every right to smile. After all, he put a lot of hard work into the bachelor’s degree in criminal justice that he was about to receive.

“My degree took countless hours of reading, studying and taking examinations,” Morgan said as he flashed a grin that clearly showed he was happy it would soon be over. “And yes, it was hectic and hard, but today feels like a miracle come true. Graduation is what it is all about.”

Within minutes, Morgan would become one of the 734 students to receive their degrees during the spring commencement held May 9, which included doctorates in education and physical therapy, as well as master’s degrees, educational specialist degrees and more than 500 bachelor’s degrees in everything from communications media to theatre arts.

Black and gold was the color of the day as the soon-to-be graduates covered the floor of what mere hours

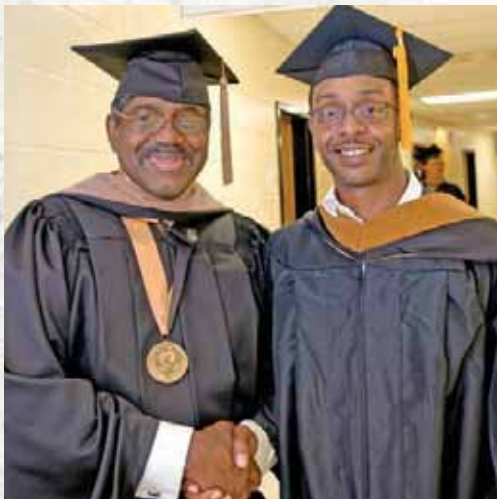
earlier was the Hornets’ basketball court. In stark contrast, sitting beside the graduates were the golden robed members of the class of 1959, who were present to be honored on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their undergraduate degrees.

Like many others at graduation, Morgan, a California native, was joined by his family, who surprised him afterward with the gift of a camera and greeted him with catcalls  
Continued on page 5

▶ 1 *Tara Hollinger helps Josephine Bullard with her regalia prior to the commencement exercises.*



▲ 2  
*Charley McLeod waves to the crowd as he enters the Acadome.*



▲ 3  
*ASU professor Charles Hardy congratulates Derick Marshall, who earned his Master of Education degree.*

▶ 4  
*Former Miss ASU Barbara Pringle enters the Acadome for the commencement exercises.*





▲ 6

*Ashley Marie Buchanan and Lyndsey Carrington Kiah both received their doctorates in physical therapy during the spring commencement.*

◀ 5

*Voderick Mickles looks at his diploma after returning to his seat.*



▶ 7

*Maiya Moore receives her degree from President William H. Harris.*



▲ 8

*Class of 1959 member Dr. John Ivery proudly bears the banner for the Golden Anniversary class.*

▶ 9

*Jamille Dorsey flashes a smile as she makes her way to the stage.*



Continued from page 2



*Perry “PJ” Morgan smiles during the 279th Commencement at Alabama State University.*

and screams of excitement.

“Alabama State has been a wonderful experience for my son in that it has expanded his mind intellectually and matured him into a fine young man,” said PJ’s father, Perry Morgan Sr.

The crowd sat spellbound as guest speaker Juanita Jones Abernathy, widow of the Rev. Dr. Ralph D. Abernathy, gave the commencement address to the 7,000-plus attendees.

Juanita Abernathy began her remarks by recalling the challenges that faced her late husband soon after he graduated from ASU in 1950.

“Within five years of graduating from Alabama State, my husband was one of the leaders of the Montgomery Bus Boycott and had become friends with another young Montgomery preacher named Martin Luther King

and the two of them enlisted others to help make America free for everyone,” Abernathy said.

She implored the graduates to remain passionate in their interests, follow their hearts, never let go of their goals and always be honest.

“Seek the truth, speak the truth and stand up for



*Micklos Grant, who received his degree in business administration, dressed up his mortarboard for the 279th Commencement.*



*Speaker Juanita Jones Abernathy delivers the commencement address.*

the truth, even if you stand alone,” Abernathy said.

She reminded the students that they are graduating in the most historic year in recent American history. The inauguration of President Barack Obama shows them they now have a full stake in the United States and that they too can attain any position in America.

“This is your time to save the planet, continue the unfinished work

of the Civil Rights Movement and correct the injustices that still linger in America’s legal and penal system,” Abernathy said.

Abernathy, who was interrupted more than 10 times by applause, ended her address with these words:

“To whom much is given, much is required, so volunteer and get involved in working to improve your community and in saving the very soul of America.” ■

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

WE'LL MEET WITH DIGNITY AND FORTITUDE  
WHATEVER COMES TO US PERSONALLY ...

By Darryn Simmons



## CEDRIC HERBERT

Cedric Herbert's path to graduation was not a straight one. Twice he interrupted his accounting studies so he could attend to personal matters. But he always came back to class.

His persistence paid off as the 27-year-old became the first of his immediate family to graduate from college.

"I'm excited," he said after receiving his degree. "It's a release, like a barrier's been opened. I'm just glad to set an example for my siblings, nieces and nephews."

Herbert is studying for his Certified Public Accountant exam, but his time at ASU has inspired him to also consider another career option.

"I want to be a teacher," he said. "Watching my instructors has given me a desire to pursue my Ph.D. and return to Alabama State one day. There's nothing like lighting that spark in someone and seeing it happen."

Whichever path Herbert decides to take, he'll pursue it with pride.

"It was my goal to get a degree that said Alabama State on it," he said. "I've done it."

## JONATHAN LUCKETT

Jonathan Lockett, 21, will use his political science major and English minor to help him prepare for a career in law.

Lockett, who received a \$60,000 Dean's Honor Scholarship, will attend law school this fall at Howard University in Washington.

When comparing scholarship offers from the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, the University of Miami and Howard, Lockett drew upon his experiences at ASU, where he enjoyed the moderate-size classes and extra attention from teachers.

"Wherever I went next, I wanted it to be a continuation of that," he said. "Howard seemed the closest to that."

Still, Lockett is the first to admit that his ASU experience will be tough to match.







## CHRIS TAYLOR

Chris Taylor didn't have to think twice about his career choice. He wanted to follow the footsteps of his father, Reginald, who spent 20 years in the U.S. Air Force.

"I've seen firsthand that it's a good way of life with a good paycheck," Taylor said. "My father gave me direction, but I went and got it on my own."

Taylor, who earned a bachelor's in computer information systems and was the only student in his class to be commissioned an Air Force lieutenant, said ASU prepared him well.

"It's improved my writing, communication and analytical skills and working in groups has got me ready for the team effort and team building that I'll be doing," he said.

Taylor, 22, praised his College of Business Administration teachers for helping him to see how his studies would translate into real-life experiences.

"It was most satisfying to see us take business policies and see how they worked in the business sector," he said. "You knew that the teachers may have been hard on you, but that they had your best interests at heart."

## SHARON TRIMBLE

On her way to becoming one of Alabama State's first graduates in its new rehabilitation counseling program, Sharon Trimble, 40, had to wear a lot of hats. She's a single mother, a full-time worker, a student and a community volunteer.

She never doubted that she could do them all.

"I don't quit anything because I know somehow I'll pull through with hard work, faith and dedication," she said.

It didn't hurt that she had the guidance and help of the staff at Alabama State.

"The loyalty of the instructors and their willingness to share their knowledge with students like me was a tremendous asset," she said. "It's knowledge that I'll be able to take with me for a lifetime."

Trimble is looking forward to putting all that she's learned at ASU to work in her new career as a rehabilitation counselor.

"You learn something new each day of your life and it's a good feeling," she said. "This is not something I chose; God chose it for me."



# NOSTALGIA REIGNS AT 1959 GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

By Darryn Simmons



When Elliot Chambers first visited Alabama State University in the mid-1950s, there wasn't a whole lot to see.

"It was a small school that was struggling," said Dr. Chambers.

Small but beautiful, chimed in former classmate Willa Duncan Walker.

"There were only two or three buildings back then," said Walker. "But one of the best parts of my experience at Alabama State was how beautiful the campus was."

The scenery still brings a smile to Walker's face, but the sweeping changes evident throughout the campus amazed the more than 40 members of the class of 1959 who came back to ASU for their reunion.

Twenty-five of them still reside in Alabama, but others traveled from 10 states - California, New York, Illinois, Florida, Tennessee, Ohio, Maryland, Virginia, Mississippi and Georgia - and the District of Columbia.

Chambers made the trip back to Montgomery from Lodi, Calif. When the retired San Joaquin Delta College

professor arrived on campus, he couldn't believe how much things had changed.

"The diversity of the students and staff, the increased curriculum and expansion of the campus has been quite impressive," he said.

Thelma Ivery, a member of the ASU faculty since 1964 and now the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, nodded her head in agreement. When she and her classmates were students, most of them were studying to be teachers.

"I'm amazed at the many different majors and options the school now provides," said Ivery. "It puts us on the same level as any other school around."

## TOGETHER AGAIN

The 2009 Golden Anniversary celebration marked the 24<sup>th</sup> year that ASU has honored alumni who graduated 50 years prior. Events included luncheons, dinners and receptions - all leading to a special ceremony that awarded them golden diplomas.

As Ivery and her classmates

gathered May 8 in Lockhart Hall to reminisce, it was clear their love for their alma mater had not waned since their classroom days. It was equally clear that the graduates appreciated the university's efforts to reunite them after so many years.

"Seeing all these people I went to school with and knowing that the school is continuing to prepare others for the challenges of today has been a humbling experience," said Chambers as he browsed through a collection of photos, yearbooks and articles on display. "We had a lot to overcome in that era and this school is a big reason why we did."

Getting the chance to talk with old friends was a special treat for Walker.

"It's been a wonderful experience and I've loved the camaraderie," she said. "It's good to see that students here can still experience small-college life, but also get a No. 1 education."

For Ivery, it was a time for comparisons.

"It's great to see how people have changed; we all had baby faces back then," she said as she surveyed the



*Dr. John Ivery, John D. Lilly, Donald Sutton, Dr. Thelma Ivery, Ms. Bobbie Parker and Mrs. Sarah Alexander sing "The Halls of Bama" and other songs during the nostalgic gathering held May 8th at Lockhart Hall.*



*Dr. Joseph Henderson, Dr. Joe Woods and Harvest Mitchell view a board paying tribute to their deceased classmates during the president's banquet for the class of 1959.*

meeting room where small groups of her classmates laughed and talked freely about their lives. "We remember the experiences that we shared."

#### CATCHING UP

One of the more interesting stories was told by Joseph Henderson.

"I first came to ASU to drop off one of my friends who was going to school there," he said. "A teacher asked what I was doing and I told him.

"He asked if I was willing to work and I told him I was," Henderson said. "He got me work in the cafeteria and I really appreciated it."

Henderson worked in the cafeteria for three years and also was a member of the track team. Most importantly, he got an education on how to be a man.

"The teachers taught us how to dress and how to act," he said. "They looked out for us and wanted us to succeed. They taught us that no matter where you're from, you need to apply yourself and don't be afraid of the dark - have self-confidence."

After leaving ASU, Henderson taught and coached at U.S. Jones High School and Alabama A&M, where his accolades included 16 consecutive Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference championships in outdoor track, 11 consecutive cross-country titles and four NCAA titles.

#### CAREER EDUCATORS

Like Ivery, many of the graduates entered the field of education, although they did not always remain teachers.

Mary Tindel left ASU with a degree and a future husband. The couple will soon celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

After teaching two years in Choctaw County, Tindel moved to Ohio where she spent 30 years as a social worker in Cleveland.

Nash Jerome Cooley of Montgomery went to work in the Montgomery Public Schools system. In a few years, he moved to Atlanta and became manager of Atlanta Stadium, and then rehabilitation adviser/coordinator of the Atlanta Housing Authority's Project Fix-Up.

Chambers went on to get degrees at California State University and Nova University and taught computer science and African-American history at San Joaquin Delta College.

Willa Walker received degrees from Cleveland State University and Eastern Michigan then became a teacher, supervisor, consultant and coordinator.

#### WE OWE IT ALL TO ASU

The key ingredients to all their success stories, the classmates

agreed, were the teachers and support staff at ASU.

"ASU had teachers that were concerned about the futures of the individuals that they taught," said Cooley. "They got on you until you saw the light. They wanted you to succeed."

The biggest thing ASU gave to Walker was a boost in self-confidence.

"The thing I most took away from my time at ASU was a sense that I could face the world and do what I wanted to do and go after anything that I desired," she said. "It gave me an assurance and prepared me to work hard at what I wanted to achieve."

Chambers modeled his teaching approach after his ASU experiences.

"The care and concern that the staff gave the students is something that I implemented in my own interaction with students," he said.

For Ivery, the lessons became more profound.

"It was in the middle of segregation," she said of the years she and her classmates spent at ASU. "We were taught that you had to be extra talented to get anywhere. Some kids take that for granted now and we have to impress upon them the importance of hard work and effort." ■



# New Buildings Beckon the Future

By Kenneth Mullinax

*Top: Ralph David Abernathy Hall. Bottom: the Life Science Building.*





*Lt. Gen. Julius Becton (ret. U.S. Army) and Atlanta attorney Carlos Gonzalez, contributed extraordinary leadership in shaping the judge's ruling in Knight v. the State of Alabama.*

The two newest buildings on Alabama State University's campus - the Ralph David Abernathy Hall and the Life Science Building - were dedicated May 8 during a public ceremony held between the structures.

It was a scene of celebration as hundreds of education leaders, elected office holders, friends and Abernathy family members attended the formal ceremony.

Carlos Gonzalez, an Atlanta attorney who assisted federal judge Harold Murphy in overseeing the implementation of the landmark *Knight v. Alabama* federal lawsuit decree, spoke at the luncheon.

"These extraordinary new facilities could not have been built without the *Knight v. the State of Alabama* desegregation lawsuit," Gonzalez said. "And its effects are continuing to be felt here at ASU and across Alabama through the creation of scores of new academic offerings, funding and the construction of new academic buildings and facilities."

Gonzalez said he was awestruck

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# Family Treasure Bestowed Upon University

By Kenneth Mullinax



*Alabama State University President William H. Harris and Juanita Jones Abernathy pose with a bust of Ralph Abernathy donated by Mrs. Abernathy at the building dedication ceremony on May 8.*

The moment Juanita Jones Abernathy first set foot in Alabama State University's new College of Education building last March, she knew it should be the home of one of her most beloved and cherished treasures.

Yet, she told no one of her intentions.

Abernathy didn't share her thoughts with ASU's president or administrators. She didn't even tell her own children until one week before the massive building was to be named and dedicated to the memory of her late husband, the Rev. Dr. Ralph David Abernathy - an ASU alumnus (1950).

"As I toured the building for the first time with President Bill Harris, he took me through the new College of Education's foyer and it was then and there I decided its impressive entry hall was the perfect place for the sculpture we had made of my late husband," Juanita Abernathy said.

The bronze sculpture is a larger-than-life size bust of Ralph Abernathy created by acclaimed international artist Vicky Penfold of Germany.

Abernathy, who was born in Linden, Ala., was pastor of Montgomery's First Baptist Church in 1955 when he became a leader in the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the trusted partner of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Abernathy held that role until King's assassination in 1968,

when he became King's chosen successor as head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference from 1968 to 1977. He also served as the pastor of the West Hunter Street Baptist Church in Atlanta from 1961 to 1990, where he continued to champion the issues of human rights and peace. Juanita Abernathy said the bust holds great sentimental attachment for her because she and her husband had been introduced to the artist as they toured Europe for the last time in 1989, just months prior to his death.

"Ralph commissioned the artist on the spot to capture his image in a piece of sculpture," Juanita Abernathy said, "and agreed to sit for her the next time we were in Europe. But death struck him down in April 1990 before he was ever able to return to her studio."

Fate intervened and work on the bust began even before the elder Abernathy's funeral took place in Atlanta, said Kwame Abernathy, the youngest of the five Abernathy children.

"My sister Juandalynn was living in Germany at the time our father died," Kwame Abernathy said. "The artist contacted her before she left for the funeral and gave her

Continued on page 33

**DON'T TOUCH  
THAT DIAL!**

# WVAS Celebrates 25 Years with Digital Explosion

By May Donnell

Mel Marshall remembers what it was like leading up to the day in June 1984 when Alabama State's WVAS 90.7 FM began its first official broadcast with 20,000 watts of power.

"We tested for several months," said Marshall. "Steve Meyers (former program director) and I would literally have someone at the station play records and we'd get in the car and drive to, say, Selma and see how far we could go and still hear it. Then we'd head to Birmingham and do the same thing."

Today, the award-winning jazz, blues and news station is heard in 17 Alabama counties. It's gone digital, reached out to a global audience via the Internet and a hook up with iPhone is in the works.

That's a far cry from the days when DJs played vinyl records and pulled news releases from a teletype, admitted former employees who showed up June 20 for a silver anniversary birthday bash at Montgomery's Union Station train shed. Many of those attending had cut their broadcast teeth inside the WVAS studio.

Those 25 years of change have been necessary to keep pace with the advances in technology, said Jackie

Amis, the station's public affairs director.

"Back then, we got the UPI news in on the teletype," said Amis, who joined the station as a news reporter and anchor. "We'd rip the pages out and post them on the board. Today, we download Associated Press wire stories. We can get voice production by e-mail. It used to be handwritten announcements and snail mail. Now it's all so much smaller, faster and more concise."

Marshall, who was hired away from Commodore Entertainment by WVAS founder Dr. John Knight to help launch the operation, said a story in the *Montgomery Advertiser* announcing the

opening of the new station was all that was needed to get the word out. Once broadcasts began in earnest, the phones started ringing and didn't stop.

"It was like a flood," said Marshall. "People were proud for ASU. Montgomery was proud to have jazz.

People were saying things like, 'I never thought I'd see the day.'"

From the start, Knight believed the station's primary mission should be to provide the kind of news programming not being offered by local media outlets. At the time, he said the black point of view was still being omitted from local newscasts.



WVAS News Director Tana Shealy, Station Manager Candy Capel, and news reporter Melanie Hogan with the Best Regularly Scheduled Newscast Award from the Associated Press.

The station's efforts to be at the forefront of news and views have not gone unrecognized.

This year, WVAS received the Associated Press award for the "Best Regularly Scheduled Newscast." Its weekly public affairs program, "Perspectives," won "Best Talk Show

in a Medium Market” from the Alabama Broadcasters Association.

One thing that hasn’t changed is the station’s dedication to community involvement. “Jazz on the Grass” is an annual Labor Day concert sponsored by the station and the Alabama Jazz and Blues Federation. The low-cost gathering is a crowd pleaser now in its fourth year.

“With this concert, we were celebrating the ‘staycation’ way before anybody else,” Amis said.

Among other things, WVAS also pitches in to help the American Red Cross collect blood, shows up for Deputy Dave’s Family and Friends Day sponsored by the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Department and works with the Montgomery Public Library to encourage children to read.

Station Manager Candy Capel came on board as a part-time announcer in 1984. Today, she oversees programming, engineering, accounting, community service and a revolving door of student interns. As the station celebrated a quarter century of operation, Capel’s primary focus was on the two new channels the station recently added.

“With a digital tuner, you can now get three choices of programming from WVAS,” said Capel.

Listeners can tune in to regular programming, which features jazz, blues, National Public Radio and local news, or they can opt for HD2 or HD3, both just a click away.

Capel said station employees are still putting together the programming for the two new outlets. One will



*WVAS threw itself a gala birthday party June 20 at Montgomery’s historic Union Station, complete with the sounds of the jazz band “Between Nine and Seven.”*

eventually offer student-produced shows and formats. The other will likely revolve around educational, gospel and church-related programming.

“We plan to let students produce their own shows, even if it’s from the dorm room,” she said. “It’s such a great opportunity for students to get their feet wet in radio.”

Increasing the power to 80,000 watts from 20,000 greatly increased the reach of the station and is one of its major accomplishments, said Capel. The addition of new programming options is another big step forward.

News Director Tana Shealy, who first joined WVAS in 1989 as a student news anchor, thinks the changes will strengthen the station’s news coverage.

“This gives us the opportunity to go beyond sound bites and into more long-form stories and more news content,” Shealy said. “With

the immediacy of the radio business, it’s rare that you get that chance. I am excited for the students who are coming along now.”

One former student, who credits WVAS and Marshall with launching her 15-year radio career, said exposure to the radio station opened up a whole new world to her.

“WVAS literally gave me my start in radio,” said Angela Baldwin, who went on to work for radio stations in Montgomery and Tuscaloosa under the stage name Michelle Miller. “There was no question we couldn’t ask. It was fabulous. They helped all of us out a lot.”

And that, according to Shealy, is as much a part of the station’s mission as playing jazz and blues and covering the news.

“WVAS encourages everyone to do better, regardless of their situation,” Shealy said. “That’s one thing I’m very proud of.” ■



# Transforming Health and Healing

By Timothy C. Ervin

*Bobby James, 2007 graduate of ASU's Health Information Management program*

When Bobby James was a student at Alabama State University, he had no idea how he would use a degree in biology. He did not want to teach and he did not want to become a doctor. All that uncertainty went away when he took a stroll through the hallways of the John L. Buskey Health Sciences Center.

After taking time to investigate the various majors that the College of Health Sciences offered, James began to think about changing his major to Health Information Management. It was a risky decision for the junior.

Declaring another major meant he'd have to spend three more years at ASU.

But for James, it turned out to be the right choice.

When he graduated in 2007 with a bachelor's degree in Health Information Management, James landed a job at Jackson Hospital in Montgomery. There he was in charge of its cancer tumor registry and served as the hospital's privacy officer.

"It was well worth the switch," James said about his decision to change majors. "Coming from the books to actually doing it was great. I

am blessed to be doing what I went to school for."

James, who now is employed at a local college, is just one of almost 1,000 students to graduate from ASU's health sciences program. Most are working as health care providers, researchers, educators and administrators. Others have gone into business for themselves.

All of them are benefiting from a growing demand for preventative medicine and a shift in emphasis from hospital care to community-based clinics and home care.



## Meeting the Needs

Rapidly changing medical technology and the demand for more rehabilitation services are driving a new educational trend that experts predict will create a wave of employment opportunities in health sciences.

The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that during the next 10 years, half of the new jobs created in the U.S. will come in the health-care industry.

According to a *U.S. News & World Report* special edition, “America’s Best Graduate Schools: What’s Hot and What’s Not,” the demand for counselors already exceeds the supply by at least 25 percent, and the number of people needing rehabilitation services will rise as advances in medical technology save more lives.

ASU’s College of Health Sciences has been training students since 1997 when the university received approval from the Alabama Commission on Higher Education to offer programs in the health sciences. Students were admitted to the bachelor’s degree programs in Health Information Management and occupational therapy in 1998. The first diplomas were awarded in August 2000.

In May 2000, ASU’s Board of Trustees gave collegiate status to the health sciences programs, making ASU one of only five Historically Black Colleges and Universities and one of only three universities in

Alabama to have a division of health sciences.

The College of Health Sciences now offers many new degrees, which include a Bachelor of Science in Health Information Management, a Master of Science in occupational therapy, a master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling and the clinical doctorate in physical therapy.

Dr. Denise Chapman, dean of the College of Health Sciences, believes that adding such high-caliber programs has brought diversity to ASU and introduced more minorities to the health sciences.

“The College of Health Sciences exposes African-Americans to fields they may not know about,” Chapman said. “It also has one of the most diverse student

populations on campus, attracting non-blacks to the popular and competitive programs.”

One such student attracted to the college was Rusty Becker, a 2003 occupational therapy graduate. She is grateful to ASU and the occupational therapy program. Part of the curriculum included management and administration classes in which students had to create an imaginary business and deal with caseloads and patient productivity. These courses provided plenty of hands-on activities, she said.

“Alabama State University is definitely essential to my success,”



*Top: Rusty Becker, occupational therapy alumna (2003), works with one of her clients in her clinic. Bottom: Dr. Denise Chapman, dean of the College of Health Sciences.*



*Dr. Charlina Washington, DPT 2005*

Becker said. “It helped develop my hunger for occupational therapy and the desire to start my own business.”

Becker and her husband decided to open Excel Rehabilitation, their own occupational therapy practice. By March 2006, it was up and running. Becker said they began with two clients. Now she sees almost 60 clients a week.

“It’s been extremely successful,” Becker said. “It has grown beyond our imagination.”

Michael Kinne, who went to Huntingdon College in Montgomery for his undergraduate degree, chose ASU for graduate school because of its new physical therapy program.

“The facility was brand new, the professors and classes were excellent,” said Kinne, a 2002 graduate. “It was a great experience.”

The College of Health Sciences is creating a reputation for itself as an award-winning division.

For the past four years (except 2004, when there were no minority

graduates), physical therapy students have won the Minority Achievement Award from the American Physical Therapy Association. Recipients receive \$6,000 to help transition into their professional careers.

In 2005, Charlina Washington received the APTA Minority Scholarship Award. She took 10 percent of the \$6,000 scholarship and established two \$300 scholarships for minority students who demonstrated professional excellence and superior service to Alabama State University’s physical therapy program. With the assistance of alumni from the physical therapy program and a local clinician, the scholarship has grown to \$2,000.

ASU also was the recipient of the 2007 Minority Initiatives Award for the recruitment, admission, retention and graduation of minority students in physical therapy. As part of the award, ASU received \$2,500 from the American Physical Therapy Association.

## A Healthier Future

The programs in the College of Health Sciences were initially provided for in the *1995 Remedial Decree of the John F. Knight Jr. and the United States of America v. the State of Alabama* desegregation lawsuit.

The decree, issued by U.S. District Judge Harold Murphy, was designed to fully desegregate state colleges and universities. The state was mandated in the Knight case to fully fund the programs for 10 years.

This bonanza in funding provided more than \$20.6 million for health sciences at ASU – \$11 million for the physical therapy program, \$6 million for occupational therapy and more than \$3 million for the Health Information Management program.

“These high-demand programs represent a long-awaited dream come true at ASU,” said President William H. Harris. “We are now fully positioned to become a comprehensive regional university with first-quality degree programs that meet the educational needs of the citizens of Alabama.”

During ASU’s 269th commencement exercises, held May 8, 2004, the university awarded its first doctoral degree in physical therapy to Robert Kelly Rhodes of Highland Home, Ala.

“I was working in physical therapy in Montgomery when ASU started the doctoral program, and it was a perfect fit for me,” Rhodes said. “It’s been an excellent experience

for me. I recommend this program, and I preach it to everybody I meet from high school students to undergraduates, graduates and anybody else who is looking for an excellent opportunity in physical therapy. ASU is definitely the place to go.”

“It is a great feeling of accomplishment to start with a blank page and see a program develop and students progress through it to graduation,” said Dr. Steven Chesbro, chair of the Department of Physical Therapy.

Another benefit of the Knight lawsuit is the \$15 million John L. Buskey Health Sciences Center. The three-story, 80,000-square-foot facility opened in the fall of 2001. It contains a cadaver anatomy lab, a biomechanics lab, a women’s health/ cardiopulmonary lab, a therapeutic exercise lab, a physical dysfunction lab, three computer labs, two video conferencing rooms, a 209-seat lecture hall and smart classrooms that offer state-of-the-art interactive computerized displays.

The building is named in honor of the late John L. Buskey, an ASU alumnus and former director of the Levi Watkins Library and Learning Resources Center. Buskey also was a longtime member of the Alabama House of Representatives.

“Through the remedial decree, ASU received funds to help eliminate vestiges of past discrimination and to assist in throwing off the limits of its previously stifled mission,” said Rep.

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*Top left: Dr. Steven Chesbro, chair of the Department of Physical Therapy. Top right: Dr. Denise Chapman helps Robert Kelly Rhodes put on his graduation regalia during the 2004 Commencement. During the ceremony, Rhodes was awarded ASU's first doctoral degree in physical therapy. Bottom: Under the direction of Dr. Valda Montgomery, students work with cardiac stress test equipment in one of Alabama State University's physical therapy labs.*



*ASU Today has much to celebrate this year. On Dec. 15, 1983, Alabama State University published the first issue of ASU Today, a three-page publication on 8.5-inch x 11-inch paper with no photographs. Twenty-five years later, ASU Today is still going strong. It has grown into the premiere communications tool of ASU's Office of Marketing and Communications. Now, it features about 40 pages of full-color photographs and text on glossy paper and is enjoyed in more than 30,000 households.*

*Throughout this 25th year, the staff of ASU Today will celebrate its anniversary highlighting Outstanding ASU alumni in education (the March/April issue) medicine, government and law, business, and sports and entertainment. The following pages tell the stories of outstanding alumni who are serving as presidents of health care organizations and hospitals; as the next generation of trendsetters in medicine, as well as some notable alumni whose accomplishments in medicine laid the groundwork for others to follow.*

# MAKING THE MARK IN HEALTH AND MEDICINE

*Compiled and written by Timothy C. Ervin*

## BREAKING THE COLOR BARRIER



**JEFFERSON UNDERWOOD II  
RETIRED PRIVATE PRACTICE  
(B.S. 1947)**

Prior to the Civil Rights Era, blacks who practiced medicine in the South faced some extraordinary challenges. Many hospitals routinely refused medical care to black patients, even in emergency situations.

The color line in hospital care was so rigid that black physicians were unable to practice at public hospitals. Black physicians found it didn't matter how many years they had spent in medical school, or how much training they had received, many times alongside white classmates. Passing tests administered by state

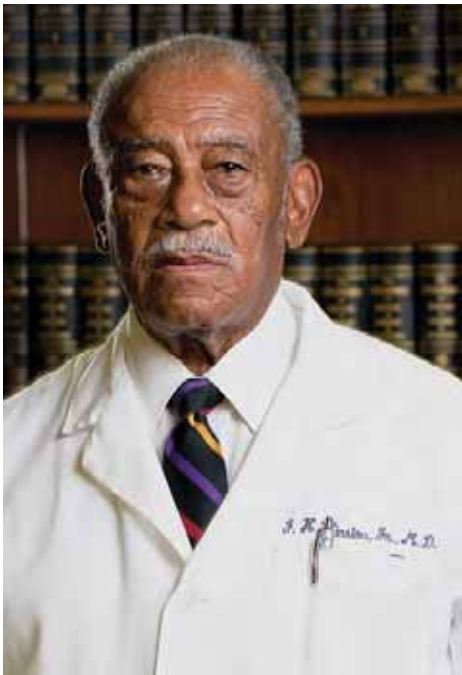
licensing and specialty boards didn't help either.

This changed in the mid-1960s when Alabama State University alumni Dr. Jefferson Underwood II and Dr. John Winston Jr. became two of the first black physicians to integrate the public hospital system in Montgomery.

### A SEPARATE BUT UNEQUAL TREATMENT

Until 1965, the only hospital open to black physicians and their patients was St. Jude's Hospital. Black physicians were denied staff privileges at other Montgomery hospitals because they were not members of the Medical Society of Montgomery County.

After graduating from ASU in 1947, Underwood traveled to Buffalo, N.Y., and attended medical school at the University of Buffalo. Underwood, now 85 and a retired general practitioner, was one of two black



**JOHN WINSTON JR.**  
**PRYOR WINSTON CENTER**  
(B.S. 1949)

men in his medical school class.

After returning to Montgomery, Underwood was unable to find work in the public hospital system. So he took a job working on the bottom floor of St. Jude's Hospital from 1956 to 1965. It was the only floor open to black physicians and black patients. The top floors, which had air conditioners, were reserved for whites.

Appalled at the deep seed of racism, Underwood tried for 10 years to change things. Year after year he sent letters to three of Montgomery's hospitals, requesting they allow him to deliver his patients' babies and care for the sick in their hospitals. The hospitals ignored his requests telling him he had to be a member of the county medical society to practice at

their hospitals.

Until 1965, Underwood and other black physicians were denied entry into the medical society.

Many other black physicians who was dismayed by Montgomery's "separate but not equal" policies. Others also had applied for equal representation.

"We thought we were better trained than anybody," said Winston, 80, who still practices medicine at the Pryor Winston Center in Montgomery and is the attending physician at ASU's Student Health Center.

Winston grew up east of Montgomery and graduated from ASU in 1949. Afterward, he traveled to New York and received a master's degree from Columbia University and completed medical school at Meharry College in Nashville, Tenn.

He came back to Montgomery in 1957 and completed his residency in general surgery at the Veterans Administrative Hospital in Tuskegee. He was one of the first blacks in Alabama to be certified by the American College of Surgeons.

Winston said he came back to help improve medical care for blacks.

"To get a doctor outside of the city was a difficult proposition," he said. "The only time many black people saw a doctor was to be pronounced dead or to be told they were not going to live long."

Winston said there was resentment about segregation. "It created a desire

to do something about it."

## CHANGING TIMES

Major changes in segregation didn't occur until the Civil Rights Era in the 1960s, when President Lyndon B. Johnson led the movement to desegregate the health care system. Hospitals quickly became a battleground.

Even though Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act mandated integration of hospitals, some facilities in former Jim Crow states like Alabama defied federal pressure and refused to desegregate. That changed in 1965 with passage of the Medicare Act, which prohibited segregation at hospitals receiving federal funds.

About six months after the Civil Rights Act passed (Feb. 23, 1965), Sister Catherine, an administrator at St. Margaret's Hospital, acted against the wishes of the staff and announced that black physicians would be allowed to work at the hospital.

Winston and one other black physician, the late Dr. Julius Pryor, also were accepted to St. Margaret's staff. Later that year, the county medical society voted to allow black physicians to join, and other hospitals opened their doors to black physicians and patients.

In 1965, Montgomery's Baptist Hospital changed its policy for staff privileges, negating the need for membership in the county medical society. Jackson Hospital later accepted black physicians and Underwood joined its staff in the 1980s.

# THE UNDERWOOD LEGACY: GENERATIONS OF SERVICE



**DR. PERRIN UNDERWOOD  
OPHTHALMOLOGIST  
(B.S. 1978)**

Medicine was a logical and natural choice for Jefferson and Perrin Underwood. After all, they had grown up with a father who was a pioneer in Montgomery's medical community. Both brothers credit Jefferson Underwood II with having a positive influence on their professional decisions.

"Having a positive male role model 'fresh out of the womb' is a rarity," said Jefferson Underwood. "His influence affected me in such a positive way that I chose to pursue the same career path and return to my community."

That sense of community service also was instilled in Perrin Underwood by their father.

"Because of the opportunities given to me by him," said Perrin Underwood, "I feel an obligation to give back to the community as best I can and in every way I can."

For the Underwood brothers, who like their father are Alabama State University alumni, a part of giving back was to establish medical practices in Montgomery.

Perrin, a 1978 ASU graduate, completed his medical studies at Meharry Medical College and his ophthalmology residency through Columbia University at Harlem Hospital. Perrin opened his private practice in 1989 and continues to provide a wide range of services. He said ASU helped to lay a solid foundation for his professional life.

Jefferson III is a 1977 graduate of ASU. After receiving a Bachelor of Science degree, he went on to Miami Medical College in Nashville, Tenn., where he received his Doctorate in Medicine in 1981. Further training was obtained at Georgetown University in Washington, where he completed



**DR. JEFFERSON  
UNDERWOOD III  
INTERNAL MEDICINE  
(B.S. 1977)**

an internship and later a residency specializing in internal medicine.

He now owns a private practice specializing in internal medicine and is the assistant director of the Palliative Care Program at Baptist Hospital. He is known in the community for using the airwaves, television and the printed page to help educate the general public. Underwood has won numerous awards, including the Douglas L. Cannon Award for medical journalism for his radio program on WVAS-FM called "Lifeline."

Underwood said it is because of ASU that he is successful today.

"The university has done so much for me and my family," he said. "I can never forget ASU."

Perrin echoes his brother's sentiments about ASU and said he is thankful for the guidance of instructors like Dr. James Oliver and Alice Harris. While he gives high marks to his alma mater for helping him to succeed, Perrin Underwood reserves his highest praise for two special people.

"My mother (Olean Underwood) and my father worked very hard to give my brother and me every opportunity they could for us to succeed and make our own way," he said. "I am truly fortunate to have had parents that set such an example about how to live and how to treat others."

Like the Underwood brothers, many ASU alumni have followed in the footsteps of pioneers like Dr. Jefferson Underwood II and Dr. John Winston. In the following pages, we'll introduce you to some of our graduates who have found success in the field of medicine.

# AT THE HELM OF HEALTH CARE



**DR. ACE ANGLIN**  
**CEO OF MULBERRY FOOT CARE**  
**(B.S. 1989/M.S. 1992)**

Dr. Ace Anglin has dedicated his life's work in podiatric medicine to preventing unnecessary amputations that can occur because of diabetes.

Anglin has used his connections with major pharmaceutical companies, health care organizations and universities to explain his approach to diabetic foot care – giving lectures to more than 100 organizations over the past 10 years. He's also written a book, *Saving the Diabetic Foot*.

As chief executive officer and podiatrist for Mulberry Foot Care, LLC, in Montgomery, Anglin has established podiatric medical departments at four community health centers since 2008. These centers service more than 30,000 patients in six counties.

He also has been the chief of podiatric medicine at Health Services Inc. for more than eight years.

Anglin received his bachelor's and master's degrees in biology from Alabama State University. He completed his residency at the Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System in Tuskegee. He re-

ceived his Doctorate of Podiatric Medicine from Barry University in Miami.

Anglin, who started his career with the East Montgomery Foot Clinic and Central Alabama Wound Care Center, said ASU set the stage for his career.

"Due to the intellectual generosity of ASU instructors, I was afforded a first-class education," Anglin said. "Because of my extensive research experience obtained at ASU, I have served as consultant for international pharmaceutical corporations for over a decade."

For 13 straight years, Anglin has volunteered to speak to the Careers in Health Care class at ASU.

"This experience has given me the opportunity to mentor literally hundreds of students in the fields of biology and pre-med," he said.



**CHRISTOPHER R. MOSLEY**  
**PRESIDENT AND CEO OF CHESAPEAKE HEALTH**  
**(B.S. 1985)**

The core values that Christopher R. Mosley's mother instilled in him as a youngster growing up in Alabama continue to guide him in his business life.

"My mother raised me in a very small community in Alabama, where my values

were first formulated," said Mosley, who earned his Bachelor of Science degree from ASU. "In that community, three things were very important – family, a sense of community and church. These values continue to guide me in my leadership role today."

As president and CEO of Chesapeake Regional Medical Center located in Chesapeake, Va., Mosley manages a \$300 million operation that has 2,400 employees, including a medical staff of 600. Since taking charge in January 2005, he has helped craft new strategies to position the not-for-profit organization for a positive future and led a team effort to improve the financial stability and garner community support.

Modern Healthcare recognized Mosley in 2006 as one of the Top 25 Minority Executives in Healthcare. The National Association of Health Services Executives named him its Young Healthcare Executive of the Year in 2003 and gave him a

President's Award in 2008.

Mosley said ASU prepared him in so many ways to be successful in business and life.

"The campus environment, especially the School of Business, afforded me a wonderful venue for learning and relationship building. Earning a degree in business administration with a concentration in accounting has opened up many avenues in the banking, health care insurance and hospital administration sectors," he said. "I am grateful for my time as a student at ASU."



**DR. PATRICIA A. MARYLAND,**  
**PRESIDENT AND CEO –**  
**ST. JOHN HEALTH**  
**(B.S. 1975)**

Patricia A. Maryland spent years watching her mother suffer from Type II diabetes. Coping with the illness was difficult because no one in the family knew

much about the disease.

After her mother died in 2000 from complications related to diabetes, Maryland decided she wanted to find a way to help others learn to navigate their way through the increasingly complex health care system. Her 30 years of experience has helped her make some progress in reaching that goal.

After being named president and chief executive officer of Detroit-based St. John Health in 2008, she worked to increase health care access and enhance the service in the company's 125 medical centers by shifting resources to patient care.

In 2005, U.S. Comptroller General David Walker asked Maryland to chair a 15-member group authorized to study the nation's health care system. Final recommendations for "Health Care That Works for All Americans" were presented to President George W. Bush and Congress

in 2006.

Maryland holds a bachelor's degree in applied mathematics from Alabama State University, a master's in biostatistics from the University of California–Berkeley and a doctorate of public health from the University of Pittsburgh.

She said her decision to attend ASU while her family was stationed overseas was a good one.

"Once enrolled at ASU, I realized that I made the right decision because of the small class sizes that allowed the nurturing staff to take a personal interest in me and my future success," she said. "I also had the opportunity while at ASU to do an exchange program at Brookhaven National Research Laboratory."

## NEW TRENDSETTERS IN MEDICINE



**DR. STEPHANIE OWENS**  
**OWENS CHIROPRACTIC**  
**(B.S. 1997)**

Dr. Stephanie Owens' chiropractic business is growing at a rapid pace, but it's the work she does to promote human

welfare that sets her apart from her peers.

When she opened Owens Chiropractic and Rehabilitation Center in March 2006, Owens wanted to use her clinic as an educational outreach tool for the Greater Cincinnati community.

To emphasize the importance of a healthy lifestyle, she started the Owens Walking Club. She reached out to children by inviting "trick or treaters" to drop by her office in costume. Those who did were given free examinations.

A budding philanthropist, Owens donates time, money and energy to the Oncology Research Department of the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. She collects hats for the hospital's younger patients who have lost their hair due to chemotherapy. She also mentors young black females interested in a career in chiropractic medicine.

All that goodwill has earned Owens a host of accolades, including the 2007 "Emerging Business of the Year" award of the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky African-American Chamber of Cincinnati; the 2008 Leading Women of Cincinnati award; and the 2008 African-American Healthcare Leader of the Year award by the State of Ohio Commission on Minority Health.

Owens graduated from ASU in 1997 with a bachelor's in biology. She earned a Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine from Life University College of Chiropractic in Atlanta in 2001.

She attributes her success to the nurturing and caring atmosphere she experienced at Alabama State University, which instilled in her the drive to give back to the community and to put her best foot forward.





**FARAH D. LUBIN, PH.D.**  
**CELLULAR IMMUNOLOGY,**  
**(B.S. 1996)**

Farah D. Lubin, Ph.D., turned a love of biology into a passion for scientific research that led to classroom and business

opportunities.

After graduating from ASU in 1996, Lubin obtained her doctorate in cell molecular immunology at Binghamton (N.Y.) University. Subsequently, she completed two postdoctoral fellowships in molecular neuroscience at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

Today, she is an Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute investigator and an assistant professor at the University of Alabama-Birmingham. She also operates her own neurobiology laboratory. Her research findings have been published in the *Journal of Neuroscience*.

During her undergraduate studies at ASU, Lubin participated in two biomedical research training programs sponsored by the National Institute of Health - the Minority Access to Research Careers and

the Minority Biomedical Research Services programs. Her summer research fellowship at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York provided additional hands-on research training.

Lubin said she was truly impressed with ASU's science program.

"I made the best of my opportunities at ASU and strongly believe that my college experience at ASU more than adequately prepared me for the obvious next step - my pursuit of a career in scientific research," she said.



**ZANDRA BUTLER**  
**RECREATION THERAPIST**  
**(B.S. 1987)**

Zandra Butler loves her job so much, she swears she'd do it for nothing.

A recreation therapist with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Butler works at the East Campus of the Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System in

Tuskegee. She also has worked at Bryce Hospital and the Veterans Administration in Tuscaloosa.

At CAVHCS, Butler organizes arts and crafts, special holiday events and sports activities for the patients. She plans trips to the movies, picnic outings and cookouts. And she helps the veterans with their gardening.

But not all her work is fun and games.

As a member of the Interdisciplinary Treatment Team, Butler must work closely with a doctor, social worker, physical therapist, nurse and other health practitioners to determine appropriate treatments for residents of the Community Living Center. Volunteers and members of the VFW and American Legion seek her help when planning special services for patients.

Butler's love of her job hasn't gone unnoticed. In 2006, she was named CAVHCS's Outstanding Woman. The next year, she was named a Health and Care

Hero.

Outside of work, Butler assists with the American Red Cross blood drive, is a member of the CAVHCS Mass Choir and EEO Diversity Advisory Committee and a volunteer with Deep South Cancer Control.

Butler received her bachelor's in recreation from Alabama State University in 1987. She said the faculty at ASU inspired her to become a therapist.

"I had an excellent experience at ASU, both academically and socially," she said. "I established a lifetime friendship with many of my colleagues. We often attend football games and other ASU activities together."



**DR. ASHLEY DAVIS**  
**PEDIATRICIAN**  
**(B.S. 2000)**

Dr. Ashley Davis gets reminded every day of the week how important pediatric medicine is.

“There is so much need here,” she said

of the Memphis, Tenn., area where she works, “and I’ve been humbled by the experience. Even on my most challenging day, I feel blessed to have a career in medicine.”

Davis, a resident physician in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Tennessee–Memphis, graduated magna cum laude from Alabama State University with a Bachelor of Science in biology.

Afterward, she worked as a clinical assistant in the University of Alabama–Birmingham Children’s Center and as a research assistant in UAB’s School of Health before being accepted into the University of Louisville School of Medicine. During medical school, she was very involved with the Student National Medical Association and served as chapter secretary for a year.

Her list of extracurricular activities is long. She’s a board member for Living

Without Limits; a member of the Bluff City Medical Society, American Academy of Pediatrics (2006–present), Medical Student Sickle Cell Project (2003–07), Pediatrics Club (2003–07), Student National Medical Association (2003–07) and Family Medicine Interest Group (2003–07).

“Dr. Karyn Scissum Gunn in particular served as my mentor at ASU,” said Davis. “She supported and assisted me in my goal in becoming a physician. She was the professor who taught me the importance of hard work and dedication.”

**DR. NICKLYA HARRIS-RAY**  
**HEALTH CARE**  
**PRACTITIONER, TECHNICIAN**  
**(B.S. 1999)**

Dr. Nicklya Harris-Ray has a soft spot in her heart for the needy – from the small villages of Jamaica to the poor towns in Louisiana.

Back in 2004, while a student at Barry University School of Graduate Medical Sciences in Miami Shores, Fla., Harris-Ray volunteered to be the attending physician for the Student National Podiatric Medical Association’s mission trip to Jamaica. It was a trip that would set the tone for her future medical career.

While in Jamaica, Harris-Ray and a team of physicians established makeshift clinics in the towns of Linstead, Ewarton, Treachway, Lluisdasvale, Boscobel, Highgate and Kingston. From these clinics they dispensed medications and provided humanitarian health care to more than 1,100 people.

When Harris-Ray returned to the U.S., she served as chief resident for the Depart-

ment of Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Philadelphia. Then three years ago, she turned her attention once again to helping the underprivileged, this time in southern Mississippi and central Louisiana – towns within driving distance of Alegria NHR, which she owns and operates in Slidell, La.

Harris-Ray graduated cum laude from ASU with a bachelor’s in chemistry in 1999. She received her doctorate in podiatric medicine and surgery from Barry University in 2004.

Harris-Ray holds professional licenses from the Medical Board of California, Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners and Mississippi State Board of Massage Therapy.

“ASU prepared me for a career in medicine by focusing on academic excellence, and pursuing outside summer enrichment and programs to make me more competitive while pursuing my career goals,” said Harris-Ray.





**DR. LATISHA N. CARTER-BLANKS  
PEDIATRICIAN  
(B.S. 1998)**

If you shadowed Dr. Latisha N. Carter-Blanks during a typical day on the job, you'd be gasping for breath by the end of the day.

Carter-Blanks is a busy woman.

During the day, she is staff pediatrician at the 1<sup>st</sup> Fighter Wing Hospital, Langley AFB, Va., and oversees the Level II

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. As director of the Allergy/Immunizations Clinic, she manages four technicians responsible for giving vaccinations and administering immunotherapy for active-duty members and their dependents.

At night, Carter-Blanks provides coverage for the 1<sup>st</sup> Fighter Wing Hospital newborn nursery, which is the second busiest nursery in the Air Force.

Working through the Portsmouth Naval Medical Center Pediatric Residency program, she trains medical students from Virginia's College of Osteopathic Medicine and students enrolled in the phase two portion of the Air Force Physician's Assistant program.

Carter-Blanks graduated magna cum laude in 1998 from Alabama State University. She received her doctorate from Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit. She also was commissioned as an officer in the USAF at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery.

Prior to coming to Langley AFB, Carter-Blanks was an assistant professor of pediatrics for the Kalamazoo Center for Medical Studies/Michigan State University College of Human Medicine.

Carter-Blanks said she would not have been able to achieve as much as she has without the help of all of her instructors and colleagues at ASU.

"Alabama State University gave me the building blocks that I needed to pursue a career in medicine," she said. "The opportunities afforded me at ASU were unmatched. If given the opportunity again, I would still select ASU for my undergraduate education," she added. "It was an excellent choice and the springboard to my future."

**RUSTY BECKER  
OWNER, EXCEL  
REHABILITATION  
(B.S. 2003)**

When Rusty Becker had a baby, it was difficult for her to find the right job. She worked as a temporary employee for several offices, acquiring experience in occupational therapy.

Her big break came when the occupational therapy office in the Central Alabama Easter Seals Rehabilitation Center closed in December 2005. Becker and her husband decided to open their own practice. By March 2006, she had Excel Rehabilitation up and running.

Her greatest success story involves a child who has microcephaly, a neurological disorder that can cause a range of physical limitations. When the youngster first came to Becker, he could not do anything. Now, he can place pegs in a peg board, recognize the colors red and blue, untie his shoes, take off his socks and shoes and sit on

bended knees for 45 minutes at a time.

"Every time he comes here, he does something new," Becker said. "It's amazing."

It's those types of experiences that Becker wants to share with future occupational therapy students. Becker said she has a student in her office 36 weeks out of the year.

"I felt like there was a real need for that," Becker said.

Working with children with disabilities has motivated Becker in her personal life. She said it is encouraging to watch the children persevere in some of the most difficult circumstances.

"I always thought that I would be helping others when I started this business. But I think it has helped me more," Becker said. "It has made me a better mother and a better spouse."





**DR. ARISTOTLE KIRKLAND  
OWNER, CAPITOL CITY  
REHAB PLUS  
(M.S., 2002/D.P.T., 2007)**

Things have changed for Dr. Aristotle Kirkland in the seven years since he was part of the first graduating class of ASU's master's degree program in physical

therapy. For one thing, he received his Doctor of Physical Therapy from ASU in 2007, and he's now a business owner.

Kirkland is co-owner of Capitol City Rehab Plus Physical Therapy Center in Montgomery. He works with clients who have neck and back injuries, acute and chronic pain disorders and those needing orthopedic and sports physical therapy.

"Whenever someone comes to my clinic and I can give them their quality of life back, that makes all of the difference," Kirkland said.

He started the business in July 2004 with James Howlett, a licensed physical therapy assistant. Two other physical therapists - Sandra Whaley and Ernie Montgomery - now work with him.

The business has grown significantly. His first year, Kirkland averaged 30 to 40 client visits a week. He now has 90 to 100 client visits a week.

Kirkland attributes much of his success to his belief in providing personal,

one-on-one care. He does not believe in having so many patients that the clinic becomes an assembly line.

His business is a clinical education site where ASU students are able to go for observation. Kirkland also has opened up satellite offices and other clinics around Alabama and in bordering states.

He is appreciative of ASU's physical therapy program for helping him to be successful.

"It was excellent," Kirkland said. "It prepared me for what I am doing now."



**DR. ROBERT K. BARNETT  
OBSTETRICS AND  
GYNECOLOGY  
(B.S. 1993)**

The individual attention that Dr. Robert K. Barnett received from his ASU professors has shaped the way he deals with all his patients. Every patient, from women in impoverished Third World countries to pregnant women in rural southwest Arizona, receives his individual attention, whether for a routine exam, child delivery or surgery.

Barnett attributes his patient commitment, in part, to his ASU experience.

"My professors took a personal interest in making sure I excelled and they provided individualized attention," he said.

After earning his Bachelor of Science in biology with a minor in mathematics from ASU in 1993, Barnett went on to get his doctorate in medicine from the University

of South Alabama - College of Medicine. He trained at Yale New Haven Health System in Connecticut, where he completed his residency in obstetrics and gynecology.

While training in Connecticut, Barnett joined a medical volunteer organization. He spent the next 10 years traveling to Third World countries to provide free health care to women in need.

At present, he is actively pursuing the establishment of his own private practice, which is scheduled to open this fall.

**DR. TONDRA L. MOORE**  
**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,**  
**UNIVERSITY OF ST. FRANCIS**  
**(B.S. 1999)**

Dr. Tondra L. Moore wanted to become a doctor; but as she delved deeper into the fields of mediation and research, Moore realized she was much more interested in transforming health care policy than practicing medicine.

“I came to Alabama State pursuing a career in health care as a bench chemist. The Minority Biomedical Research Support Enrichment Program allowed me to explore my career goals while still pursuing my education.”

Moore’s educational and professional background is an interesting mix of legal and medical studies. She received a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Alabama State University in 1999, earned her master’s from the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 2001, a doctorate in health administration in 2005, and a Juris

Doctorate from Cumberland School of Law in 2008.

Moore’s work experience complements her educational experience. While working with Cooper Green Mercy Hospital, an indigent care hospital in Birmingham, Moore managed a prestigious Cardinal Health grant that focused on reducing surgical complications.

She also worked at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis, Tenn., the Jefferson County (Ala.) Department of Health, and the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Moore is currently an assistant professor in health care leadership in the College of Business and Health Administration at the University of St. Francis in Joliet, Ill.

Moore attributes her success to the work ethic and education she received as an undergraduate student.

“Alabama State University prepared me for my career in health care by preparing me to be a responsible citizen of the



world,” she said. “Through these experiences, I was better prepared for my career. It instilled in me a strong work ethic and an affinity for excellence.”



**DR. SHERYL**  
**STRANGE-CANADY**  
**FAMILY PRACTICE PHYSICIAN**  
**(B.S. 1992)**

For Dr. Sheryl Strange-Canady, the best way to make a difference in the lives of others was to become a family physician. She was attracted to the notion that by practicing family medicine, she could develop long-lasting relationships with clients that could stretch across generations.

After receiving her bachelor’s in chemistry in 1992 from Alabama State University, where she graduated summa cum laude, Strange-Canady received her Doctor of Medicine from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1998. She completed her medical internship and residency at Aurora St. Luke’s Hospital in Milwaukee.

Strange-Canady worked in community medicine from 2001 to 2004 at Tri-County Health Inc. – a Medical College of Georgia affiliation. In 2006, she received a fellowship from Morehouse School of Medicine. During her training, she published an article in the Journal of the National Medical Association: “Knowledge, Attitudes and Beliefs of Women about the Importance of Prostate Cancer.”

Strange-Canady has been in private practice for five years at Family Practice of Conyers, Ga. She’s been an emergency medicine physician for the past six years.

Strange-Canady is an active member of the American Academy of Family Physicians, American Medical Association, Georgia Academy of Family Physicians, National Medical Association, and the Big Sister Mentor Program.

“Alabama State instilled within me a strong sense of pride, an invincible determination to conquer obstacles and an unshakeable belief that I could achieve anything,” she said. “ASU was my family and a warm embrace, all the while preparing me for the challenges of medical school. I remain grateful to ASU for playing a huge role in my success today.”



**TIFFANY T. CRUTCHER**  
**DIRECTOR OF NURSING**  
**HOME**  
**(M.S. PHYSICAL THERAPY**  
**2003)**

While a student at Langston (Okla.) University, Tiffany T. Crutcher worked as a student trainer for the university’s athletic teams. She learned a lot during those four years about pre-game and postgame treatment for athletes. But she wanted to know more, so she moved to Montgomery

in May 2000 and enrolled in ASU’s physical therapy program.

Her bachelor’s degree in health, physical education and recreation came in handy as the Tulsa, Okla., native worked to obtain her master’s in physical therapy in 2003. Following graduation from ASU, she didn’t go back into the athletic arena to work. Instead, she spends her time these days working as director of rehabilitation at Southern Springs Health and Rehab in Union Springs, Ala.

She is credentialed as an athletic trainer and certified weight trainer, serves on the ASU Physical Therapy Advisory Board and as a clinical instructor through the American Physical Therapy Association.

Community involvement always has been important to Crutcher. While at ASU, she served as the president of the Student Physical Therapy Organization and vice president of the Student Special Interest Group of the Alabama Physical Therapy Association. Through these positions, she conducted exercise classes for black senior

citizens; volunteered to provide physical therapy services for 15 adult residents with developmental disabilities; and organized activities to recruit minority students and educate them about the physical therapy profession.

Professionally, Crutcher is a member of the American Physical Therapy Association, Alabama Physical Therapy Association, National Athletic Trainer Association and the Alabama Association for the Physically Challenged.

“Alabama State University instilled in me a high standard of excellence and professionalism and that same standard is what I live by in my everyday practice and as I serve my community,” said Crutcher.

**DEMETRIOUS J. BLACKMON,**  
**DOCTOR OF NEPHROLOGY**  
**(B.S. 1998)**

Dr. Demetrious J. Blackmon’s introduction to the opportunities in health care came while he was a student at ASU. Those studies so intrigued him, he went on to get his doctorate in internal medicine and become one of the two lead physicians at Southern Crescent Nephrology in Atlanta.

“The Health Careers Opportunity Program at ASU helped stimulate my interest in the health profession and gave me the foundation to compete with the best in the field of medicine,” said Blackmon.

He graduated magna cum laude from ASU with a bachelor’s in biology in 1998, then received his Doctor of Medicine from the University of South Alabama. He completed his internship and residency at the University of Tennessee College of Medicine in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Blackmon also was a Nephrology and Hypertension Fellow from Emory University’s School of Medicine and an Interventional Nephrology Fellow in 2009 from FMS Lifeline, both in Atlanta.

During his professional career, Blackmon has presented his topic, “A Gift from the Tooth Fairy: A Case of Pulmonary Actinomycosis,” to such organizations as the American College of Physicians (Chattanooga, Tenn.), Society of General Internal Medicine (New Orleans), University of Tennessee College of Medicine, Society of General Internal Medicine (Chicago) and during Resident Research Week.

At ASU, Blackmon was recipient of the Dean’s Academic Award, John H. Garrick Leadership Award and was a Presidential Scholar. He also received a Medical School Minority Tuition Scholarship and Medical School National Minority Leadership Award.





**TARA R. FREEMAN  
MEDICAL RECORDS  
SPECIALIST  
(B.S. 2006)**

After working more than 15 years in customer service, Tara R. Freeman decided in 2004 to enter the Health Information Management program at ASU. She now considers that decision one of the best she's ever made.

She completed the Health Information

Management program in 2006 and then received a master's degree in public management from Troy University in Montgomery in 2007.

"The instruction I received at ASU prepared me for the vast number of opportunities that a career in Health Information Management can provide," Freeman said. "It gave me the foundation to pursue a career in coding, research, management information systems, quality improvement, privacy/security, as well as so many others. Thanks to ASU, the possibilities are unlimited."

Currently, Freeman is a medical records specialist at Greil Memorial Psychiatric Hospital in Montgomery. She reviews and maintains daily census reports to ensure statistical accuracy; assists with clinical pertinence reviews on active and inactive medical records; and assigns diagnostic codes to medical records for the Alabama Department of Mental Health.

Previously, she served as a coder for

Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System.

She is a Registered Health Information Administrator, a Certified Health Data Analyst and an adjunct instructor at ASU.

Freeman is a member of the Alabama State University Advisory Board, Virginia College Advisory Board, American Health Information Management Association and the Alabama Health Information Management Association. She served as credentialing chairman for the Alabama American Health Information Management Board of Directors (2008-09).

She volunteers in her community for Toddler Ministry, the Special Olympics, Alabama Statewide Cancer Registry, Archibald Retirement Center and as a math tutor.

**DR. CHARLINA  
WASHINGTON  
REHAB AND RECREATIONAL  
THERAPIST  
(B.S. 2000/B.S. PHYSICAL  
THERAPY 2005/DPT 2005)**

Dr. Charlina Washington is one of the first individuals to receive a clinical doctorate in physical therapy from ASU.

The advanced degree prepared her to become the rehab program manager for Sava Senior Care at Woodley Manor Health and Rehab. She is responsible for the overall administration, clinical planning, and operations and development of the rehabilitation program.

The Snowdown native graduated with honors from ASU in 2000, receiving a bachelor's in therapeutic recreation. Following graduation, she attended the Advanced Academy of Therapeutic Massage, then returned to ASU in the summer of 2002 and entered the physical therapy program.

Washington is currently pursuing a

Ph.D. from the University of Alabama in Birmingham.

She holds memberships in the American Physical Therapy Association, Alabama Physical Therapy Association, American Massage Therapy Association, National Therapeutic Recreation Society, Phi Beta Lambda Professional Business Fraternity and Diamond Life Membership in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. She is a member and trustee at Jericho AME Zion Church.

Since her graduation in 2005, Washington has been appointed to serve as co-chair of the Publicity and Communication Committee for the Alabama chapter of APTA and was named editor of the chapter's newsletter *For Members Only*.

She said ASU taught her more than the core principles of physical therapy.

"The faculty at ASU focused on the practical implication and application of the knowledge that is utilized on a daily basis to carry out the critical thinking that is needed to give each patient/client



the individualized treatment plan that will ultimately allow the patient/client to move forward achieving the highest level of functional mobility and wellness."

# NOTABLE ALUMNI IN MEDICINE



**DR. DAVID M. CAWLEY,  
DENTIST  
(B.S. 1979)**

Dr. David M. Cawley has trained with some of the world's most prominent family dental specialists, but that pales in

comparison to his 20 years of assisting patients in Montgomery.

"My greatest achievement is knowing that God has given me the privilege of helping thousands of patients achieve good oral health along with relationships that are still in place today," Cawley said. "The fact that I have been a servant to my patients is easily my greatest accomplishment."

Cawley was recently a board member for a national Dental Practice Based Network headquartered at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. This research network is funded by a grant from the National Institute of Health.

He also was a member of the Internet Dental Alliance and the Alabama Dental Association.

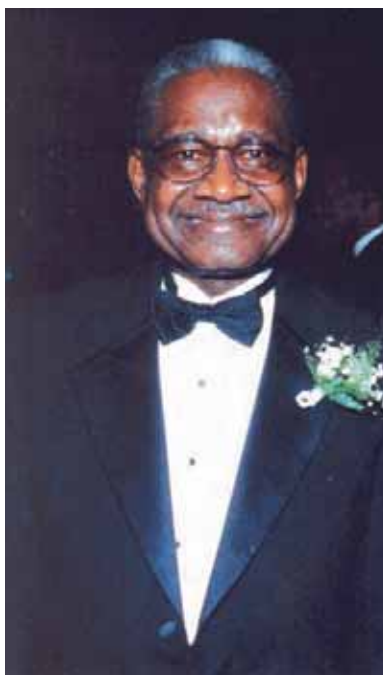
Cawley received a Bachelor of Science from ASU in 1979 and Doctor of Dental

Surgery from Howard University.

He said ASU played a big part in his career success.

"Hearing your instructors encourage and challenge you to excellence was the fuel in my engine to put forth maximum effort," he said. "The small class size also enabled me to stand out more instead of getting lost in the crowd."

"Much of what I was taught at ASU was applicable and relevant in the basic classes I took my first year in dental school," he said. "Without a tennis scholarship, nurturing environment, mentors, friends and prayers, I would not be where I am today."



**DR. ISAAC CLINTON REESE  
RETIRED MEDICAL  
RADIATION PHYSICS  
(B.S. 1957)**

Dr. Isaac Clinton Reese came to ASU from a small high school that didn't have a science laboratory.

"When I left ASU, I was able to successfully complete my graduate studies and enter the field of medical radiation physics," he said of a career that has spanned more than 45 years and included professorships at three universities and a teaching stint at Carver High School in Montgomery.

After getting his bachelor's degree in 1957 from ASU, Reese completed his master's from the University of Rochester in 1961. He obtained his Doctor of Philosophy from the University of California in 1974.

Reese was an Atomic Energy

Commission Fellow (1960-61) and was listed in Outstanding Young Men of America (1965). He served as the vice chairman of the Department of Radiology of the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science and the King/Drew Medical Center from 1981 to 1996.

His medical experience is not limited to hospital work. During his career, Reese has served as a professor of radiology sciences at Charles R. Drew University, an adjunct professor of radiological sciences at UCLA and an assistant professor of radiology at Indiana University Medical Center.





**DR. CHARLES HILL  
CHIEF OF  
OPHTHALMOLOGY  
(B.A. 1973)**

Dr. Charles Hill has spent 23 years working with patients suffering from glaucoma and eye problems caused by diabetes. Some of his most important work was performed on medical missions he made to St. Lucia in the West Indies.

On one of those missions, Hill spent three months working at Victoria Hos-

pital. So impressive was his work, Hill was named an Honorary Ambassador of Health.

He's always been a strong proponent of service, which would explain his selection by *Atlanta Magazine* as one of Atlanta's top doctors.

Hill is the chief of ophthalmology at DeKalb Medical Center in Decatur, Ga. He has worked at Decatur Hospital, DeKalb Medical Center at Hillandale, Ga., and as an assistant professor at Morehouse Medical School.

After earning a bachelor's from Alabama State University, Hill received his medical degree from the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa. His post-graduate training began with a surgery internship in Kalamazoo, Mich., followed by an assistantship in ophthalmology at St. Louis City Hospital in St. Louis.

He completed his residency in ophthalmology at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary/Harvard Medical School in Boston, and then went on to complete clinical and research fellowship training in glaucoma at Emory University Medical School.

Hill is a member of the American Acad-

emy of Ophthalmology, National Medical Association, American Medical Association and Atlanta Medical Association.

Hill said he is thankful for the nurturing and guidance that he received from several ASU professors who touched his life.

"The professor parenthood at ASU adopted me and treated me as if I was one of their natural sons with all the love and discipline that I needed to establish a solid foundation for success," he said. "Even though a lot of them have passed on, I will always love them and they shall always have a very special and warm place in my heart."



**DR. JACOB GRIFFIN  
DENTIST  
(B.S. 1984)**

Dr. Jacob Griffin has been the owner of Healthy Smiles Dental Center in Montgomery for more than 10 years. His mission is to provide world-class dentistry in a professional and caring environment.

After graduating from ASU in 1984 with a Bachelor of Science in biology, Griffin taught high school biology and chemistry for a short time. Then he studied dentistry at Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry in Nashville, Tenn. After graduating from Meharry, Griffin completed a hospital dental residency program in 1996.

Griffin said at ASU he was surrounded

by a nurturing environment that helped him with guidance.

"The ASU faculty, staff and administrators are to be credited for my success," he said. ■

*“The Bod Pod,” one of the instruments used in ASU’s physical therapy lab, measures a person’s body mass index. BMI is a measure of body fat based on height and weight that applies to both adult men and women.*



Continued from page 17

John F. Knight Jr., D-Montgomery, the lead plaintiff of the case and ASU’s executive vice president. “This building is a beautiful manifestation of ASU’s expanded mission.”

Chapman said she is grateful that the *Knight v. Alabama* case brought the programs and new building to ASU.

“We stand on the shoulders of Mr. Knight and the other plaintiffs,” Chapman said. “If it wasn’t for their diligence, we wouldn’t be here. We provide programs with a unique mission, which makes us the best program in the state, regionally or even nationally.”

The College of Health Sciences plans to add other programs in the future. Recently, it began taking applications for a new bachelor’s degree in rehabilitation services with

a concentration in addiction studies. A master’s program in prosthetics and orthotics is on the horizon. It will prepare students for the evaluation, fabrication and custom fitting of artificial limbs and orthopedic braces.

Chapman thinks all of the programs in the College of Health Sciences will continue to grow as more students learn about the opportunities at ASU. With the number of middle-aged and elderly people growing each year, she expects the health sciences programs to be relevant for years to come.

“People are always going to be sick,” she said. “Our job as health professionals is to make people as functional as possible.” ■

## Current Programs

### Health Information Management (HIM)

Health Information Management was the first health sciences degree offered at ASU. Started in 1997, the program graduated its first class in 2000.

Health information managers work with other health professionals to collect and disseminate information needed to provide high-quality care and maintain systems that give patients privacy and confidentiality.

“(Health Information Management) is great for anyone who wants a career with endless opportunities,” said LaShunda Blanding Smith, interim chair of the ASU program. “There’s a demand for this position. The program at ASU teaches you all you need to know to be successful.”

### Physical Therapy (PT)

The master’s degree program in physical therapy began in 1999 and graduated its



*Dr. Jerry Lee does a presentation during a physical therapy class.*

first class in 2002. The physical therapy program became a clinical doctorate in 2004 – the first doctoral program to be offered at ASU.

Dr. Denise Chapman, the previous chair of the Department of Physical Therapy, said that none of her students earned less than \$60,000 after graduation. Despite the earning potential, Chapman warns that the work is not easy. Physical therapy includes examining individuals with impairments, functional limitations and disabilities or other health conditions in order to determine a diagnosis, prognosis and intervention.

“It’s not glamorous,” Chapman said. “It’s hard work to work with all types of people.”

### Occupational Therapy (OT)

While physical therapy concentrates on the body’s functions and movements, occupational therapy focuses on helping individuals with disabilities achieve independence in their lives.

The 11-year-old bachelor’s program in occupational therapy awarded its first degrees in 2000. Master’s degree classes started in the summer of 2007.

Occupational therapy is a high-demand field with growth projections as high as 27 percent through 2014.

### Rehabilitation Counseling

The master’s degree program in rehabilitation counseling began in the fall of 2007 after the College of Health Sciences received a \$150,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Rehabilitation counselors help individuals with disabilities gain personal, economic and vocational independence and improve their quality of life.

Dr. Phillip Lewis, program coordinator, said demands for rehabilitation counselors will increase because a significant number of existing counselors are retiring.

“They are going to need trained and qualified people to fill those positions,” he said.

## Family Treasure Bestowed Upon University

Continued from page 11



*Leon Barkan of Volkert & Associates, Inc., Bryan Bell of Goodwyn, Mills and Caywood, Inc., President William H. Harris, and trustee Oscar Crawley cut the ribbon on the \$26.7 million Life Science Building.*

detailed instructions and the supplies that were needed to make a death mask of Dad. By casting a mold of Dad’s face before the funeral, it ensured that the artist would have an accurate image that she could bring to life through her art.”

Until Juanita Abernathy presented the bust of her late husband to Alabama State University at the formal dedication ceremony May 8, only a handful of people had ever seen it. The sculpture, which was completed in 1992, had never left the family’s home, which is located in Atlanta’s historic Collier Heights neighborhood.

“Ralph’s bust has remained in the private office of my home all this time and the only people who have ever seen it were my children and grandchildren,” she said.

When she decided she wanted to share it with the world, Alabama State University was the logical place to do that, Kwame Abernathy said.

“ASU meant so much to my father because this was the place he studied, obtained an academic education and began practicing the art that he and Uncle Martin (Martin Luther King Jr.) later fine-tuned so well, the nonviolent protest movement,” he said.

As a student at ASU, Ralph Abernathy served as its student government association president and launched his first successful protest movement on the grounds of the university.

Juanita Abernathy said the ASU campus and Montgomery are considered hallowed grounds to her family.

“ASU and Montgomery are special to us because Ralph went to college here; our first four children were born at St Jude’s Hospital; he pastored his first large church here; he served as a leader in the birth of the modern Civil Rights Movement in Montgomery; and became best friends and partners with the preacher at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, Martin Luther King – and the rest is history,” Juanita Abernathy said. “Ralph would be so excited and appreciative to know that the school he loved, Alabama State, named this building after him.

“My husband spent his entire life trying to re-educate America that its old segregationist laws and Jim Crow customs were unjust and evil,” she said. “To name a College of Education after a man who sought to enlighten and educate the world is both fitting and appropriate.” ■

## Dr. Parichart G. Thornton, College of Education

By Kenneth Mullinax



**Name:** Dr. Parichart G. Thornton

**ASU affiliation:** Interim department head, curriculum and instruction, and assistant professor of reading education, College of Education.

**Background:** A native of Montgomery, she graduated from Carver High School in 1987.

**Education:** Ph.D. Auburn University, reading education, 2008.

**Personal:** Married to Major Huey Thornton. They have two children – Mary Elise, 10, and Robbie Aerin, 2.

Dr. Parichart G. Thornton's passion is reading and literacy.

"Reading is the basic foundation for all formal knowledge and by helping produce some of the nation's finest teachers at ASU, we are investing in our children's future," she said.

Since 2007, Thornton has helped

develop a collaborative relationship with both ASU's Early Childhood Learning Center and Montgomery's E.D. Nixon Elementary School. So far, this joint effort has helped more than 200 of ASU's undergraduate and master's degree teacher candidates learn scientific methods they can use

to improve the vocabulary and reading skills of children.

"This not only helps the children we teach, but ASU's teacher candidates use research-supported methods to learn first-hand in the field what works best to improve our children's basic reading skills," Thornton said. ■

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## ASU Announces 3 New Vice Presidents

The addition of three new vice presidents will help streamline Alabama State University's organizational structure and better serve its students, faculty, staff and alumni, according to President William H. Harris.

Harris announced that Danielle Kennedy-Lamar is ASU's vice president of Marketing and Communications; Kippy Tate, vice president of Buildings and Grounds; and Carmen Douglas, vice president of Human Resources.

Kennedy-Lamar joins ASU after having served as Florida A&M University's associate vice president for Student Affairs-Enrollment Management, and formerly as ASU's director of Admissions and Recruitment from 1999 to 2006.

Douglas – a certified Senior



*Danielle Kennedy-Lamar, VP for Marketing and Communications, Kippy Tate, VP for Buildings and Grounds, and Carmen Douglas, VP of Human Resources.*

Professional in Human Resources – has 17 years experience and served as the employee relations and training specialist at the Montgomery City-County Personnel Department since 2003.

Tate, who served as ASU's interim vice president of Buildings and Grounds since August 2008, is a registered architect and formerly served as director of the State of Alabama's Building Commission.

## ASU Hosts Statewide Political Science Convention

*By Kenneth Mullinax*

Hundreds of political science professors converged on the Alabama State University campus April 3-4 for the statewide Alabama Political Science Association conference, the second time in 10 years the university has hosted the event, said Dr. Sharron Herron, an ASU political science professor and program chair.

One of the highlights of the conference was a dinner and panel discussion on race, economics and politics in Alabama. The panel included Jere Beasley, former Alabama lieutenant governor and a nationally known trial lawyer; Dr. Glen Browder, a former U.S. congressman and political science professor; and Dr. John F. Knight, ASU's executive vice president and state representative.

"Hosting a statewide convention of political science professionals highlights ASU's increasing influence in this field of study," Herron said.

## Partnering for Conservation

*By ASU News Services Staff*

The Alabama State University Hornets football team is going green this season. In a collaborative effort between ASU and the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries (AGI), the Hornets team bus will be partially powered by used cooking oil that has been converted into a biodiesel fuel.

ASU's cafeteria will supply the used oil and AGI will convert it into biodiesel fuel. Speaking at a news conference to announce the project, ASU President William H. Harris said the program will help to "heighten public interest in and awareness of fuel conservation."

Joining Harris for the announcement were ASU Executive Vice President John F. Knight Jr., Provost Karyn Scissum Gunn, Head Football Coach Reggie Barlow, State Rep. Thad McClammy and a crew of AGI biodiesel experts who brought with them their mobile biodiesel fuel manufacturing center.

This new program is similar to the initiative kicked off in May between ASU, AGI and the Montgomery Public Schools (MPS). The "Save the Environment" model program will produce biodiesel for MPS buses and other MPS equipment from recycled cooking oils. ASU is providing scientific expertise for "Save the Environment" and establishing internships for its Life Science students to monitor the program.

Continued from page 11

by the advancements that have taken place on campus since the federal court rendered its decision in 1995.

“I’m enormously proud of the hard work, dedication and vision of Judge Harold Murphy, John Knight, President William H. Harris, the ASU Board of Trustees and attorney Jim Blacksher,” he said. “Without them, none of this significant progress would have been possible.”

Also in attendance at both the luncheon and dedication ceremony was Lt. Gen. Julius Becton Jr. The retired U.S. Army general officer, who resides at Fort Belvoir, Va., was appointed by the federal court to serve as a member of the *Knigh t v. the State of Alabama* oversight committee. Becton ensured that the court’s decree and edicts were carried out at ASU and at all the other public universities in Alabama.

Becton, the former commanding general of both the 7<sup>th</sup> Army Corps in Germany and the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division, said he doesn’t mince his words and is “darn proud” of all the accomplishments that have occurred at ASU, especially with the construction of the new Life Science and the Ralph David Abernathy College of Education buildings.

The 83-year-old retired general said that naming the College of Education building after a man whose life’s work was to educate the world against the evils of racism and hatred was “brilliant.”

“By putting Ralph Abernathy’s name on that building, you show the

world that good people can finish first; and by dedicating the Life Science Building, you show the world that the beacon of education shines bright at ASU,” Becton said.

After a luncheon held for special guests, including the extended Abernathy family, ASU’s two newest buildings were consecrated after a series of remarks, which concluded with a formal ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Dr. Karyn Scissum Gunn, ASU’s provost, said the new buildings are significant symbolic advancements for the university.

“One enriches our history in a place of renowned educators,” she said. “The other beckons the future, a signal to the world that our time in science and technology has arrived.”

Juanita Abernathy, widow of the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, and members of her family were in attendance at the dedication.

“Naming the building after my husband is a wonderful tribute to his work and efforts in the Civil Rights Movement,” Juanita Abernathy said. “I know he would have been proud. He fought for civil rights his whole life.”

President Harris pointed out that Ralph D. Abernathy was a symbol of the university’s interest in inclusiveness and openness.

“It’s only fitting to name this College of Education building after someone who spent his life trying to educate America about the foolishness of racism,” Harris said.

The 134,000-square-foot Ralph David Abernathy Hall is the new

home of the university’s College of Education. The \$30 million facility, which joins an existing building, includes simulated classrooms, research and development laboratories, a 545-seat auditorium/assembly hall and a “Great Hall of Teachers” memorial.

Dr. Thelma Ivery, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, said the two new buildings are representative of a new chapter of ASU’s history, which is advancing the university’s academic environment, fostering the advancement of scientific research and stretching the very boundaries of the university across Hall Street to the new eastside of campus.

ASU’s provost said the scientific study and research being conducted in the Life Science Building is cutting-edge.

“Students in the new Life Science Building are already engaging in scientific discovery so futuristic that it borders on science fiction,” Scissum Gunn said.

The \$26.7 million Life Science Building includes a 2,000-square-foot teaching seminar room, well-equipped research laboratories, walk-in cold rooms and dark rooms.

The five-floor, 85,000-square-foot facility houses the new doctoral program in microbiology for the Department of Biological Sciences, features state-of-the-art molecular biology teaching laboratories and multimedia classrooms furnished with the latest instructional software. ■

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The Alabama State University Trust for Educational Excellence is an endowment established in the *Knight v. State of Alabama* desegregation case that provides the university with perpetual funding for:

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- Matching funds to endow chairs to eminent scholars under Alabama's Eminent Scholars Program
- Subsidizing the salaries of full-time faculty members with outstanding reputations as scholars
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