

## Three alumni named to UF College of Medicine's Wall of Fame

By MELANIE STAWICKI AZAM

A world-class corneal transplantation expert, a leader in medical education and the Cleveland Clinic's heart and lung transplant program director were recently named to the UF College of Medicine's Wall of Fame.

Richard Belitsky, MD '77, Mark J. Mannis, MD '75, and Kenneth R. McCurry, MD '87, will join 24 fellow alumni named as examples of the far-reaching impact a UF medical education has on the betterment of health and human lives.

"I was quite honored to even be considered for it," McCurry said.

Belitsky said he was grateful to the people at UF who helped him at the beginning of his career.

"It's a wonderful honor and means a lot to me, particularly coming from the medical school that gave me my start," he said.

Mannis said his UF professors inspired him to pursue his love of research, teaching and patient care.

"They really determined the trajectory of my career," he said.

Belitsky is deputy dean for education at Yale School of Medicine. The Harold W. Jockers associate professor of medical education and an associate professor of psychiatry, he is known for innovation in medical student and residency education and is currently leading a transformation of Yale's medical school curriculum.

Joining Yale's faculty as an assistant professor in 1983, he has earned numerous honors for his teaching. With clinical interests in general adult psychiatry and forensic psychiatry, Belitsky is interested in mental health services in prisons and jails.

Mannis, chair of ophthalmology at University of California Davis and chair of the UC Davis Health System Eye Center, is an international authority on corneal transplantation and



external diseases of the eye. A professor and chairman of ophthalmology at UC Davis, he has researched corneal wound healing, skin diseases affecting the eye, and outcomes of corneal transplants and artificial corneas.

He also has helped establish eye-banking and tissue-donation services in the United States and Latin America and is medical director of Sierra Donor, a nonprofit organ donation agency in Sacramento, California. Mannis is president of the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology with members from more than 35 countries.

McCurry, who is a cardiac and transplant surgeon, is program and surgical director of lung and heart-lung transplantation at the Cleveland Clinic. Before joining the Cleveland Clinic in 2009, he was the University of Pittsburgh's head of cardiothoracic transplantation.

His research focuses on patient outcomes following heart, lung and heart-lung transplantation, and he has several major research grants for clinical trials related to heart failure and transplantation.

A Wall of Fame award ceremony is planned for May 10 for the new honorees. Members of the Wall of Fame have their photos displayed in the Founders Gallery of the college's Academic Research Building.

Look for photos on [DrGator.ufl.edu](http://DrGator.ufl.edu) from the Wall of Fame induction ceremony.

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# New College of Medicine Alumni Board members

By MINA RADMAN

The College of Medicine Alumni Board welcomes three new members: Jean Lester Bennett, MD, a retired pediatrician who graduated with the first COM class in 1960; Randolph Mahoney, MPAC, PA-C '01, a former pilot and assistant professor at the UF School of Physician Assistant Studies; and Mark Michels, MD '85, an ophthalmologist from West Palm Beach, Fla., and former Junior Honors Medical Program student at UF.

Bennett, Mahoney and Michels spoke to the Dr. Gator about their own interests in the future of the College of Medicine and their new roles as board members.

**Question:** What led you to become a board member?

**Bennett:** I was on the board many years ago and, over the years, have served on other boards at the university. I was asked to become a board member again to help shape the College of Medicine, and I said I would be glad to.

**Mahoney:** I was honored to be asked and found it to be a way to increase involvement in alumni affairs and development at the college. It's great to have a voice and help things move forward. I'm an enthusiastic supporter of the college.

**Michels:** I had already been involved in fundraising efforts in support of the college, and the board saw that and asked me to get involved, and I was happy to do that.

**Question:** What do you hope to give back to the college as a board member?

**Bennett:** As a member of the very first class who has seen the evolution of the school and the marvelous things that have been accomplished, I hope to provide insight as to how far we've come. I will be serving on the board with some of my former patients, and I think I have a little bit of wisdom about the practice of medicine.

**Mahoney:** I plan to continue to support the college, both personally and financially, especially with the physician assistant alumni. Years ago, there weren't many of us but now there are, and we want to be involved. I hope I can bring the PA's perspective to the college.

**Michels:** I hope to bring my enthusiasm for the education I received at Florida and help make sure others coming up have the same opportunities that I had—or better ones.

**Question:** What is your favorite memory from your College of Medicine days?

**Bennett:** My classmates. There were only 39 of us and to this day, I count them amongst my best friends. We've kept in touch through the years. We were truly there to help each other. There was no competition, nothing but sincere camaraderie.

**Mahoney:** One of the first things we do in PA studies is an intense course of anatomy with cadaver dissection in Summer B. At that point, you know if you're in the right place. It's the wonders of the human body and how it's put together in health and disease and how things



Jean Lester Bennett, MD '60



Mark Michels, MD '85



Randolph Mahoney, MPAC, PA-C '01

work. That's the thing that I remember best. It's an advantage that we have here at Florida.

**Michels:** Walking into the visual sciences lab and talking to William Dawson for the first time about eye research. I had no idea that it would be the beginning of what I ended up doing with my career. I thought I was just going to find something to spend a little time on, and I found myself going to the lab over and over again.

# Alumni reunite at first-ever Physician Assistant Gator gathering

By BRIANNA SWALES

Physician assistants from across the Sunshine State convened in Orlando on March 2 for the first-ever UF School of Physician Assistant Studies Gator Gathering. Alumni had the opportunity to network with fellow PAs while getting a brief rundown on the latest happenings from associate dean and director of the School of Physician Assistant Studies,

Ralph Rice, DHSc, PA-C. The event was held in conjunction with the Florida Academy of Physician Assistants 2013 Winter Symposium and Recertification Review and took place at the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek, Presidential Suite.

# Just dance

By MELANIE STAWICKI AZAM

Four years ago, UF College of Medicine student Travus White found himself rocking out to Beyonce's "Single Ladies" in the O'Connell Center along with 800 other UF students.

This April, the second-year medical student is organizing the first ever UF College of Medicine Dance Marathon team.

"I had this vision that our school would be involved," said White, who is vice president of community service for UF's American Medical Association Medical Student Section and participated in the event as an undergraduate with his fraternity.

Dance Marathon at UF, which will be held April 13 to 14, is a 26.2-hour event benefiting Shands Hospital for Children. Each year, hundreds of participants keep moving, along with pediatric patients and their families, to raise money and awareness for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals.

"I love that it has such an impact," White said. "Dance Marathon has this spark...that no matter how you feel about community service, it changes people's minds."

Last year about 815 dancers participating in Dance Marathon at UF raised more than \$886,000 for Shands Hospital for Children at UF.



UF College of Medicine students Travus White and Nicole Melanson are organizing the college's first Dance Marathon team, which will raise money to benefit Shands Hospital for Children.



## Healthy living made easier

### Alumni couple creates wellness community

By MELANIE STAWICKI AZAM

John and Shaun McKee believe in the power of living healthy and active lives. They are devoted to fitness and often participate in ironman triathlons together.

The two physicians and UF College of Medicine graduates (John 1990 and Shaun 1991) decided to share their passion for healthy living with their Mississippi Gulf Coast community by helping to spearhead two major wellness projects in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

“The most elusive commodity in people’s life on the Mississippi Coast is health,” said John, a gastroenterologist. “It got worse after the storm.”

Working with Miami-based developers Eduardo Stern of Land Star Development and Louis Wolfson of Pinnacle Housing Group and the Mississippi Development Authority’s Disaster Recovery Division, the McKees formed a team dedicated to the creation of Mariner’s Village, a \$12 million wellness-oriented residential community in Long Beach, Miss.

Mariner’s Village, completed in 2011, won the 2012 Mississippi State Medical Association’s Excellence in Wellness Promotion award. John said the neighborhood was designed to be environmentally friendly and promote recreation and physical fitness for residents. The neighborhood features a gymnasium, walking track, beach volleyball court, indoor/outdoor playgrounds and original artwork.

The McKees also were pivotal in fostering the development of e-Fitness & Wellness, a \$15 million 150,000-square-foot fitness center in Biloxi, Miss. The center, which opened in 2007, has 40 partners, many of whom are physicians.

Mississippi has one of the highest rates of obesity in the United States The McKees saw the impact unhealthy habits had on their patients and wanted to help change that trend.

The two projects also have provided local housing and economic development after Hurricane Katrina destroyed thousands of Gulf Coast homes in 2005.

“It’s a boost for us,” said Billy Skellie, mayor of Long Beach.

The McKees’ own home was destroyed in the storm, but despite their loss, they became dedicated to helping their community heal.



The McKees fostered the development of e-Fitness & Wellness, a fitness center in Biloxi, Miss. Photos provided by the McKees.

## A leader and advocate for the underserved

By MELANIE STAWICKI AZAM

More than 20 years later, Jennifer Keehbauch, MD ’92, recalls the experience that ignited her passion to care for the underserved.

She was a third-year UF College of Medicine student, accompanying Louis Kuritzky, MD, an assistant professor in the family medicine program, on a visit to a rural Alachua County clinic, and one of his patients didn’t have money for the medicine he prescribed.

“So he just reached into his wallet and handed her money for her prescription,” recalled Keehbauch.

It was physicians like Kuritsky who inspired Keehbauch to found the Community After Hours Clinic for the Uninsured at Florida Hospital in Orlando.

“This is our 10th year,” said Keehbauch, the clinic’s medical director and a family physician at Florida Hospital. “We’ve seen more than 25,000 patients.”

Expanded this year to include specialty services, the clinic primarily cares for working, uninsured adults. It serves patients on evenings and weekends and occupies space at the hospital’s employee clinic.

Keehbauch also is a leader in research and medical education at Florida Hospital, where she is the director of research and continuing medical education, associate director of family medicine residency and director of women’s health fellowship.

Her own research focuses on women’s health, along with pediatric obesity and improving care using electronic medical records.



Scan this QR code or visit [ufl.edu](http://ufl.edu) to learn more about Jennifer Keehbauch, MD ’92.

## News Clips

### Top honor

The UF Proton Therapy Institute pediatric program earned the 2013 Top Team Effort Award given by the UF Shands Cancer Center at its annual Celebration of Excellence Awards event in Gainesville, Fla., on Feb. 26. The Top Team Effort Award rewards workgroups for achieving challenging goals and making significant positive impact on organizational business, research and/or patient care objectives. Nominations for the award were submitted by cancer center members, and entries were voted on by a group of cancer center peers. The UF Proton Therapy Institute pediatric program was selected for the highest level of dedication and patient-focused mission in caring for pediatric patients. The pediatric proton program is led by Danny Indelicato, MD ’08.



### A body at peace

There were dark jeans, washed-out prints, skinny jeans and polka dots. Though different styles of clothing, each piece held similar memories: defeat, control, unhealthy lives. It was the first step in “Transfiguration: Making Peace With Our Bodies,” a positive body image project created by the UF&Shands Eating Disorder Recovery Center that transformed old clothing into a paper dress for a size 16 mannequin. Patients also wrote letters to their bodies, which were rolled into paper beads and strung together as necklaces. Patients of the Eating Disorder Recovery Center picked up their old clothes and cut them into small pieces, which were then broken down into a pulp.

### Just say ‘no’

With marijuana use becoming legal in more states, researchers at UF and their colleagues advise caution for clinicians contemplating recommending medical use of marijuana to their patients.

“Smoked marijuana is a nonmedical, nonspecific and potentially hazardous method of drug delivery,” wrote Gary M. Reisfield, MD, of the UF College of Medicine and Robert L. DuPont, MD, of the Institute for Behavior and Health and Georgetown University in a “Clinical Decisions” feature released in the Feb. 28 issue of The New England Journal of Medicine. “Although marijuana probably involves little risk in this context, it is also unlikely to provide much benefit.”

In this interactive online feature, the physicians responded to a case vignette recommending against the use of medical marijuana. The patient in the case has metastatic breast cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy. Reisfield and DuPont argue that while some research points to marijuana’s role in relief for certain kinds of pain, it does not relieve all types of pain.





## Dr. Gator

Dr. Gator is produced by the UF Health Science Center Office of News and Communications for alumni, faculty and friends of the UF College of Medicine.

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## MedWAR: wilderness adventure race

By MATTHEW BROWN, UF COLLEGE OF MEDICINE, CLASS OF 2015

I can't move. How deep is this mud anyway? Is this what the dinosaurs felt like in the tar pits? Wait, I think I got it. I'll hold onto this log. Now, left leg coming up...whoa...whoa, SPLASH! I look like the creature from the black lagoon.

After wallowing our way out of the muddiest place since the battle of Agincourt, the four members of team UF Med 2 huddled up, got our bearings and charged off into the wildness, intent on our next challenge.

Such was the scene four miles into the 12-mile course of the Southeast medWAR Challenge, an endurance/adventure/medical skills race that took place in northern Georgia last year.

It pitted us mere mortals against the bitter wilderness, daring us to prove that our soft and easily marred exteriors could be forced beyond what they reasonably should be asked to do. Not only were we asked to orienteer from station to station, we were expected to respond to certain scenarios at each stop.

We faced 24 multiple-choice questions and five role-playing scenarios, in which I was struck by lightning, attacked by a honey badger, mobbed by a swarm of bees and dislocated my shoulder.

We ran around in the woods, yelling and screaming, getting wet and dirty, starting fires and sweating more than a crawfish at a Cajun festival—basically fulfilling every dream I've had since I was 5 years old.

Our team was organized by Florida Wilderness and Environmental Medicine President Coben Thorn, MD, an emergency medicine resident at UF. Three other then first-years and I signed up despite not having any real idea what we were getting into and having zero training in wilderness medicine.

The journey started out like any other; I crawled out of my tent, stretched and headed over to the nearest tree. Finally, they blew the horn and we attacked each obstacle with fierce determination, and eventually clawed our way out of the wilderness.

While we didn't head home with the gold medal, we'll be back next year and they will learn to fear the name UF Med 2.



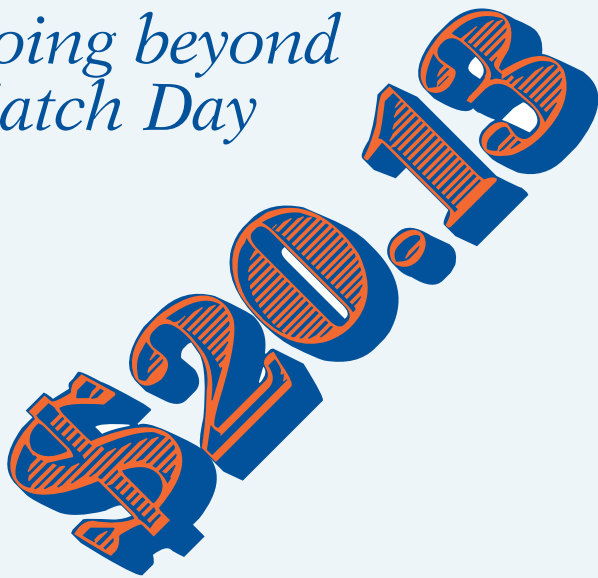
UF students practice their splint-making skills under pressure.



Photos courtesy of Matthew Brown

UF College of Medicine students from the class of 2015 Matt Brown, Michael Robinson, Amy Sheer and Morgan McGuire.

## Going beyond Match Day



By BRIANNA SWALES

Match Day might just be the most anticipated day of the year for fourth-year medical students across the country—a day when a single sealed envelope holds the key to the future. But this year, medical students will have the opportunity to take the future into their own hands and help build the new George T. Harrell, M.D., Medical Education Building.

For the first time, students were asked to make a gift—this year in the amount of \$20.13—on Match Day in honor of an inspirational faculty member at the UF College of Medicine, someone who has touched their lives over the past four years. All contributions will help fund the new medical education building, which will support a fundamental shift in learning and teaching for a new generation of medical students.



Photo provided by the Benton family

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

Tom Benton, MD '85, and his sister Jane Benton, MD, who completed her residency at UF in 1990, received their master's degrees in public health from UF in December 2012. Pictured with them is their father, John J. Benton, MD, a Gainesville native who was also a pediatrician involved in public health.

Tom lives in Gainesville and Jane lives in Merritt Island, but the siblings, who are both pediatricians, completed their degrees online and were study buddies for more than two years. Their late great-grandfather John R. Benton also has UF ties; he was the first dean of the College of Engineering.