



PHOTO BY MINDY C. MILLER

Ibram X. Kendi, PhD, former UF assistant professor and 2016 National Book Award winner.

Sparking discussion and reflection

By TYLER FRANCISCHINE

The UF College of Medicine’s first annual Celebration of Diversity Week, held April 3-8, attracted alumni and leaders in academic medicine to participate in discussions on the effects of bias in health care.

Maude Lofton, MD ’79, who traveled to Gainesville from Littleton, Colorado, was struck by the talk she heard from Dr. Ibram X. Kendi on American medicine’s racial history. The former assistant professor of African American history at UF and 2016 National Book Award winner for “Stamped From The Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America” explained how racist ideas can lead to health inequity through inferior care and a lack of resources for minority populations.

Lofton said Kendi tells it like it is.

“We often don’t address the truth of history as it unfolded in this country,” she said. “Race relations play a key role in the development

of medicine and our health care system. We have to deal with that in a sober, somber way if we’re going to move forward and improve.”

The week’s discussions, led by an impressive list of leaders in academic medicine, including several from UF, recognized the detrimental effects of implicit biases in the relationship between health care professional and patient, as well as among members of the academic medicine community.

“RACE RELATIONS PLAY A KEY ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICINE AND OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.”

— Maude Lofton, MD ’79

UF department of emergency medicine chair J. Adrian Tyndall, MD, leads the college’s diversity committee, which organized the Celebration of Diversity program. Tyndall said the intention was to stimulate conversation and action across the college.

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NEWS CLIPS

MATERNAL-FETAL MEDICINE CHIEF SELECTED TO LEAD GENOMIC MEDICINE SOCIETY

Anthony Gregg, MD, chief of maternal-fetal medicine at UF Health, was elected president of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics. The ACMG's mission is to develop and sustain genetic and genomic initiatives in clinical practice, education and advocacy. Gregg's clinical work focuses on caring for patients with histories of pregnancy complications, especially severe preeclampsia, birth defects and pregnancy loss. "I am proud and honored to have been selected president-elect of ACMG while genomic medicine takes an increasingly important role in population wellness," Gregg said. ■



Will Coggins, 10, pediatric heart transplant recipient, UF Health Shands Transplant Center.

PEDIATRIC HEART TRANSPLANT PROGRAM RECORD SPOTLESS

UF Health Shands Hospital surpassed all other pediatric heart transplant programs in the nation with zero deaths within the last two-and-a-half years, according to the 2017 Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients. With 120 pediatric heart and heart-lung transplants performed since 2006, UF Health Shands Hospital has become one of the two most active pediatric heart transplant programs in the Southeast. The 18,000-square-foot UF Health Pediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Unit opened in 2014 to handle complex cases involving children awaiting heart transplantation. ■



SIX GRADUATES FROM ONE CLASS NAMED CHIEF RESIDENTS

The UF College of Medicine class of 2014 was well-represented at this year's Association of Program Directors in Internal Medicine chief resident conference, held in Baltimore in March.

Six graduates, pictured here at the conference, were named chief residents at their respective programs throughout the country. From left are Oladele Akinsiku, Case Western Reserve University; Jeanney Lew, University of Texas Southwestern – Parkland; Grant Lowther, University of Florida; Grant Jester, University of Florida; Dan Gutman, University of Illinois; and Mayur Moody, Emory University.

CELEBRATING OUR NEWEST GATOR MDS

MD may only be two letters, but together they create a world of opportunity. Members of the UF College of Medicine class of 2017 received their medical degrees at a commencement ceremony held May 20 at the Curtis M. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts. Of the 133 graduates, 36 are continuing their medical training in Florida and 51 are pursuing primary care residencies.



PHOTOS BY MINDY C. MILLER

UF HEALTH CHIEF OF CLINICAL RADIOLOGY PHYSICS NAMED INTERIM HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL AGENCY

Manuel Arreola, PhD, an assistant professor and chief of clinical radiology physics in the department of radiology, was named interim head of the International Atomic Energy Agency’s dosimetry and medical radiation physics section. The IAEA is an organization within the United Nations that promotes the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Based in Vienna for three months, Arreola will edit IAEA publications and coordinate a major conference in pediatric imaging, among other projects in quality assurance of the use of radiation in medicine. “The opportunity to share my professional experience and my passion for what I do is an extraordinary thing,” Arreola said. “The goal we have here at UF Health is the same goal that people have all around the world — developing better, safer and more efficient patient care.” ■

GOOD ELECTED TO LEADERSHIP ROLE WITH AAMC

Michael L. Good, MD, dean of the UF College of Medicine, was elected to the Administrative Board of the Council of Deans for the Association of American Medical Colleges. Good, UF’s ninth medical school dean, began his term with the board in June and will serve through 2018.

The AAMC’s Council of Deans includes the deans of all 147 accredited medical schools in the U.S. and 17 in Canada. The administrative board is elected from the membership of the Council of Deans and works to address issues affecting academic medicine.

Good took the helm of the UF College of Medicine in 2008, where he oversees 28 research-oriented basic and clinical departments with more than 1,300 faculty, 940 students and 775 resident physicians and fellows and the School of PA Studies. Good, a professor of anesthesiology, serves on the board of directors for UF Health Shands and chairs the board of directors for the UF Health Proton Therapy Institute in Jacksonville. ■



Michael L. Good, MD

PHOTO BY MINDY C. MILLER



PHOTO BY NELSON KEEFER

UF HEALTH NORTH INPATIENT HOSPITAL OPENS IN JACKSONVILLE

UF Health leaders and Jacksonville community members took part in a ribbon-cutting ceremony May 10 to open a new inpatient hospital at UF Health North. The 92-bed tower is connected by walkways to the current medical office complex. “The opening of this new hospital continues our mission of bringing the latest state-of-the-art technology, combined with the most effective patient care practices focused on quality, to the residents of North Jacksonville,” said David S. Guzick, MD, PhD, senior vice president for health affairs at UF and president of UF Health.

PHYSICIAN-SCIENTIST IN TRAINING

MD-PhD student Brittney Newby translates her passion for discovery into a meaningful career

For Brittney Newby, PhD, entering the UF MD-PhD Training Program to study biomedical sciences was the perfect marriage of her research and clinical interests. Passionate about pediatrics and riveted by immunology, she received her doctoral degree April 28.

Newby’s dissertation focused on environmental factors leading to Type 1 diabetes, which may lead to new targeted therapies for individuals at risk for developing the disease. Her passion for the topic and hard work resulted in her receiving the 2017 UF Medical Guild’s gold award for graduate student research.

Newby said she’s wanted to be a physician since she was 5 years old and focused on pursuing a career in science while an undergraduate student at Florida A&M University. She entered the UF MD-PhD Training Program in the fall of 2011.

“I realized research is what moves medicine forward,” she said. “We can use the scientific knowledge attained in the lab to answer questions that have been plaguing medicine.”

Newby recalls being overwhelmed with feelings of self-doubt while applying for UF’s graduate program in biomedical sciences. Today, her advice for anyone passionate about science

By TYLER FRANCISCHINE

and medicine is simple: believe in yourself.

“If you’re passionate about and dedicated to your goals, no one or nothing can stop you from achieving them,” she said.

With her dissertation research behind her, Newby will begin a clinical clerkship at UF Health Shands Hospital. She takes comfort in knowing the classmates with whom she started the MD-PhD program will continue to be sources of support in her future.

“Since we’re all on this unique journey of going to school for eight years, we’ve become very close,” she said. “I’m very thankful to have my classmates beside me.”

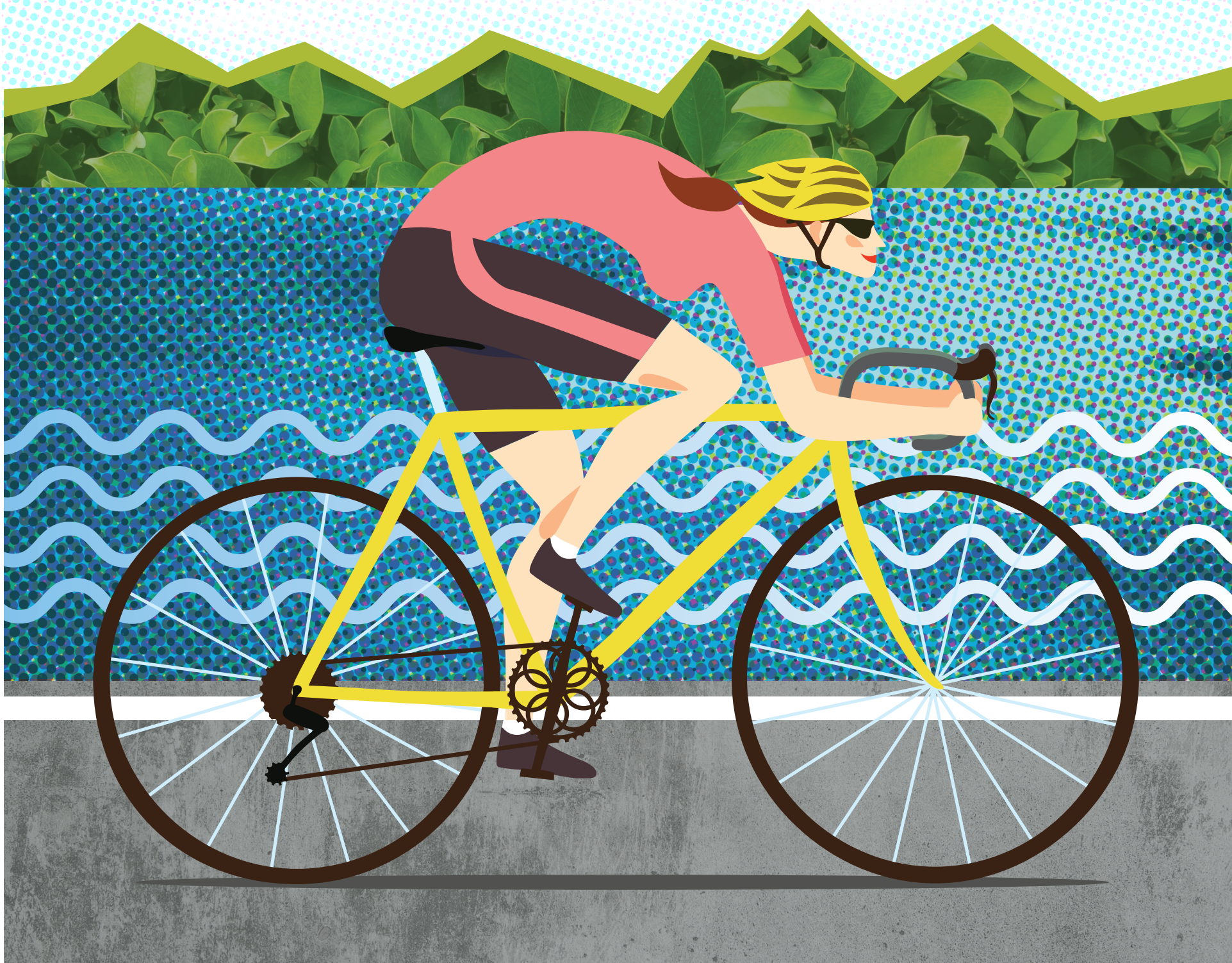


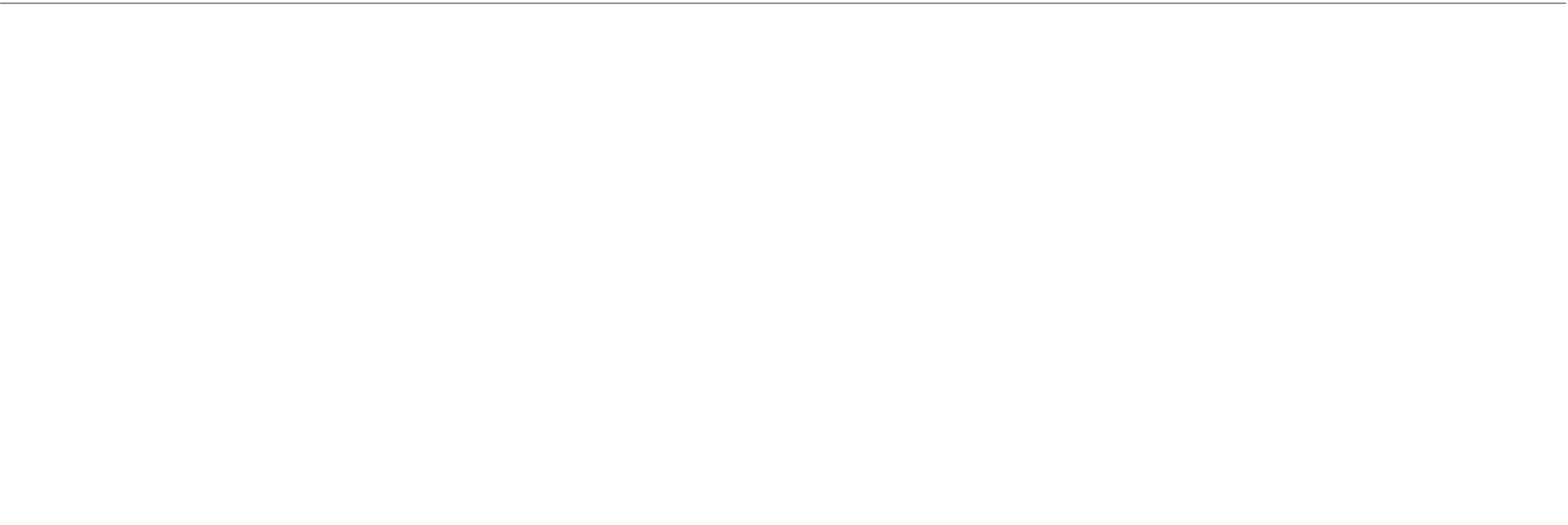
PHOTO BY JESSE S. JONES

AFTER SURVIVING A DEADLY INJURY

PHYSICIAN, FORMER CYCLIST STILL HELPING TO HEAL OTHERS

By MIKE BOSLET





When Michael Okun, MD '96, and Cindy LaRoe, MD, met for dinner with their spouses in 2015, it was a chance for the two former roommates to catch up. They had lost touch since sharing an apartment while residents at UF Health Shands Hospital 20 years earlier.

Both could recall Okun's habit of leaving empty pizza boxes stacked in the kitchen like a teetering house of cards. It is a memory LaRoe has held onto like a rare collector's item because, unlike so many glimpses into her past, it didn't vanish after she suffered a head injury in a cycling crash in 2011.

LaRoe was diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury and she no longer could practice internal medicine. She also was forced to give up her other life as a champion cyclist in the female 50-54 division.

For Okun, chair of the department of neurology at the UF College of Medicine, seeing the effects of a brain injury on his friend and onetime colleague had a "profound effect" on him. But when the evening ended with the couples touring UF's Center for Movement Disorders and Neurorestoration, the facility Okun co-founded, it was LaRoe and her husband, Ken, who were profoundly impacted by what they saw.

"They were just blown away," said Okun, co-director of the center.

That moment inspired Cindy and her husband, Ken LaRoe, founder and chairman of Orlando-based First GREEN Bank, to reconsider where their new foundation, The Art of Medicine, could do the most good. The Art of Medicine Foundation represents Cindy's love of painting for therapeutic purposes and her devotion to healing.

The foundation's inaugural gala in 2015 raised nearly \$180,000 through auctions of items that featured artwork by physicians, including Cindy, an avid painter since her accident. The money went to support brain injury programs in Central Florida.

This October in Orlando, the foundation's gala will support a new beneficiary — the UF Health Trauma, Concussion & Sports Neuromedicine, or TRACS, program. Founded last year, TRACS operates out of the movement disorders center and is affiliated with the Evelyn F. and William L. McKnight Brain Institute of UF. The institute will match The Art of Medicine Foundation's contribution to TRACS up to \$150,000.

"Ken and I felt The Art of Medicine could do the most good by partnering with TRACS," Cindy said. "The program is led by an incredible team of doctors that Mike has put together."

That "incredible team of doctors" includes TRACS founder and director Michael Jaffee, MD, and Steven DeKosky, MD '74.

Renowned as an expert on brain injuries and sports concussions, Jaffee, chief of the division of general neurology, developed groundbreaking practice guidelines and tools for

management of TBI in the military during his service as national director of the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center. He was part of an elite team assembled by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and credited with changing the culture of concussion for service members and veterans. He said the LaRoes' support for TRACS will help it maintain high standards of care while the program grows.

DeKosky, a professor of neurology and deputy director of the McKnight Brain Institute, is a leading researcher of chronic traumatic encephalopathy, a progressive neurological dysfunction caused by repeated blows to the head. He co-authored an article in 2005 that linked CTE to long-term brain damage suffered by American football players. DeKosky was portrayed in the 2015 movie "Concussion."

"I was honored and grateful that the LaRoes wanted to help this program," DeKosky said. "They have a connection here, especially since Cindy was a resident with Mike Okun."

The two TRACS colleagues say they'll attend the LaRoes' gala as guest speakers.

Cindy said her connection with Okun and TRACS has helped her feel like part of the medical community again. "It was emotionally devastating to have to give up being a doctor," she said. "But our Art of Medicine Foundation gives me the chance to make new memories of helping people heal."

"IT WAS EMOTIONALLY DEVASTATING TO HAVE TO GIVE UP BEING A DOCTOR, BUT OUR ART OF MEDICINE FOUNDATION GIVES ME THE CHANCE TO MAKE NEW MEMORIES OF HELPING PEOPLE HEAL."

— Cindy LaRoe, MD



Ken and Cindy LaRoe

PHOTO COURTESY OF KEN AND CINDY LAROE

PA school director leaves mark on UF

Dr. Ralph Rice retires after dedicated years of service to UF, students and patients

By STYLIANA RESVANIS

From serving in the U.S. Navy and working in a UF research lab to teaching students and treating patients, Ralph Rice, PA '91, DHSc, PA-C, has worn many hats throughout his decadeslong career — but the cord that has carried through his many experiences has been an unwavering work ethic and desire to honor the Hippocratic Oath by sharing knowledge with the next generation.

After spending nearly 25 years educating future physician assistants, Rice will retire as associate dean and director of the UF School of Physician Assistant Studies once a new director is appointed.

Under Rice's leadership, the School of Physician Assistant Studies flourished and strengthened, says Michael L. Good, MD, dean of the UF College of Medicine.

"Dr. Rice has proven to be an exceptional leader for our PA school's team of dedicated and experienced faculty," Good says. "He also has been a wonderful advocate for his students as they prepare to serve their patients as an integral part of a multidisciplinary health care team."

Although his time as a PA has taken him everywhere from Missouri to Alaska, it seems fitting that Rice will end his career where it began.

Armed with a microbiology degree from the University of South Florida, he first forayed into the science field as a lab technician at the UF Health Science Center. In conducting research on everything from cystic fibrosis to liver disease, he discovered a passion for medicine and a desire to help people live longer, more healthy lives.

"Being a PA can be challenging and rewarding, and that's exactly what I was looking for — I wanted not only the reward but also something where I could use my mind," he says.

Upon receiving his PA degree from UF in the early 1990s, he stepped into the world of education as a faculty member and also treated patients at UF Health Shands Hospital — first in the emergency room and later in a full-time clinical position in the lung transplant unit. Although Rice left Gainesville in the late 1990s to work with PA programs at Missouri State University and Wake Forest University, the Florida native returned to UF as associate dean and

director in 2011, determined to honor the legacy of his predecessor, Wayne Bottom, MPH, PA-C.

During his time at the PA school, Rice implemented a pass/fail curriculum for first-year students and championed the inclusion of a capstone project for second-years, which will take effect next year. He has held quarterly director's meetings with first-year students to foster open communication, encouraged professional development and mentoring opportunities for faculty and brought faculty and staff into the decision-making process.

"Inclusion is something he strives for," says Shalon Buchs, MHS, PA-C, associate director of the school. In looking at the mementos he's kept over the years — a drawing colored by a young patient in 1993, a plaque gifted to him by students from the class of 1999 and a red kickball signed by the class of 2017 — it is evident that for Rice, the highlight of his career comes down to the people.

"Dr. Rice is very hands-on; he's the type of person who's willing to go in the trenches with you and volunteer just because it's the right thing to do," says 2017 class president Ashley Giddings, MPAS '17, who recalls the medical mission trip she and some of her classmates took over spring break last year to the mountains of Virginia. The students brought the idea to Rice for approval, and he not only signed off on the trip but volunteered to go along as a faculty supervisor.

Though he may be retiring, it's unlikely Rice will ever shake his work ethic. In fact, he plans to get involved with a local pet rescue organization while continuing to practice medicine by volunteering with the Mobile Outreach Clinic Wednesday afternoons.

As he approaches the end of his career, he hopes the history books of the college remember him as someone who "did a good job filling big shoes" left behind by Bottom, who dedicated more than 25 years to guiding UF's PA program.

"It's like an asymptote in the sense that you're always striving to achieve more," Rice says. "My hope is that the program continues to move forward."

"BEING A PA CAN BE CHALLENGING AND REWARDING, AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR — I WANTED NOT ONLY THE REWARD BUT ALSO SOMETHING WHERE I COULD USE MY MIND."

— Ralph Rice, PA '91

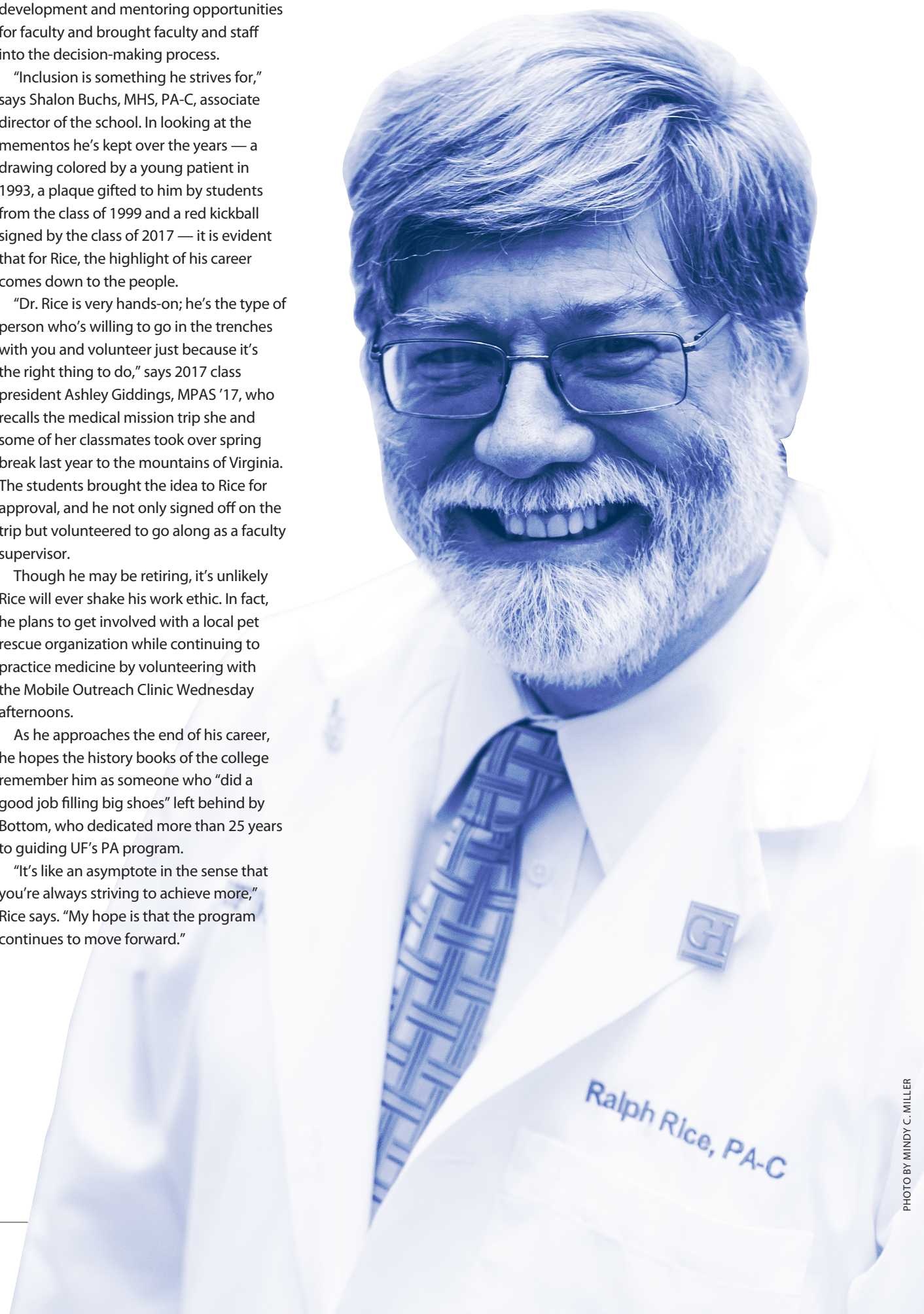


PHOTO BY MINDY C. MILLER

THEIR FUTURE YOUR LEGACY

Dear fellow Gator alumni,

At the UF College of Medicine, you — our alumni — are our biggest asset. The college's success is directly influenced by your continued involvement. Please consider joining our Legacy Challenge team, an exciting opportunity for you to ensure that the UF College of Medicine continues to advance medical education and help the best students obtain the world-class education they need and deserve. With the Legacy Challenge, we are recruiting 100 alumni and friends to join our team and leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

Ways to join the Challenge:

- Create a new named scholarship with an endowed gift of \$100,000 or more
- Sponsor a medical student with a gift of \$5,000 per year for four years
- Include the UF College of Medicine in your estate plans with a planned gift of \$20,000 or more

Since the launch of the campaign in February, 36 alumni have committed to support medical education through scholarship gifts totaling \$6.1 million. Many of them will gather this year at the George Harrell Club celebration planned for Sept. 14 in Gainesville. As members of the prestigious donor organization, the Legacy Challenge participants will be recognized for the impact they have had on medical education and student achievement and will have an opportunity to meet some of the students who have benefited from their generosity.

For more information about scholarships and the Legacy Challenge, please visit scholarships.med.ufl.edu.

Sincerely,

Your Medical Alumni Board of Directors



PHOTO BY MINDY C. MILLER



Pediatric neurosurgeon uses entrepreneurial drive to tackle health care dilemmas

By MEGAN D. KIMMEL



PHOTO COURTESY OF VICIS INC.

Samuel Browd, MD-PhD '00, has never been one to sit on the sidelines and watch.

As a pediatric neurosurgeon, clinic visits and surgery aren't the only ways Browd is forging better health care for his patients and the larger community. Browd, a professor of pediatric neurological surgery at the University of Washington and medical director of the Seattle Sports Concussion Program at Seattle Children's Hospital, is the co-founder of four companies aimed at solving health care dilemmas and developing innovative treatment options for neurologic conditions.

Browd, a 2000 graduate of the UF College of Medicine's MD-PhD Training Program, will share stories of his entrepreneurial experience during this year's UF College of Medicine Alumni Weekend.

During a TED-like talk on Sept. 15, Browd will feature his company, VICIS Inc., an innovator in the sports helmet industry and winner of the Head Health Challenge 2 grant, sponsored by the NFL, Under Armour and General Electric. He will share how the company, led by a physician and an engineer, has developed safer options for playing football that help prevent traumatic brain injuries.

The football helmet hasn't changed much in the past 70 years, Browd explained, and

new research was aimed at confirming diagnosis rather than focusing on prevention.

"A lot of energy was spent around sensors and detecting concussion after it happened, and we wanted to know if there's a way to prevent concussion on the field," Browd said.

VICIS Inc., a company started at the University of Washington, produces a helmet unlike any the sports industry has seen. Browd and his co-founders envisioned a helmet that not only provided safer protection against concussions, but one that was at the peak of technological innovation and supported by the athletes who would wear it.

The VICIS ZERO1 helmet is poised to make its debut this fall across college and professional football. The helmet is currently in the hands of 30 NCAA football teams and 25 NFL teams during spring and summer practices and will be an option for players during the regular season. Browd is confident players will choose the physician- and engineer-designed helmet over others.

"If you're able to innovate in health care, you can have a very big impact," Browd said. "If we come close to what we think we can with the helmet, it's going to make sports safer for athletes across the board — in any helmeted sport. The technology is available, and we think we have it."

Join us at Alumni Weekend to hear more from Dr. Browd.

"IF WE COME CLOSE TO WHAT WE THINK WE CAN WITH THE HELMET, IT'S GOING TO MAKE SPORTS SAFER FOR ATHLETES ACROSS THE BOARD — IN ANY HELMETED SPORT. THE TECHNOLOGY IS AVAILABLE, AND WE THINK WE HAVE IT."

— Samuel Browd, MD-PhD '00

FACULTY SOUND BITES

"It's over. It's gone."

— Ira Longini, PhD, a UF professor of biostatistics, speaking with WUFT about the West Africa Ebola epidemic, which was eradicated in part by the ring vaccination trial he helped create with the World Health Organization, March 31.

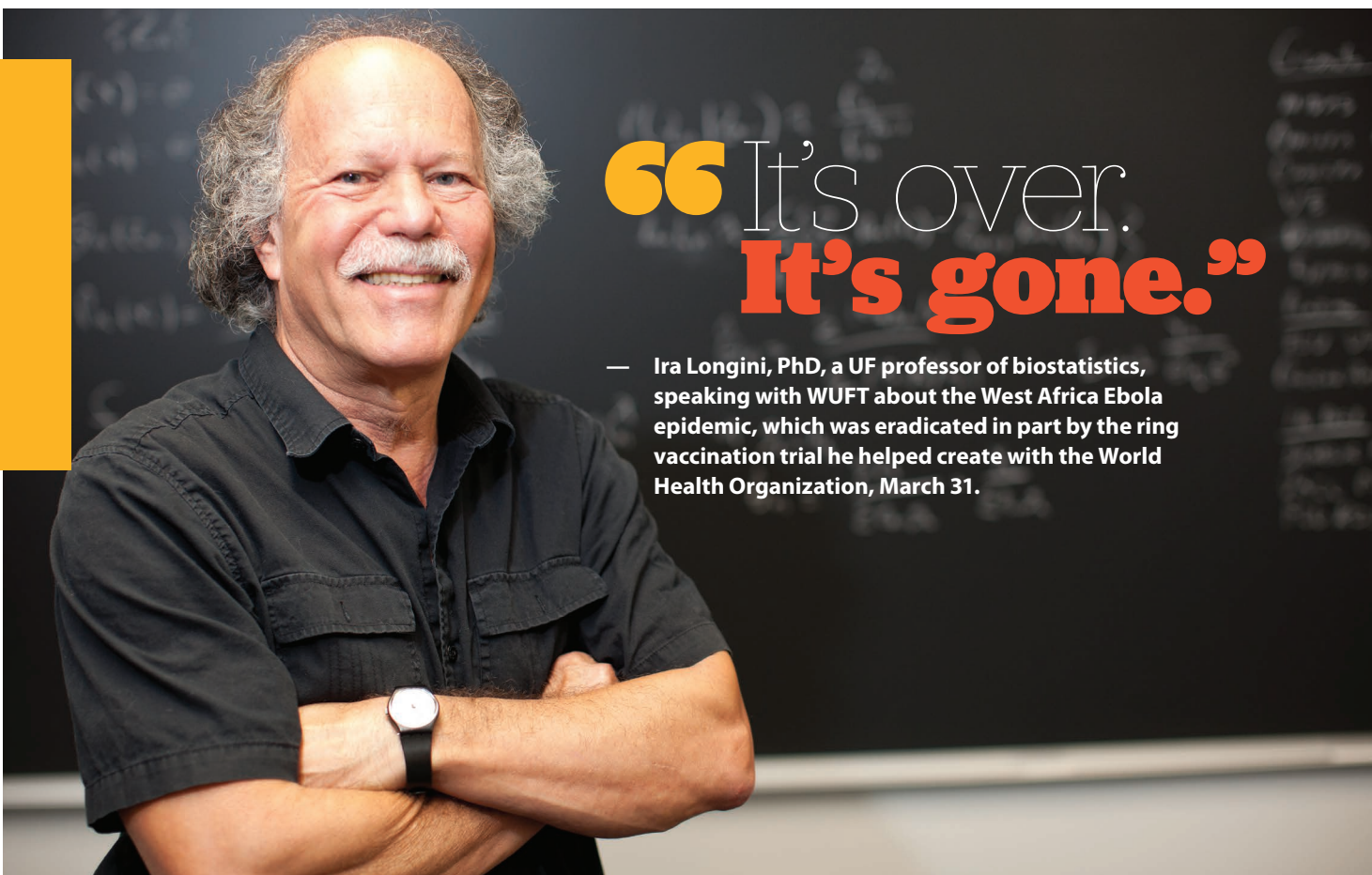


PHOTO BY JESSE S. JONES

Honoring a role model

By TYLER FRANCISCHINE

Maureen Novak, MD, was honored May 3 by the UF College of Medicine class of 2017 with this year’s esteemed Hippocratic Award.

Established by the class of 1969, the award is presented to a UF College of Medicine faculty member who embodies humanism, professionalism and teaching prowess. The Hippocratic Award is widely considered one of the highest honors a graduating class bestows on one of its teachers. Novak, associate dean for medical education, also received the award in 2011.

During a ceremony held at UF’s Wilmot Gardens, associate dean for student affairs Patrick Duff, MD, explained that the “small, respectable tree” standing near the plaque honoring past Hippocratic Award recipients bears roots from the same tree under which Hippocrates taught his students medicine in ancient Greece. The tree was a gift from the Greek minister of agriculture.

Fourth-year medical student Christian Reintgen, MD ’17, outlined why Novak was chosen for the second time. “She represents respect, mindfulness and humanism,” he said. “She’s acted as guide, advocate, teacher and friend to all of us students.”

Jeremy Collado, MD ’17, called Novak an advocate for her students.

“She’s one of the most caring, compassionate and responsive educators out there,” he said. “Anytime you need advice or help, even after hours, within minutes she will respond and solve your problems or offer advice. She’s the first person the students turn to.”

UF College of Medicine Dean Michael L. Good, MD, said Novak serves as a role model for her students.

“To be recognized by your students, that is indeed what it’s all about,” he said.

“She's the first person the students turn to.”

— Jeremy Collado, MD ’17



Graduating student Christian Reintgen presents Dr. Maureen Novak with the 2017 Hippocratic Award during a ceremony at UF Wilmot Gardens in May.

PHOTO BY MINDY C. MILLER



“Some people deny it. She was never in denial. For her it was 'I have it, and I have to deal with it.' She dealt with it.”

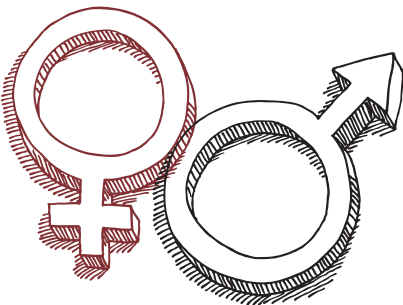
— Desmond Schatz, MD, medical director of the UF Diabetes Institute, discusses actress Mary Tyler Moore’s Type 1 diabetes experience with National Public Radio, Jan. 26. Moore died Jan. 25 at age 80.

“When someone has built up a life ledger full of meaningful experiences, the prospects of serious illness and death often do not seem so threatening.”

— James Lynch, MD, a UF professor of medicine, with Richard Gunderman, asking, “Can a dying patient be a healthy person?” in The Conversation, Feb. 8.

“We know that men are often compelled by stereotypes to act tough and manly, so they may be reporting less pain than they really feel. By the same token, women may be encouraged to report pain.”

— Roger Fillingim, PhD, director of the UF Pain Research and Intervention Center of Excellence, speaking with TIME Health on the cultural expectations of chronic pain, April 4.



Sparking discussion and reflection

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PHOTO BY JESSE S. JONES

2017 Diversity Week

“How does our institution truly value diversity? It was a week to start crucial conversations,” Tyndall said. “We know disparities in health care persist, regardless of our best efforts. When we look at the workforce in academic medicine, there has been progress, but it’s still lacking in terms of numbers of unrepresented faculty. It’s important to make people aware of how diversity, or the lack thereof, impacts equity and outcomes.”

Lofton said the week’s events brought back memories of her own time at the UF College of Medicine in the mid- to late-1970s. As members of the Black Students Health Professions Coalition, Lofton and classmates connected across disciplines to create summer programs for incoming students of color as well as celebrate each other’s achievements.

“There were 14 black students out of 120 in my class. We created our own network within the larger system,” she said. “And today, what we did independently is now included in the curriculum at the college.”

Lofton believes the UF College of Medicine has made “tremendous progress” in establishing a path looking forward, but there is work yet to be done.

“The fact that the university openly promotes diversity means it’s on the right track,” she said. “They’ve set up the structure for the work that needs to be done. Now there needs to be more community outreach — not just setting up clinics, but interacting and being a present part of the community.”

Marcus Martin, MD, senior vice president and chief diversity officer for the University of Virginia, presented to students, faculty and staff during the UF emergency department’s grand rounds on diversity. Martin was named the first African-American chair of an academic emergency department in the nation. For decades, he’s worked

“IT’S IMPORTANT TO MAKE PEOPLE AWARE OF HOW DIVERSITY, OR THE LACK THEREOF, IMPACTS EQUITY AND OUTCOMES.”

— J. Adrian Tyndall, MD

to make the University of Virginia an inclusive environment. He’s accomplished this through improving practices in the admissions process, starting an alumni fund centered on equity and access, and co-authoring works like “Diversity and Inclusion in Quality Patient Care,” published by Springer last year.

“Medical education must address the attitudes and knowledge gaps that perpetuate cultural barriers,” he said. “We found diversity equals excellence.”

Lofton said her medical school experiences were shaped by time spent with Dr. Cullen Banks, the first black physician to have full privileges at Alachua County General Hospital, and Willie J. Sanders, the first black faculty member at the UF College of Medicine. Today, UF College of Medicine students receive scholarships from funds established in memory of the two men.

“Diversity isn’t just about race. It relates to age, gender and socioeconomic status,” Lofton said. “That’s why the scholarships are so important and should be supported.”

Celebration of Diversity events culminated with the UF College of Medicine’s annual Emerald Ball, established nearly 15 years ago by UF medical students to provide accepted minority students with an opportunity to learn more about the college in an effort to encourage their enrollment.

UF College of Medicine Dean Michael Good, MD, welcomed special guest speaker Freeman Hrabowski III, PhD, president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Hrabowski’s work with the Meyerhoff Scholars Program, a pipeline to increase diversity in science and engineering undergraduate programs, has produced more than 1,000 graduates. The College Board’s National Task Force on Minority High Achievement called Hrabowski’s program a model for campuses across the nation.

“As we prepare the health care leaders of tomorrow, we must create a climate that fosters belonging, connection and value for all,” Good said.

RESEARCH ROUNDUP



Naturally derived compounds from the areca nut could help smokers quit.

UF HEALTH RESEARCHES NATURAL SMOKING CESSATION COMPOUNDS

UF Health researchers in pharmacology and therapeutics have identified naturally derived compounds that could help smokers quit. Co-investigators Roger Papke, PhD, and Nicole A. Horenstein, PhD, presented their findings at the American Chemical Society’s national meeting in San Francisco in April. The pair identified compounds derived from the areca nut, native to India and southeast Asia, that affect brain receptor proteins in a similar way to nicotine. The goal of the research is to find treatments that only target those brain receptors involved in addiction, leading to the potential development of smoking cessation drugs without side effects.

COMMON EAR DROPS MAY LEAD TO EARDRUM DAMAGE IN CHILDREN

UF Health researchers in medicine and pharmacy have found that commonly prescribed antibiotic ear drops correspond to a likelihood of eardrum perforation in children after ear tube surgery. The study, co-authored by Patrick Antonelli, MD, a professor and chair of the department of otolaryngology, was published in Clinical Infectious Diseases. Antonelli’s team found that children receiving quinolone ear drops were 60 percent more likely to have eardrum perforations in comparison with those receiving neomycin ear drops, and the risk increases when children take steroids together with quinolone drops. Quinolone drops are more widely prescribed than neomycin after the latter was found to cause hearing loss with repeated use. “Until we have other, safer antibiotic ear drops available, clinicians and parents must be cautious when using quinolones or neomycin and understand the risks associated with both,” Antonelli said.

UMBILICAL CORD BLOOD CELLS RESEARCHED AS TREATMENT FOR TYPE 1 DIABETES

Umbilical cord blood cells can be preserved and used as a potential treatment for Type 1 diabetes, UF Health researchers in pathology and immunology found. Thymic regulatory T cells, white blood cells that modulate the immune system and prevent autoimmune diseases like Type 1 diabetes, can be frozen at birth and later multiplied in the laboratory. Harvesting these cells is safer and potentially more effective than previous methods, researchers said. “This is a really important step in having the potential for safely treating patients with their own cells,” said Todd M. Brusko, PhD ’06, an associate professor in the department of pathology, immunology and laboratory medicine.

U.S. DEFENSE DEPARTMENT AWARDS UF TO STUDY ELECTRICAL STIMULATION

The U.S. Defense Department awarded UF neuroscientists \$8.4 million to study the effect of electrical stimulation on strengthening neural connections in the brain. Kevin J. Otto, PhD, will lead a team of neuroscientists from the McKnight Brain Institute of UF and the Malcom Randall VA Medical Center in conducting behavioral studies in rodents to determine the impact of vagal nerve stimulation on decision-making, executive function, perception and spatial navigation. Vagal nerve stimulation therapy is currently used to prevent seizures, depression and chronic pain, but there is little research on what makes it effective.

CULLEN BANKS SCHOLAR WORKS HARD TO LIVE UP TO HIS EXAMPLE

Third-year UF College of Medicine student William Freeman counts receiving the Cullen W. Banks, MD, Scholarship as one of his proudest achievements. The Lake Mary native finds medicine fascinating and frequently visits a Gainesville elementary school to teach the next generation about science. When Freeman isn't studying or teaching, he's playing pieces from his favorite composers, Chopin and Liszt, on piano. Doctor Gator asked Freeman a few questions about his experiences at the UF College of Medicine, his passions and his goals for the future.

Q AND A

with student William Freeman

1

Doctor Gator: How has receiving the Banks Scholarship impacted your medical school experience?

Freeman: The Banks Scholarship has not only assisted me monetarily, but it has provided me with many opportunities to make various connections. As the Banks Scholarship recipient, I have been fortunate to meet and learn from physicians and other students who have previously gone through the journey I am currently on. Having others with a vast array of perspectives and experiences to discuss my thoughts and questions with is an indispensable resource.

2

Doctor Gator: How has the life of Dr. Banks, the first black physician to have full privileges at Alachua County General Hospital, served as inspiration for your own future goals?

Freeman: Whenever I get the chance to sit down with Ms. LaKay Banks, it amazes me to hear all of the accomplishments her late husband was able to achieve in a time when many African Americans faced a great deal of oppression. His drive, intelligence and sheer grit to accomplish all that he was able to achieve is a constant reminder to me, as a Banks scholar, to work my absolute hardest and to set big goals for myself.

3

Doctor Gator: What are your goals after graduating?

Freeman: I have always been interested in surgery, but I will keep an open mind as I proceed through each of my clerkships. Every field has something interesting and rewarding to offer, and I am excited to see which specialties truly speak to me.

4

Doctor Gator: What do you find most fascinating about medicine?

Freeman: I cannot remember a time when I didn't want to go into medicine. The literal life-altering breakthroughs and the ability to directly affect the life of your patient, as well as the family, friends and loved ones of your patient, is what I find most fascinating and rewarding about medicine.

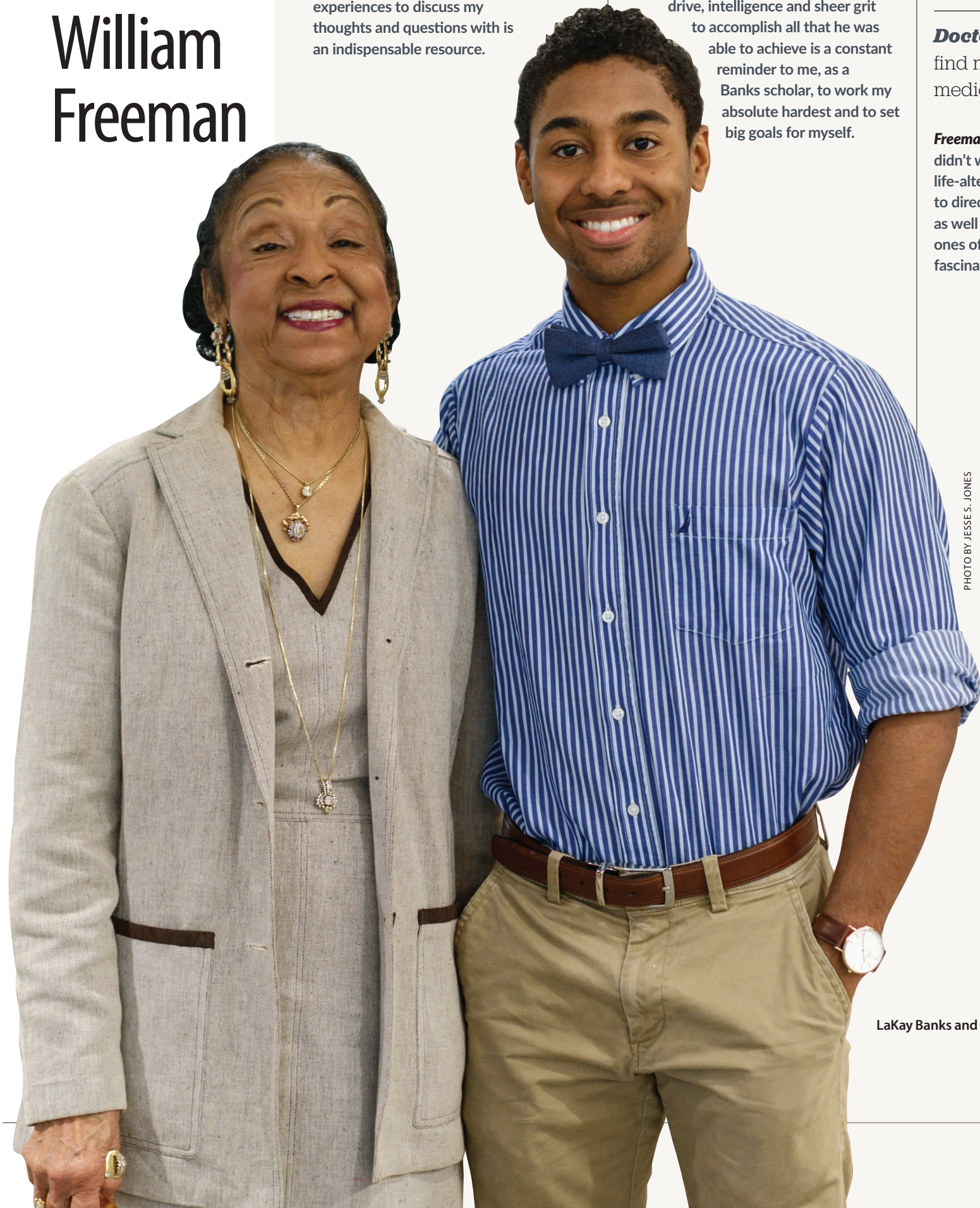


PHOTO BY JESSE S. JONES

LaKay Banks and William Freeman

University of Florida College of Medicine

ALUMNI WEEKEND

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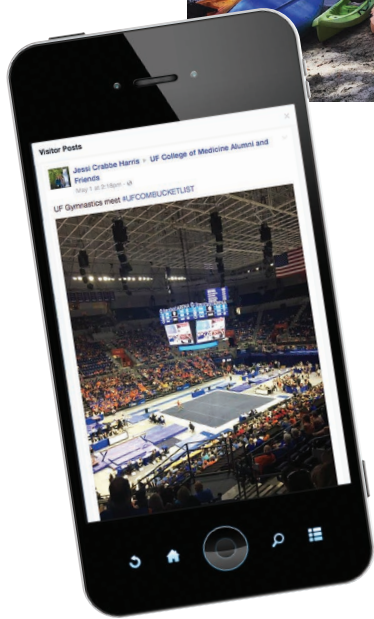
PHOTO BY YI-WEN SU, WIFE OF NEUROLOGY RESIDENT DR. DAVID HO



PHOTO BY DERMATOLOGY RESIDENT DR. JESSICA HARRIS



PHOTO BY GENERAL MEDICINE RESIDENT DR. TAMMY SMITH



What's new on social media

Check out the latest buzz in the UF College of Medicine digital world

Residents and fellows are sharing their tours around town thanks to the **#UFCOMBucketList challenge**.

The challenge encourages UF residents and fellows to experience North Central Florida's unique culture and environment by completing a number of suggested activities. Nearly 50 activities are recommended, including attending Gator sporting events, the UF College of Medicine's Alumni Weekend, a show at the Curtis M. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts and kayaking on Lake Wauburg.

Participants who complete 20 items receive a UF Health fleece. Tune into the fun by following the #UFCOMBucketList hashtag on Facebook.

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