As we enter the second decade of the 21st Century, the Mitchell Cancer Institute continues to expand its clinical reach throughout the region, offering the latest clinical treatments and clinical trials to our patients battling complex cancers, and building upon a strong base of basic and translational research. As the only academic cancer institute in the upper Gulf Coast corridor, the Mitchell Cancer Institute provides cutting-edge cancer treatment within our regional service area of south Alabama, the Mississippi Gulf Coast, the Florida panhandle and beyond. Our physicians bring an interdisciplinary team approach to cancer care.

With the strategic goal of becoming a National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated comprehensive cancer center, our researchers stand on the front line in the fight against cancer and collaborate with our clinicians to advance cancer care. The MCI has built a robust, interactive and entrepreneurial training environment where investigators, physicians, physician-scientists, medical students, clinical fellows and Ph.D. graduate students work collaboratively supported by state-of-the-art core laboratories and specialized equipment. The basic research at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine and the on-site commercial development teams at the MCI greatly enhance the development of use-inspired cancer research. Extramural grant funding at the MCI exceeds $11,400,000 with eight of our fourteen grants supported through the National Cancer Institute.

In this Progress Newsletter, you will read about some of our new physicians, our research activities and recent peer-reviewed grant funding awards, and our community outreach activities as well as highlights of human interest. Enjoy!

Thank you for all your support of the Mitchell Cancer Institute….together, we can advance cancer care in the region.

Sincerely,

Michael Boyd, M.D., Ph.D.
Abraham A. Mitchell Chair and Director and Professor of Oncologic Sciences

— Mission Statement —

The Mitchell Cancer Institute is dedicated to the mission of reducing illness and death due to cancer in the Gulf Coast region and beyond, through research, clinical services, professional and community education, and outreach.
Dr. Suzanne Russo and Dr. Roger Ove have joined the USAMCI department of radiation oncology. Alongside departmental chair Dr. John R. Russell, Russo and Ove were attracted to the USAMCI because they can combine their love of research with their love of clinical care. These physician-scientists fit well into the MCI model of attracting top doctors with strong research backgrounds interested in translating their knowledge into the clinical setting.

Russo is a graduate of the University of North Carolina School of Medicine in Chapel Hill. There she completed her internship in internal medicine and her residency in radiation oncology, serving as chief of radiation oncology in her final two years. Russo has also served on the faculties of the Wake Forest University, University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of Tennessee and East Carolina University. Russo has an extensive background in research as well as clinical treatment, with numerous publications in her field. Her primary focus is in the treatment of gastrointestinal and thoracic malignancies and sarcomas. She also has a special interest in pediatric malignancies and is an active member of the Children’s Oncology Group.

Ove joined the USAMCI as vice chair of the department of radiation oncology. He received his medical degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and his Ph.D. in physics from Yale University. With numerous scientific publications, Ove has served as a Head and Neck Professor for the American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology. Ove has served on the faculties of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of Tennessee and East Carolina University. His special interests are in the treatment of lung, head and neck, genitourinary (prostate), and central nervous system malignancies.

Russo and Ove are both trained in a number of special procedures including Brachytherapy, Image Guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT), Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT), Tomotherapy and CyberKnife stereotactic radiosurgery. Their basic science backgrounds in biology and physics, respectively, complement their passions for incorporating the latest technological advances in radiation with the most advanced systemic treatments to provide state-of-the-art cancer treatment and care. We welcome this talented husband/wife team to the MCI.
The MCI is pleased to offer AccuBoost, which is designed to target and deliver the all-important boost dose accurately and reliably.

“The MCI strives to offer the most advanced technologies to our patients and AccuBoost is one of many cutting-edge treatments offered within the USAMCI Department of Radiation Oncology,” said Dr. Russell, chair of the department. The USAMCI Radiation Oncology Department offers a full continuum of radiation oncology modalities. The Cyberknife and Tomotherapy Center is located on the ground floor of the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute; this center includes two of the most advanced radiation technologies available in the country. This center also includes a 64-slice PET/CT Scanner. The Radiation Oncology Clinic of the MCI, located on the ground floor of the Mobile Infirmary DeBakey Professional Office Building, houses three Varian linear accelerators. For more information, please visit the MCI website at www.usamci.com.
A sold-out tribute drawing participants from across the state honored former Gov. and Mrs. Bob Riley at the USA Mitchell Center, on Thursday, Jan. 13, at the University of South Alabama Mitchell Center.

The $65,000 raised at the event will benefit the Elizabeth Jenice Riley Memorial Endowment Fund at the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute. The Rileys’ daughter Jenice succumbed to cancer at age 33, just as Riley began his race for his first term as Alabama’s governor.


During an emotional speech at the event, Mrs. Riley thanked the Mitchell family and the whole community for their commitment to cancer research and treatment at USAMCI.

“I would give anything in this world if no one ever had to hear the word ‘cancer’ again,” she said. “But, it is what it is, and that word will be said, probably to someone in this room. Now you have a wonderful, beautiful facility here in Mobile. You don’t have to go far away from home all alone to seek the most wonderful treatment.”

Gov. Riley said, “What you’ve done with this cancer center is to fulfill a dream and a vision you had nine years ago.”

In his closing remarks, he said, “Friends, you have made our lives special and for that we will be eternally grateful.”
Cancer Control and Prevention at the MCI: Colorectal Cancer Educational Initiative

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the U.S., as well as in the state of Alabama, despite the fact that it is 90% curable when detected early. This fact is what makes the partnership between USA Mitchell Cancer Institute and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) so exciting. In 2010 the MCI was the recipient of a grant through the ADPH and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) which focuses on improving colorectal cancer screening rates through engaging healthcare providers as partners and educating lay persons on the importance of colorectal screening and their options for early detection.

Over the summer and fall of 2010, the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute and the ADPH, conducted a survey of primary care providers statewide to 1) determine the challenges in educating patients about the importance of colorectal cancer screenings 2) “take a closer look” at colorectal cancer screening practices in Alabama, and 3) develop educational and other strategies to improve colorectal cancer screening rates in the state. All primary care providers in Alabama, including family medicine physicians, internal medicine physicians, and OB/GYN physicians, were mailed a survey. This survey was commissioned as part of a five year grant through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to promote colorectal cancer prevention and early detection in our state, with the ultimate goal of reducing colorectal cancer mortality in Alabama.

We were pleased with the response rate from the survey; of the 2,378 practicing physicians receiving the survey, we had a 26% response rate. The information gathered provided crucial data for designing a plan specific for our eight county region surrounding the Mobile metropolitan area. An informational packet was developed which includes a listing of all Grade A tests for colorectal cancer screening recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, academic articles supporting the use of multiple methods of colorectal cancer screening including both colonoscopy and the use of the FIT or Fecal Immunochemical Test and supportive tools for their “in office” use such as an educational DVD for patients explaining why colorectal screening is so important at age 50. These educational packets are disseminated to physicians during a “one on one” office visit to primary care providers by Susan Crutchfield, RN, Coordinator for Community and Physician Outreach at the Mitchell Cancer Institute. Samples of the FIT are also delivered at the time of the visit to allow physicians not familiar with this form of testing to explore the possibility of its use in their practice.

As statistics reflect that only 30-40% of all adults age 50 and over receive any form of colorectal screening in Alabama, our work is cut out for us. Our goal is for the state of Alabama to rank in the top one third in the nation for both prevention and diminished mortality related to colorectal cancer. A colorectal cancer screening newsletter outlining the results of the survey and discussing how we achieve these goals was sent in follow-up to all primary care providers statewide. This newsletter is available upon request by contacting Susan Crutchfield at 251-665-8000 or scrutchfield@usouthal.edu.

Building Blocks for Tomorrow’s Advances: Cancer Research at the MCI

While research appears to take place “behind the scenes” to the average person, at USA Mitchell Cancer Institute (MCI), it is entirely at the forefront in the fight to find new ways to cure and prevent cancer. Our researchers provide the building blocks for tomorrow’s clinical advances through investigation into the mechanisms and pathways involved in the development and progression of cancer. Every stride we make to expand hope comes only after an advancement of knowledge. MCI has built a robust, interactive and entrepreneurial training environment where investigators, physicians, physician-scientists, medical students, clinical fellows and Ph.D. graduate students work collaboratively supported by state-of-the-art core laboratories and specialized equipment. The University Tech Park and on-site commercial development teams drive the development efforts of use-inspired research.

MCI’s scientists and physicians are able to translate scientific findings into novel diagnostics for early cancer detection and life-saving treatments for cancer patients. According to Laurie Owen, Ph.D., Barbara Colle Chair and Associate Director for Basic and Translational Science, “the highly collaborative environment at the MCI drives interdisciplinary research in cancer biology and this innovative research is yielding critical insights into the origin and behavior of cancer. We continually strive to translate these findings into enhanced diagnostic, prognostic and prevention strategies, with the ultimate goal of improving patient outcomes.” The MCI currently has extramural grant funding in excess of $11,400,000. Since 2007, the MCI has filed 24 patents on inventions related to cancer diagnostics and/or therapy and has one technology licensed, with negotiations underway for additional licensing agreements.
In July 2009, University of South Alabama Trustee and philanthropist Arlene Mitchell established an endowment in memory of her late husband, Mayer Mitchell. Mr. Mitchell was a long-time supporter of the University of South Alabama, a trustee and past board chair, and an early advocate and driving force in the establishment of a cancer research institute in Mobile. The purpose of the Mayer Mitchell Annual Award for Excellence in Cancer Research is to provide an unrestricted award to a promising scholar/scientist. Some of the criteria used in the selection process include: originality and creativity of the research conducted, degree to which the purposed research could substantially contribute to the current state of knowledge, scientific articles submitted and accepted for publication, grant submission activity and success, peer recognition, honors, and awards received, and a commitment to the mission of the MCI as envisioned by Mayer Mitchell.

In fall 2010, Dr. Lalita Shevde-Samant was presented the first Mayer Mitchell Award for Excellence in Cancer Research. Dr. Samant is an assistant professor of oncologic sciences at the USAMCI. Her research focuses on the investigation of the molecular mechanisms and signaling pathways that regulate malignant behavior and drug resistance of breast cancer.

Dr. Lalita Shevde-Samant and Arlene Mitchell

Dr. Ming Tan Wins National Institutes of Health Award

The National Institutes of Health has awarded a research team led by Dr. Ming Tan a five-year, $1.4 million grant to study mechanisms that lead to abnormal cellular metabolism in cancer cells and investigate effective strategies against breast cancer by targeting abnormal glucose metabolism in cancer cells.

Tan is an assistant professor of oncologic sciences and Vincent F. Kilborn, Jr. Cancer Research Scholar at USAMCI.

In this study, the researchers will investigate the mechanisms that lead to abnormal glucose metabolism in cancer cells and will investigate the antitumor effects of trastuzumab (Herceptin®) in combination with glycolysis inhibitors in breast cancer.

Cancer metabolism has emerged as one of the most exciting areas of cancer research that may open a new therapeutic avenue and may bring new hope for cancer patients.

Tan's team of investigators includes Dr. Hung Khong and Dr. Lewis Pannell, USAMCI; Dr. Susan LeDoux and Dr. Glenn Wilson, USA College of Medicine; and Dr. Bin Wang, USA department of math and statistics. In addition, this USA-led collaborative research project includes scientists around the world, including researchers from Emory University and University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, as well as international collaborators from China, Norway, and Switzerland.

Dr. Ming Tan

Shevde-Samant Wins Federal Funding from National Cancer Institute for studies on a novel Breast Tumor suppressor gene

Dr. Lalita Shevde-Samant, assistant professor at the USAMCI, has won a grant from the National Cancer Institute to study Merlin, a novel tumor suppressor that her laboratory has discovered for its role in breast cancer.

Shevde-Samant's laboratory has been one of the leaders in demonstrating the adverse roles of osteopontin protein in breast cancer. The proposed study will address how Merlin is destroyed in breast cancer cells because osteopontin targets it for destruction.

The research grant of over $1.5 million from the NCI will fund further investigation of Merlin in breast cancer, understand the dialogue between Merlin and osteopontin, and determine novel molecules that can be therapeutically targeted to intervene in breast cancer. The R01 grant team includes Shevde-Samant, principal investigator; Dr. Rajeev Samant, associate professor, USAMCI; Dr. Allan Tucker, chair, USA College of Medicine department of pathology; Dr. Madhuri Mulekar, interim chair, USA department of mathematics and statistics; and Dr. Keqiang Ye of Emory University.
Dr. Jack Rostas, a general surgery resident, has won an American Medical Association seed grant for 2011. This highly competitive award is given to select aspiring physician-scientists following a nationwide search. Rostas will receive this award for the research that he is performing in the laboratory of Dr. Rajeev Samant at the Mitchell Cancer Institute. Samant’s laboratory has recently discovered that an underlying reason for aggressiveness in some breast cancers is the absence of a key protein in NMI. Rostas has discovered promising clues that may lead to possible therapeutic strategies involving restoration of NMI levels in patients. This intervention could hold promise as a method to curtail the ability of cancer to spread, or in combination with conventional therapy allow for a synergistic treatment effect.

Rostas decided to take some time off from his surgical residency to work in research at USAMCI.

“The research that goes on every day at MCI is truly amazing,” Rostas said. “I am fortunate to have the opportunity to help advance our understanding of breast cancer.”

Two graduate students from the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute were recognized for their research at the 102nd Annual Meeting of the American Association of Cancer Research in early April, which brought together cancer researchers from all over the world in Orlando. The meeting showcases cutting edge research in cancer, and it highlights new developments in understanding and treating cancer.

Lillianne Harris has been selected as an AACR-Women in Cancer Research Scholar. This award is presented to women scientists-in-training who present meritorious scientific research at the AACR meeting. Harris presented research about Hedgehog signaling pathway. Cancer cells ‘turn on’ this pathway to acquire a proliferative and survival advantage. Her research reveals how this pathway triggers events that allow tumor cells to recruit a blood supply that nurtures them. She is currently pursuing graduate studies under the mentorship of Dr. Lalita Shevde-Samant, assistant professor, in the department of oncologic sciences at the USAMCI.

Daniel Devine, also a graduate student at the USAMCI, has been selected as a finalist for the Scholar-in-training award at the AACR meeting. He presented his research at the annual AACR in a platform presentation. Devine is currently pursuing graduate studies under the mentorship of USAMCI Associate Professor Dr. Rajeev Samant. The research involves a novel molecule, N-Myc Interactor (NMI) that was first characterized for its role in decreasing the aggressiveness of cancer cells in Samant’s laboratory. Devine’s research has uncovered the role of NMI in preventing the cancer cells from acquiring highly invasive properties.
Peter Gaillard, Sr. was diagnosed with stage-four pancreatic cancer at the end of September 2010. By the time the diagnosis was received, the cancer had metastasized to his liver. After searching nationwide for a cancer center that could provide the highest level of care, Peter decided to receive treatment at the Mitchell Cancer Institute. He was drawn to the MCI’s approach of interdisciplinary care and liked the idea of having several physicians develop a treatment plan that was designed specifically for him. Peter also liked the fact that he could receive the care he needed while staying in his hometown with family and friends by his side.

Being close to his family was a top priority for Peter because he wasn’t the only one suffering from cancer. His brother Tommy was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer less than a year before and his daughter Mary Ladd was completing chemotherapy for breast cancer. With all of them receiving care in Mobile, they were able to provide a support system for one another that most patients describe as a necessity of the treatment process. “As soon as dad was diagnosed our first thought was get out of Mobile and go to a larger, out-of-town facility but we chose MCI so dad could stay home and since my uncle Tommy had such a great experience” said Peter Gaillard, Jr. “We are so glad we chose the Mitchell Cancer Institute. The amazing facility and its professional staff provided for a great experience for all of us. If we are ever faced with cancer again, we know where to go without question.”

After a six-month battle, Peter passed away peacefully on March 24, 2011. Less than three months later, Tommy also succumbed to the disease. With growing fear that others might carry the gene, several family members have decided to participate in a familial related pancreatic cancer study at Johns Hopkins Comprehensive Cancer Center. They hope their involvement will help them to better understand the disease, its impact and hereditary and environmental factors.

Recognizing the need for advanced cancer research in their own community, the Gaillard family approached the Mitchell Cancer Institute about their desire to establish a research endowment. Through their own personal investments and many memorial gifts made in loving memory of Peter and Tommy, the Gaillard Pancreatic Cancer Research Endowment has been established. “Pancreatic cancer is a silent killer with an estimated 43,140 new cases diagnosed last year resulting in 36,800 deaths,” said Laurie Owen, Ph.D., Barbara Colle Chair and Associate Director for Basic and Translational Science. “Because cancer of the pancreas often develops without any early symptoms, only 7% of patients are diagnosed at an early stage. Researchers at the Mitchell Cancer Institute are working on innovative methods to improve early detection and therapeutic options for patients with pancreatic cancer. The endowment will provide a critical foundation to expand ongoing diagnostic, prognostic, and therapeutic strategies in pancreatic cancer with the ultimate goal of improving patient outcomes.”

To raise additional funds for the endowment, the family is planning a saltwater and freshwater fishing tournament to be held this fall. “We are hopeful the Gaillard Pancreatic Cancer Research Endowment will one day save a life” Gaillard, Jr. stated. “We hope that in my generation or my children’s lifetime that there will be an early detection of this horrible disease and Mitchell Cancer Institute will be the one to find it.”
After creating buzz in the community as the “must attend” event of the year, the Mitchell Cancer Institute hosted the Second Annual Celebrate Hope fundraiser benefit on Thursday, November 18, 2010, drawing a record crowd of 600 guests. Presented by iBERIABANK, Celebrate Hope featured local chefs and caterers preparing culinary masterpieces paired with fine wines and specialty beers. A live musical performance was provided by The Little River Band.

Chairs Tonia and Jerry Silverstein and vice-chairs Cynthia Zipperly and Sheri Weber, along with a committee of volunteers, transformed the grounds of the Mitchell Cancer Institute’s midtown campus into a picturesque Tuscan scene. Stunning floral arrangements, a stone water feature, colorful butterflies and oversized seating arrangements were wonderful additions to the event’s main feature, spectacular food and beverages. Guests enjoyed mouth-watering dishes created by talented chefs of several local restaurants and catering companies while sampling fine wines and craft beers.

A special thank you reception was held the following evening at the Beau Rivage Resort and Casino for all sponsors of Celebrate Hope. Guests were treated to an upscale cocktail reception in the beautifully decorated Camellia Ballroom and a performance by one of the biggest headline acts in show business, Terry Fator, winner of “America’s Got Talent.”
Thanks to the support of so many businesses and individuals, Celebrate Hope netted more than $277,000, with 100% of the proceeds to benefit the Mitchell Cancer Institute’s cancer research programs. “It is an honor to be the premier sponsor of such a prominent fundraising event devoted to cancer research,” says Russ Ford, iBERIABANK Market President of South Alabama. “Our investment in the Celebrate Hope fundraiser and the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute is a testament to our company’s commitment to our local community and the healthcare of its families.”

The Third Annual Celebrate Hope gala is scheduled for November 17, 2011. For sponsorship opportunities and ticket information, contact the Office of Development at (251) 460-7032.
With the Mitchell Cancer Institute experiencing growth in clinical services, research and community education programs, the need for funding in support of these areas is also increasing. In response to these demands, University of South Alabama president Gordon Moulton established the Mitchell Cancer Institute Development Council. The council, comprised of local business leaders and philanthropists, assists the MCI Director, the Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations, and the development staff in securing private gift support for the Mitchell Cancer Institute. As advocates of the Institute, council members work throughout the year to identify, cultivate and help solicit financial support for new and existing programs that will ultimately help the Mitchell Cancer Institute achieve its goal of earning distinction as a National Cancer Institute - designated comprehensive cancer center.

Think Pink Tea

On October 7th, 2010 the Mitchell Cancer Institute partnered with Infirmary Health System’s Women’s Best Program, the Midtown Merchants Association and Martha Rutledge Catering to honor area breast cancer survivors. The afternoon reception entitled the “Think Pink Tea” filled the atrium of the MCI with survivors, family members, caregivers and friends to share in an afternoon of gratitude for obstacles that had been overcome. A tribute from Mobilian Ronnie Wright, the spouse of a breast cancer survivor, and his cathartic account of cancer’s effect on the entire family left few dry eyes in the house. Dr. Lynn Dyess, Mrs. Wright’s surgeon, also spoke about the role of the physician in cancer care and how difficult it is to go through the grieving process for those who “become like family” to you, yet how great it is to share in the joy with survivors as you too join in their battle for life.

Brigadier General Janet Cobb of the U.S. Army Reserve also brought a compelling perspective as she recounted her personal battle with breast cancer. Actively serving in the Gulf War, Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, Brigadier General Cobb felt that she had already been embroiled in the greatest challenges of her life, only to find out a few years later that cancer would pose her greatest challenge yet. The riveting personal accounts of endurance and strength inspired all who were there.

Dr. Ron Russell completed the afternoon with the recognition of all survivors who were each presented a pink baseball cap. Transformed by the uplifting sounds created by harpist, Mahlon McCracken, the MCI atrium resonated with good will. Martha Rutledge’s pink tiered cake was not only a visual work of art but a labor of love! Multiple door prizes were provided by the generosity of our Midtown Merchants, as well as other area merchants, and all Midtown Merchants donated a share of their two day profits to provide financial support for the occasion. Created to promote awareness of breast cancer, as well as to honor survivors, the Think Pink Tea inspired us all. Please mark your calendar for the 2011 Think Pink Tea on October 27th featuring keynote speaker and breast cancer survivor/advocate, Cookie Aftergut.
Prostate Cancer Awareness

Recognizing September as Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute sponsored an awareness reception and dinner to promote education, early detection and prevention of prostate cancer in south Alabama. Joined by members of the Us Too Prostate Cancer Education and Support Group, Dr. Eddie Reed spoke on the need for informed decision making between patients and their physicians. In June and July, the MCI provided free prostate screenings on six Fridays to further promote prostate cancer awareness. As research and technology are advancing daily in prostate cancer, the need for education about such changes and a patient’s involvement in deciding what is right for them is crucial. For an appointment to discuss your options please contact Dr. Eddie Reed at 251-665-8000. For more information on the Mobile chapter of “Us Too” please contact Duane Kent at 251-591-8557 or www.ustoomobile.org.

Not Just Dedicated but Creative Volunteers!

During chemotherapy treatments volunteers provide snacks, drinks, blankets and a listening ear to patients and families as they work alongside USAMCI nurses. But just like the founder of this dedicated group, Leila Hollowell, they enjoy “thinking outside the box.” With the help of Calagaz Photo, Trisha McMahon, a retired speech therapist and amateur photographer transformed some of her photographs of local sites into puzzles for patients to put together during their sometimes lengthy treatments. Becky Kinder, a volunteer at the MCI Fairhope location at Thomas Hospital, delivers therapeutic hand massages to her patients while they are undergoing treatment. She also created a campaign on her facebook page called “Hold Her Hand” which collects donated scarves and gives each new patient three scarves and personal instruction on how to tie them in attractive ways. Her twenty plus years as a women’s apparel store manager has definitely come in handy as she received over 150 scarves within the first few weeks of her campaign. Just like patients, Chemo Sabes come from all different backgrounds. Each brings their own unique talent to the job, but all bring their heart for serving others.

As Trisha McMahon states, “the key is the relationships you make with the patients, we learn a little bit about them, we let them know we are there for them and we do a lot of hugging and try to bring a little laughter into their day.”

Meet Our MCI Goodwill Ambassador

Dorothy Perkins, or “Dottie,” as she is known at the MCI, is a ten year veteran of the University of South Alabama health system. She has worked in a variety of departments from housekeeping to transportation and has always been known for her kind eyes and happy disposition, but most of all for her warm hugs! Dottie confesses that she has always been a people person, “I can’t help it, even people I’ve never seen in my life. I just want to give them a big hug”. Dottie first learned the power of a hug when she began working at a boot camp for troubled boys many years ago. “You could just see what it did for them, because you never knew what they had been through and a hug just let them know that even they were someone special!” Dottie believes that having a job where she greets new people everyday is what she was meant to do, “it reminds people that someone cares and that if all you can do is take one step forward then that’s okay because God will take two!”
Make a Gift

Making charitable contributions is an art— a creative process that adapts to the changing needs and wishes of the donor. There are many ways you can support the University of South Alabama Mitchell Cancer Institute. Your gift will help us provide the best care to every patient every day and pioneer medical innovations that help people across the region and beyond. For more information on how to make a gift, contact Kelly McCarron in the Office of Development at (251) 460-7276 or log on to www.southalabama.edu/mci/giving to make a secure transaction.

Oncology Outlook

Building on a very successful 2010, Oncology Outlook returned to Point Clear and the top rated Grand Hotel Marriott Resort to hold its’ 2011 annual CME conference for regional healthcare providers. The beautiful setting along the Eastern Shore of Mobile Bay once again attracted over 80 area physicians and other health practitioners for a Friday evening networking reception, as well as a day of learning about advances in cancer treatment and research. Technological and medical advancements now available to patients in the Mobile area were highlighted, as well as exciting developments in research underway at the MCI. Dr. Oliver Sartor, Medical Director of the Tulane Cancer Center was the keynote speaker and captivated the audience with his breadth of work in the field of prostate cancer. To view footage of the lectures please access our website at www.usamci.com

MCI Patient Navigation Coordinator Named ACS Volunteer of the Year

Cathy Tinnea, MCI Patient Navigation Coordinator, was honored this spring by the American Cancer Society as their 2010 Volunteer of the Year. Cathy chaired the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk which took place on October 30, 2010. Attending the walk were 15,000 survivors, family members, supporters and friends who helped to raise $325,000 for the ACS and to promote breast cancer awareness.

Save the DATE

Oncology Outlook
MARCH 23 & 24, 2012
MCI employees teamed up to support the American Cancer Societies’ annual Charity Chili Cookoff, Saturday, February 12, 2011, at Bienville Square. A beautiful warm day, lots of teamwork, some chili pepper beads, and a great recipe provided by one of our radiation oncology engineers, Ken Sylvia, created the perfect mix for fun. Our “wild game” offering didn’t make the finals this year, but it did create a spark of determination to return next year for another try!


In memory of Vernita Burks Balbuena, family members presented a check for $1,500 to Dr. Thomas Butler at the Bay Bears “Pink in the Park” event on April 16, 2011, to benefit lung cancer research.

On June 24, 2011, Chris Conover and Susan Barnes of Bikers Battling Breast Cancer of Lower Alabama presented Dr. Lynn Dyess and Travis Grantham with a $5,000 check for ongoing breast cancer research.

Ruth’s Chris Steak House graciously donated 10% of their lunch and dinner proceeds, totaling $1,466.32, on June 17, 2011, to general cancer research.

The 3rd Annual GO for Gynecologic Oncology 5K was held on September 18, 2010. It was once again a record year, with 856 registered participants and over $33,000 raised for gynecologic cancer research.

Mr. Richard Frank and employees of Goldstein’s Jewelers presented a check for $1,223.00 on December 7, 2010. This donation was a result of an Exclusive Trunk Show by acclaimed jewelry artist, Denny Wong. A portion of the proceeds of the event benefited breast cancer research.

The 4th Annual Shrimp for Life™ NYC was held on May 20, 2011, at the Bowery Hotel in New York City. Hosted by Mayer and Arlene Mitchell’s grandchildren, this kick off to summer event featured hors d’oeuvres, cocktails, dancing and a silent auction. Since 2008, this event has generated over $218,000 to the Audrey Joyce Grodnick Breast Cancer Research Endowment.

The 13th Annual Walking for the Memories walk was held in Grand Bay on April 2, 2011. This year over $6,000 was raised and the funds will be used to purchase two outdoor benches for the Infusion Terrace.
UPCOMING MCI EVENTS

September 17, 2011
4th Annual GO for Gynecologic Oncology 5K/1 Mile Fun Run/Walk
8:00 a.m.
USA Main Campus
Mitchell Center Lawn
Benefits GYN cancer research

October 18, 2011
5th Annual Eastern Shore Toyota and Eastern Shore Hyundai Golf Tournament
11:00 a.m.
Timbercreek Golf Club
Daphne, Alabama
Benefits Shawn and Leyla Esfahani Breast Cancer Research Endowment

October 23, 2011
2nd Annual Tennis for Tatas
1:00 p.m.
Mobile Tennis Center
Benefits breast cancer research

October 27, 2011
2nd Annual Think Pink Tea
4 – 6 p.m.
Mitchell Cancer Institute
Co-sponsored by Infirmary Health System

November 17, 2011
3rd Annual Celebrate Hope gala
6:00 p.m.
Mitchell Cancer Institute
Benefits cancer research

For more information on how you can sponsor, participate or volunteer for MCI Special Events, please contact Abbie McCullough at 251-460-7032 or e-mail amcullough@usouthal.edu

Visit our Website: www.usamci.com/specialevents

Stay connected to the MCI.
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