Sea Change
School of Marine and Environmental Sciences, led by Dr. Sean Powers, launches with a new campus home.
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Vice President for Development & Alumni Relations
Margaret M. Sullivan

Vice President for Marketing & Communications
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SOUTH Magazine is a publication of the Office of Alumni Relations and the USA National Alumni Association. It is intended to inform alumni and friends of current USA events and issues.

ALUMNI REUNION WEEKEND
Jaguars from across the country returned to campus for South’s first in-person alumni reunion weekend.

JAGUAR MEMOIRS
Alumni from across the decades share memories of their time as students at South.

SEA CHANGE
There’s a new home for students and professors in the newly established School of Marine and Environmental Sciences.

LIGHTS, JAGUARS, ACTION!
Students gain hands-on training with the ESPN+ broadcast team.

Inside
4 View from the Belltower
5 Executive Director’s message
6 University News
10 Groundbreaking Impact
12 Jaguar Memoirs
16 Sea Change
22 Lights, Jaguars, Action!
27 Expansion continues for USA Health
32 Alumni Reunion Weekend

22
22
12
16
32
uring the first weekend of October we welcomed hundreds of alumni to campus for the University’s inaugural Alumni Reunion Weekend. After postponing the event in 2020 due to the pandemic, we were overjoyed to see our dedicated alumni face to face for four days of social, educational, athletic and networking events.

Last spring, the NAA launched Jaguar Memoirs: An Oral History Project. Thousands of USA alumni shared stories from their time at South for this unique project. We are excited to share a few of these stories in this issue, and we will be sharing many more in the upcoming years.

Although 2021 has brought the University and the Alumni Association its share of challenges, our alumni and friends united to make this past year our most successful fundraising year in USA’s history. Through your generosity, USA and USA Health are able to continue growing and thriving.

The USA National Alumni Association and the University could not achieve these milestones without your continued enthusiasm and support. Thank you for being part of this incredible Jaguar community.

Go Jags!

Karen Edwards ’80
Executive Director
USA National Alumni Association
**USA Board of Trustees Selects Jo Bonner as University President**

Former Congressman Jo Bonner, who represented Alabama’s First District in the U.S. House of Representatives for six terms and currently serves as chief of staff to Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey, will be the fourth president of the University of South Alabama.

“We are tremendously pleased that our comprehensive national search has resulted in the decision to bring Mr. Bonner to USA as the fourth president in the history of the University,” said Jimmy Sluotock, chair pro tempore of the USA Board of Trustees. “With his leadership, we look forward to the continued elevation of the University of South Alabama’s reputation as a leading academic, research and healthcare institution.”

In his current position, Bonner directs an executive staff of 35 and oversees 21 cabinet agencies and departments administering a total state budget of more than $26 billion. His role includes the development of the governor’s strategic policy agenda and communications, working with leaders of the Alabama Legislature, the business community, numerous advocacy groups as well as the public.

In addition to his decade in elected office, Bonner’s first 100 days in the Spring issue of South Magazine.

**USA Health’s NICU nurse manager among Alabama’s Top Nurses**

Renee Rogers, nurse manager for the Hollis J. Wiseman Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at USA Health Children’s & Women’s Hospital, has been named one of Alabama’s Top Nurses by Alabama Media Group.

Out of more than 400 nominations from across Alabama, Rogers was one of only 10 healthcare providers selected for this honor by a panel from the state nurses association.

**National Alumni Association Recognizes Outstanding Faculty, Alumni**

The USA National Alumni Association presented its Faculty Excellence Awards and Young Alumni Award during its annual membership meeting on Aug. 26. Five USA faculty members were recognized for their achievements as well as one young alumna. Additionally, three alumni were elected as new members of the National Alumni Association Board of Directors.

**NAA Board of Directors member publishes book**

Ron Stallworth ’03 published his first book, Cracks in the Wall, in July 2021. The memoir relates Stallworth’s experience of overcoming extreme poverty, homelessness and illiteracy to ultimately achieve success as an engineer and philanthropist. The lessons in this book are cross-racial, cross-generational, and are relevant to both ends of the socio-economic spectrum with its simple, powerful message: reach through the cracks in the wall that divide us.

Stallworth is senior director of business development at Hargrove Engineers + Constructors and currently serves as secretary/treasurer of the USA National Alumni Association Board of Directors.

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Fox wins Lifetime Achievement Award in Nursing

Dr. Natalie Fox has earned the 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award from This is Alabama and the Alabama State Nurses Association. Fox, a nurse practitioner, serves as the assistant administrator and chief nursing officer for USA Health’s Physicians Group. In her role, she is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Physicians Group with a focus to continuously improve patient-centeredness, patient equity and timeliness of healthcare delivery. Since March of 2020, when the coronavirus pandemic began, she has overseen operations at USA Health’s drive-through COVID-19 testing and vaccination site which is currently located at the Civic Center in downtown Mobile. Fox is a three-time graduate of USA, earning her bachelor’s, master’s and doctorate—all in nursing—at the University.

Board of Trustees Scholarship awarded

Connor Holm, a 2021 graduate of Satsuma High School, has been awarded the University of South Alabama Board of Trustees Scholarship. The $5,000 award is given annually to the most academically talented student in each incoming freshman class.

At Satsuma, Holm was valedictorian, a National Merit Scholar, president of her senior class and the National Honor Society and served as captain of the soccer and cross-country teams.

The freshman biomedical sciences major is in the Early Acceptance Program that conditionally guarantees admission into the USA College of Medicine and is a member of the Honors College.

Ard Receives Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award

Dr. Bri Ard, University of South Alabama director of international education and study abroad, has received a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program Award for 2021-2022.

Fulbright scholars engage in cutting-edge research and expand their professional networks, often continuing research collaborations started abroad and laying the groundwork for future partnerships between institutions.

Ard will travel to Bucharest, Romania to teach American Studies at the University of Bucharest and conduct a qualitative research project on Romanian student life. Also, as a Fulbright Scholar, Ard will share knowledge and foster meaningful connections across communities in the United States and Romania.

“Our project draws upon the Fulbright Program’s fruitful legacy of international exchanges and seeks to build upon the Fulbright Program’s 75th anniversary this year. Since 1946, the Fulbright Program has provided more than 400,000 participants from more than 160 countries the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research, exchange ideas and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns.”

Nursing graduate appointed to Board of Community Health

Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp appointed Cynthia Barker, DNP, RN-BC, NE-BC to the Georgia Board of Community Health in August. She will serve in this capacity for two years.

The Georgia Department of Community Health is governed by a nine-person board appointed by the governor. Dr. Barker is a clinical nurse manager at the Atlanta VA Healthcare System. She earned her doctorate in nursing from the University of South Alabama in 2017.
GROUND IMPACT

A growing alumni base, combined with committed supporters willing to give, has led to the most successful fundraising year in the University of South Alabama’s 58-year history.

"Our donors see immense value in the University of South Alabama and USA Health. They are choosing to invest because it is a force for good in our region."
Margaret Sullivan
Vice President, Development and Alumni Relations

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"‘Winning this scholarship has been a blessing for me. It has helped me continue my education and given me more financial opportunities to apply for graduate school.’"
Kennedy Reese ‘22
Scholarship Recipient

"It gives us an opportunity to honor the legacy of our parents for teaching us valuable lessons about the importance of never forgetting where you came from, always encouraging others, giving back to the community and maintaining a strong community connection."
Dr. Robbie Holt-Snyder ‘00, ’07
Donor & USA Health retiree

$26.1 MILLION
donated or pledged

4,440
total donors

1,314
donors gave to USA or USA Health for the first time

"Individual donor money supports our academic physician scientists and is the difference that allows us to create new life-saving therapies at USA Health."
Dr. Martin Heslin
Director, USA Health Mitchell Cancer Institute

$15.5 MILLION
raised in support of USA Health through the generosity of 2,194 donors

$7,389,804
raised in support of the Pediatric Emergency Center to meet the needs of more than 40,000 children annually

25 NEW ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS and donations to 336 existing scholarships

5,083 DONATIONS of $250 or less totaling $312,637

$1.2 MILLION
given through Employee and Retiree Campaign for USA and USA Health

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Donor & USA Health retiree
Jaguar Memoirs

An Oral History Project

Last spring, hundreds of alumni shared memories of their time as students at South Alabama. Over the next year, we will be sharing some of their stories with you. Whether they graduated a few years ago or several decades ago, their memories show the indelible mark that South has made on their lives.

Tom Corcoran ’70
B.S., Marketing Management

“There were five kids in my family, and three of us were headed to college within three years. I attended the University of South Alabama because it was affordable. I had top-notch professors who prepared me to move into the workforce. I was heavily involved in my fraternity and remain friends with those guys to this day.

“The University brought companies for on-campus interviews. I obtained a job with an oil, gas and chemical company headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio. I was able to move up the ranks. One of my assignments was to travel to China 2-3 times a year and negotiate large chemical purchase contracts with the government. This was in the very early days when China was just opening up to the outside. Six years prior I had been sitting in a classroom at the University of South Alabama. I spent 15 years in the chemical business, and then I was recruited to become president of a small animal health company. Over the course of the next 23 years we were able to grow the company from $25 million to $1.2 billion with worldwide operations.

“Any success I have had started at the University of South Alabama.”

Dr. Kathleen A. Pajer ’82
M.D., USA College of Medicine

“My husband at the time was a nuclear engineer in Pascagoula, Miss. I applied to the University of South Alabama because it was the closest medical school, but I am very glad that I did. It was a terrific educational environment, and I received excellent medical training.

“Since South was a relatively new medical school, we had numerous opportunities for hands-on experiences that were not possible at larger institutions with full complements of residents and fellows. When I went to Dartmouth and Yale for residency and fellowship respectively, I discovered that I had received better training in many domains than my colleagues.

“My experience at South was transformative in shaping the direction of my career. I was able to participate in basic research from the first year of training onward. I went on to become a clinician scientist, focusing most recently on strategies to improve the pediatric mental health service system in Canada. I’m currently the chair of a large department of psychiatry at the University of Ottawa. I am grateful to South for such a strong start in my career and have fond memories of colleagues and professors, some of whom remain friends to this day.”
“South was local and close to where I lived. The campus itself stood out to me the most; it was just so tranquil.

“It’s a place where you can become the best version of yourself or a stepping stone to become the best version of yourself.”

“South gives you the fundamentals to succeed, and they make sure that you’re well-rounded, are ready for success and to take on anything that comes your way. The University is a very integral part of our community, and it means everything to everyone who has a professional career. It’s a place where you can become the best version of yourself or a stepping stone to become the best version of yourself that enriches the value of life.”

“South is the reason why I have my job now at Lifelines Counseling Services. I met my internship supervisor at South, and she placed me into the job. If it hadn’t been for South, I would have never been in the position that I’m in today.”

1990s

Nikhil M. Patel ’97
B.S., Management
Mitchell College of Business

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“It’s a place where you can become the best version of yourself or a stepping stone to become the best version of yourself.”

2000s

Charles O. Erwin ’07, ’18
B.S., Interdisciplinary Studies
Doctorate of Education

“My bachelor’s degree was in adult interdisciplinary studies, which allowed three areas of study. Since I was a functioning paramedic, all of my paramedic credits applied to that degree. I also had an interest in education and history. Those were my other two areas of study.

“As a student it was the dedication of the faculty that impressed me most.”

“I knew that if I wanted to continue to progress as a faculty member at USA, I needed a doctorate. I enrolled in the doctor of education with a specialty in higher education leadership. All those degrees were pursued and accomplished because I wanted to continue to grow here at South. Now I’m the interim assistant dean of undergraduate affairs at the College of Allied Health Professions and the chair of the Department of EMS Education. As a student it was the dedication of the faculty that impressed me most. Being a military member, loyalty is very important to me. I’ve found that at South.”

2010s

Dr. Kaila M. Mattson, ’11
B.S., Chemistry

“I had the opportunity to attend school at the University of South Alabama on a full academic scholarship through the Junior Miss program [now Distinguished Young Women] as Wisconsin’s 2007 Junior Miss. Through the Honors Program I began hands-on laboratory research in the fall semester of my freshman year. I was very fortunate to be paired with Dr. James Davis in the chemistry department, who served as my mentor throughout my undergraduate tenure. To this day he continues to serve in that function.

“I’m doing research every day, leveraging those skills that I first learned at South.”

“I co-authored peer-reviewed scientific publications as an undergraduate student and completed two research internships in Germany. Because of those experiences and the help of the faculty, I was also awarded a national Barry Goldwater Scholarship, Mortar Board National Foundation Fellowship and a National Science Foundation Fellowship.

“I was blessed with truly exceptional mentors and professors who took a genuine interest in my personal and professional development. Now I’m a product development chemist at Dow Chemical. I’m doing research every day, leveraging those skills that I first learned at South. Attending South was not only one of the best choices I’ve ever made, but one of the most pivotal that really was a turning point in my life.”

2010s

Kenishia Pritchett ’18
B.S., Interdisciplinary Studies

“I chose to go to South because my brother was going for football, and I ended up going on his official visit with them. I fell in love with the closeness of the campus on this visit, and three years later I became a student.

“My favorite spot was the sitting area around the library. I worked in the Marx Library, and it was peaceful and calm. It was in the center of campus, and I could see everything.”

“My favorite spot was the sitting area around the library. I worked in the Marx Library, and it was peaceful and calm. It was in the center of campus, and I could see everything.

“Dr. Krista Harrell had the most impact on me. She was the coordinator when I was there, so got me into the Vagina Monologues, which I participated in all four years. Dr. Harrell was caring and passionate about her job, and left the most lasting impression to this day.

“South is the reason why I have my job now at Lifelines Counseling Services. I met my internship supervisor at South, and she placed me into the job. If it hadn’t been for South, I would have never been in the position that I’m in today.”
Dr. Amy Sprinkle couldn’t wait to move into a new home for the School of Marine and Environmental Sciences at South. She boxed up books and keepsakes from her old basement office in the Life Sciences Building. She unloaded her things while workmen were still finishing classrooms and labs on the second and third floors of the Education and Outreach Building.

In her new office, there’s a wall of windows overlooking the Glenn Sebastian Nature Trail on the north side of campus.

“I’m so stoked to have a view,” she said. “Really excited about that. I’ll be able to bring in plants and get some photosynthesis going in here.”

Sprinkle, the undergraduate coordinator for marine sciences, often meets with prospective students and their families.

Next fall, pending state approval, the school will welcome undergraduates majoring in marine or environmental sciences. Plans for bachelor’s degree programs include a “Semester at Sea” at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab.

“If I was a student, I’d be totally jazzed about things like that,” Sprinkle said. “You know, ‘So I can take classes at the beach for a whole semester? Yes, please.’”

The School of Marine and Environmental Sciences, within the college of Arts and Sciences, was approved this spring by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education. This change marks a new era of coastal education and research at the University of South Alabama.

South invested $3.2 million in renovations of the Education and Outreach Building. It will hire four new environmental science professors over the next two years.

Natural resources crucial to the program include nearby Mobile Bay and the Gulf of Mexico.

“The strategy is to capitalize on our location,” said Dr. Sean Powers, chair of the School of Marine and Environmental Sciences. “We’re the only four-year public university in the state to have daily access to the ocean and the coastal environment.”
Powers, like many members of the South faculty in marine science, is also a senior scientist at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab. He and other professors are spending more time in Mobile. Laboratory equipment such as mass spectrometers are being moved from the barrier island to South’s campus.

“Hurricane Sally really hit the Sea Lab hard,” he said. “It taught us that we shouldn’t keep very expensive equipment in harm’s way.”

More durable is Dauphin Island’s national reputation. Marine science researchers at South bring in $5 to $7 million a year in new research grants. This money funds laboratories and equipment, along with graduate assistants.

Now, for the first time, South is adding an undergraduate degree program.

“This is an opportunity for us to leverage something that’s very successful,” Powers said. “We still want to be a research-intensive program. That’s why we’re planning to keep our undergraduate size really modest.”

Plans in environmental science call for an interdisciplinary approach. Hires will include professors of environmental toxicology and environmental sociology.

For years, South has welcomed marine science graduate students and Ph.D. candidates from across the country. Soon they will be joined by young undergraduates in marine and environmental sciences.

“It should be very refreshing,” Powers said with a smile. “They bring such enthusiasm, which is infectious, and they all want to change the world, which is a wonderful quality.”

The North side of South

The Education and Outreach Building, now home of the School of Marine and Environmental Sciences, is located north of Three Mile Creek, next to the Human Resources office at South.

Some faculty and students say they will miss being near other science departments – and the Starbucks in the Marx Library. Others are ready for a change of scenery.

“This brings us into a new space — that’s exciting,” said Erin Casellas, a marine sciences graduate student from Roseneath, Colo. “There’s more outdoor space, too, for eating lunch or reading a book. I spend most of my time on campus. I’m down on Dauphin Island maybe once a week.”

A pair of undergraduates — Amaya Brogden and Lizi Ryed — lead the Marine Science Student Association at South. There are nearly 100 members. They will share bigger meeting rooms, along with a student lounge, in the Education and Outreach Building.

“I wish we could have had this when I was a freshman,” said Brogden, a senior from Greenville, Ala., majoring in biology. “It’ll be a great draw for students at South Alabama.”

Byrd, a biology senior from Fairhope, also believes the new building and new school will help with recruiting students. The school will have a home of its own. Students care about things like that.

“I would go there every chance I got,” Byrd said. “They had a shark and stingray touch pool, and I thought that was the coolest thing in the world.”
She hopes to graduate in the spring, take a gap year, then go to work or graduate school. At South, she’s gotten a glimpse of the future for the School of Marine and Environmental Sciences.

“As a senior, I don’t think I’ll get to see a lot of the amazing things to come, but I am super-excited about it,” Byrd said. “I’m excited for all the underclassmen who will come here.”

**Maritime color scheme**

On a tour of the Education and Outreach Building, Powers marveled over the pale blues that replaced an outdated red-and-gold color scheme.

“This is much better than we pictured it,” he said. “Originally, there wasn’t going to be any money for renovations. It wound up costing about $3.2 million, so that’s a significant investment for the University.”

There are faculty offices with huge windows and teaching laboratories with long work tables. In between, there are break rooms, conference rooms and a student lounge. Another highlight is a 120-seat auditorium with video screens for large meetings and guest speakers.

Just last year, the department of marine sciences at Smith squeezed into 3,000 square feet. Now, the School of Marine and Environmental Sciences occupies more than 20,000 square feet.

“The big thing is space – our growth has been stymied by a lack of space,” Powers said. “Here, it’s all designed for us. A lot of analytical equipment requires a very clean space, and we have that here.”

In planning a curriculum, the School of Marine and Environmental Sciences got feedback from local companies along with state and federal agencies. Graduate programs will include courses for professionals to earn training certificates.

Powers said role models for South include Duke University and the University of California at Santa Barbara.

“These programs have been very successful,” he said. “They’re also significantly more expensive than South.”

Next year, the University will launch a lecture series to introduce the new School of Marine and Environmental Sciences to the public. Powers wonders if the Education and Outreach Building could also use some public art.

“There’s this Fairhope guy, Frank Ledbetter, who does metal sculptures, and he did one of cownose rays for the Dauphin Island Sea Lab,” he said. “Maybe we could talk one of our donors into getting him to do one for us.”

**The 1974 Society**

The 1974 Society is an elite group of dedicated alumni that provides support for the Alumni Association and its many programs. All 1974 Society members are recognized in a permanent display in the Macqueen Alumni Center.

**Your gift of $1,974 is payable over three years, and can be made online at southalabama.edu/1974society or call the Office of Alumni Relations at (251) 460-7084.**
It took eight tries to shoot the intro for the South football game with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette on the ESPN+ network.

When the audio went right, the video went wrong. Or the graphics didn’t sync. Or there was a technical glitch.

When the segment finally came together, a half-dozen students sighed with relief in the control room housed in a small trailer just outside Hancock Whitney Stadium.

“Roll it,” said technical director Will Davis, a senior majoring in communications. “Let’s roll with it.”

Many colleges hire freelance crews to broadcast home football games, but the University of South Alabama relies on a team of student workers. Most of them are studying communications and gaining experience. They learn on the job, and get better with each game.

“It’s fun when that light comes on, and they start enjoying it,” said Pat Greenwood, multimedia director for the South athletic department. “I’d put our broadcast up against anyone in the Sun Belt Conference.”

Before the Louisiana game, the student crew went through a checklist of pregame duties. They monitored equipment, and worked around a few tech issues.

Just then, heavy rain swept across campus. You could see it on the TV monitors and hear it on the roof of the trailer.

A student camera operator burst through the door, no jacket, soaked from head to toe. He needed to know how to handle his equipment during the downpour. “Did you go swimming?” somebody joked.

Parker Arrington, a senior majoring in computer science, was more helpful. “Do you have a camera cover?” he asked. “Yes.”

“OK,” Arrington said. “Hold the camera as close as you can to the wall.”

Slow Down, Then Speed Up

Things got tense in the control room as the Louisiana game began. Everyone with a headset talked to camera operators and across one another. Rapid-fire cues flew back and forth.

“Everybody ready?” “Going to black.” “Slow A in.” “You’re queued up?” “8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 …”

“Ready 2, Take 2.” “We need the quarterback – we need the quarterback’s face!” “Camera 2, to your right, to your right.” “Replay, replay it.” “3, can you get closer?”

The students groaned as the Ragin’ Cajuns scored three quick touchdowns on their way to a 20-0 lead. Crew members had their own problems. They missed cues and fumbled replays as they tried to get a handle on the game.

Tyler Folks, video production manager for the South athletic department, supervised the broadcast crew. He led Davis through the director’s role, especially at the beginning of a game.

“That’s the most chaotic part,” Folks said. “That’s when I tell everyone to slow down, take a deep breath. Find your routine, and then we can speed up your routine.”

During a timeout, Davis pulled back his headset. He enjoyed a swig of Coke and a handful of Skittles.
The crew settled into the broadcast. Davis said. "I was waiting for Pat to stop after the halftime break. "Let's get back a touchdown and started a comeback in the rain."

"I got nervous, I got nervous there," Davis said. "I'm constantly in their ears," he said. "You know, 'Tell Julie to keep pushing in on that shot.' Or 'Hey, make sure we have this.'"

"We had a student at one of our first games, he hadn't been drinking enough," he said. "I had a lot more responsibility because our crew was smaller." He marvels at how quickly South students pick up the routine.

"You know, 'Tell Julie to keep pushing in on the end zone camera?' And they're like, 'Oh, we're doing it now.'"

"I worked a camera and I directed for ESPN's Top Ten." Davis said. "You just deal with it," he said. "It's your shots was on ESPN's Top Ten." He marvels at how quickly South students pick up the routine. Football knowledge helps. So does enthusiasm and ambition.

Kyle Samuel, a student director last season, started work for Fox Sports in Charlotte, North Carolina, just after graduation.

"He was the kind of student who took control of things," Greenwood said. "He'd come in and say, 'I want to learn the truck,' or do this, or do that. He was ready to hit the real world when he left here." Greenwood, who serves as color commentator for Jaguar games, stays in touch with the student crew on his own headset in the press box.

"I'm constantly in their ears," he said. "You know, 'Tell Julie to keep pushing in on that shot.' Or 'Hey, make sure we have the right yardage on the graphic.'"

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"We had a student at one of our first games, he hadn't been drinking enough water, and he passed out," Greenwood said. "We're like, 'What happened to the low-end zone camera?' And they're like, 'Oh, he passed out.'"

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The Louisiana game was the first football broadcast for Mac Herrero, a freshman majoring in communications. He got soaking wet behind his end zone camera, but didn't seem to mind.

"You just deal with it," he said. "It's Mobile, you know?"

Herrero is a football fan and TV viewer who often knew the kind of camera shots the director wanted. He was a little nervous at first. He soon learned to focus on the job and tune out most of the chatter on his headset.

"When they say 'Camera 4,' he said, "that's when my ears turn on." He marvels at how quickly South students pick up the routine. Football knowledge helps. So does enthusiasm and ambition.

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Academic medicine = advanced healthcare

We’re an academic health system.
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The COVID-19 pandemic has altered so many things in people’s lives. Additionally, it has caused significant disruptions for a large number of businesses. Fortunately, it has not slowed USA Health’s effort to increase access to the region’s only academic healthcare system.

As the region’s only Level 1 trauma center, University Hospital and its specialized team of care providers stand ready for any type of emergency. In the fall of 2021, USA Health completed the renovation of the 11th floor of the hospital, reducing the amount of diversion time for the facility.

“This floor will help lead the way as we continue to grow as a healthcare system,” said Alan Whaley, Ph.D., USA Health chief operating officer.

“We are a trauma center, we are a highest-level stroke center, we are a burn center, and we just recently opened the Fanny Meisler Trauma Center. We cannot realize our potential in any of those areas without the capacity to support the efforts,” said Michael Chang, M.D., USA Health chief medical officer.

“This floor will allow us to diminish our diversion time in a way that will allow us to take care of those patients who come to us as the only academic healthcare system in the region.”

It took nearly a year to transform the previous storage area into 34 new, modern patient care rooms designed for both medical and surgical patients. The additional beds bring University Hospital up to nearly 220 beds in service.

The 10th floor of the hospital is being renovated from office space to clinical areas to build more capacity. That project is scheduled to be completed in mid-2022.

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DESPITE PANDEMIC, EXPANSION CONTINUES FOR USA HEALTH
USA Health’s commitment to enhancing access to care also includes the pediatric patient population. Earlier this fall, it broke ground on a renovated and expanded pediatric emergency center at Children’s & Women’s Hospital. “This will create the first true pediatric emergency center at the hospital,” said Edward Panacek, M.D., M.P.H., chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine. “The center will combine state-of-the-art technology with the advanced practice associated with an academic healthcare center to improve the care provided to everyone who comes through our doors.”

Scheduled for completion in summer 2023, the new facility will more than double the current emergency department from 9,000 square feet to nearly 19,000 square feet and expand from 14 treatment areas to more than 30 areas, including 25 private treatment rooms. The project also will create two behavioral health rooms and a sensory room to enhance the care for patients with specialized needs.

“Not only has the demand for our services grown with the population of the region, but the space requirements associated with the delivery of the high quality of care we are known for makes this expansion even more important.”

Ground broke this fall on a renovated and expanded pediatric emergency center at Children’s & Women’s Hospital.

Further, the space will provide enough room for parents and caregivers to be with their children to enhance the experience for young patients and their loved ones.

The Pediatric Emergency Center at USA Health Children’s & Women’s Hospital is the only healthcare facility in the region offering specialized care 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and staffed with pediatric emergency medicine physicians to host meet the needs of sick and injured children.

The expansion will strengthen the educational and training opportunities of future healthcare providers including emergency medicine residents, medical students, nurses and nurse practitioners, physician assistants and other allied health professionals. The new space will enable the installation of the most advanced equipment that care providers will be using not only now, but for generations to come.

“Not only has the demand for our services grown with the population of the region, but the space requirements associated with the delivery of the high quality of care we are known for makes this expansion even more important,” said Chris Jett, administrator for Children’s & Women’s Hospital. “We will have the most up-to-date equipment that matches the high-quality team that delivers the care.”

“For many, our pediatric emergency center is the gateway to resolving their child’s medical issue,” said Owen Bailey, M.H.A., FACHE, chief executive officer of USA Health. “This project is another example of our recent efforts to increase access to the unmatched services we provide. We are excited about having the opportunity to continue meeting the healthcare needs of the children in the Upper Gulf Coast region and hopefully provide some additional peace of mind to families in the area.”

Reaching across Mobile Bay to further meet the growing healthcare needs of the region, USA Health broke ground on the Mapp Family Campus in Baldwin County. Located at the southeast corner of state highways 181 and 104 in Fairhope, the campus will be home to an ambulatory surgery center and a physician office building.

“Collaborating with community physicians, providers from USA Health will bring their specialized expertise to meet the healthcare needs of the people in the region,” Bailey said. “As the only academic healthcare system in the region, USA Health continues to expand relationships with community providers and other partners, as we strive to provide increased access to the care that people need and deserve.”

Approximately 50 percent of the population of Baldwin County lives within 15 miles of the Mapp Family Campus.

The campus will be home to a three-story, 50,000-square-foot physician office building, staffed with primary and specialty care providers to better meet the healthcare needs of the people in the region. Specialties will include neurology, cardiology and surgical specialties, pediatric and adult gastroenterology and urology. The building also will house a full array of imaging technology, including X-ray, ultrasound, mammography, CT and MRI.

USA Health physicians and other providers will incorporate health and wellness strategies for their patients along with traditional medicine. A demonstration kitchen and community room will be included in the facility. Caregivers and coaches will provide opportunities to engage patients in movement, relaxation and healthy-eating classes, with the goal of helping people lead longer, better lives.
Within the 25,000-square-foot ambulatory surgery center, surgeons from USA Health and the community will utilize some of the most technologically advanced surgical equipment, including a Mako robotic arm to assist in total joint replacements. Surgical specialists in pediatrics, orthopedics, urology, general surgery, gastroenterology, ear, nose and throat, and more will care for patients at the new ambulatory surgery center. This facility is anticipated to eliminate the need for people to leave Baldwin County for surgery, keeping them closer to their homes and loved ones.

“The Mapp Family Campus will be another important location for educating and training the next generation of healthcare providers,” said John Marymont, M.D., MBA, vice president for medical affairs at the University of South Alabama and dean of the College of Medicine. “Having this additional site will help USA Health try to alleviate some of the healthcare provider shortages we are facing.”

Louis and Melinda Mapp donated the nearly eight acres of land that the campus will sit on, and the University of South Alabama named the campus in their honor. The Mapps are longtime supporters of USA Health, as well as volunteers at University Hospital and Children’s & Women’s Hospital.

“I have seen firsthand the impact that academic medicine can have on people,” Louis Mapp said. “We are honored to be a part of bringing that level of care to this part of our region.”

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During the first weekend of October, South held its first in-person Alumni Reunion Weekend. Hundreds of alumni from across the state and country returned to campus for four days of events.
Head football coach Kane Wommack gave alumni an enthusiastic season update at the Hargrove Club. Alumni flocked to the MacQueen Alumni Center on Saturday for the official alumni tailgate party.

The classes of 1970 and 1971 were honored during the Golden Jaguar dinner. The Sunday jazz brunch was the perfect ending to the weekend. The rain couldn’t take away the smiles and fun during the all-alumni party Friday evening.
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