Mobile Philanthropist Abraham Mitchell to Address USA 2013 Fall Commencement

Abraham A. Mitchell

Mobile philanthropist and businessman Abraham A. Mitchell, who earlier this year committed $50 million to the University of South Alabama on its 50th Anniversary, will address graduates at USA’s 2013 Fall Commencement.

Commencement will take place at 2 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 14, at the Mitchell Center. A total of 1,644 students are scheduled to graduate, which would bring the total number of degrees awarded to 77,188 throughout USA’s history.

USA is scheduled to award 1,002 bachelor’s degrees, 565 master’s degrees, 79 doctorate degrees and two education specialists. Fall commencement is the graduation exercise for both summer and fall terms.

USA and the Mobile County Public School System will partner again this year to provide live streaming of the University’s Fall Commencement. The live coverage begins Dec. 14 at 2 p.m. on the University’s Web site at www.southalabama.edu. Recorded video of the event will be available online at the same address following the live Web cast.

A native Mobilian, Abraham Mitchell has had a long and successful business career and is one of the state’s leading philanthropists in support of higher education. In the 1950s, he and his brother, Mayer, co-founded what would become one of the Southeast’s largest real estate companies, specializing in single-family homes, apartments and shopping centers. The Mitchell Company grew into one of Mobile’s largest employers.

Earlier this year, Abraham Mitchell committed $50 million to the University. Half of the gift is for the Mitchell-Moulton Scholarship Initiative; the other half for USA’s Mitchell College of Business. The bequest brings the family’s total giving to the University of South Alabama to more than $93 million.

Abraham, Mayer and Arlene Mitchell’s gift of $22 million to support USA’s Cancer Research Institute resulted in the naming of the Mitchell Cancer Institute in their honor in early 2006. Abraham Mitchell played a major role in the renovation of USA’s Mitchell College of Business and the addition of a business library and resource center. He has provided full academic scholarships to 28 superior business students annually, as well as funding a challenge grant program to support faculty chairs in business. He assisted with funds to build the Mitchell Center and has supported USA athletics in numerous ways. He has endowed faculty chairs in the USA College of Medicine in radiology, cardiology and cancer research.

Mitchell also has donated to other educational institutions and to numerous civic groups and causes. Mitchell attended the Wharton School of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania. He received a bachelor’s degree in law from the University of Alabama and a master’s of law in taxation from the New York University School of Law.

In addition to his business career, Mitchell served as an interim district attorney for Mobile County. He is a member of Congregation Ahavas Chesed and has one son, Brent, who lives in Tel Aviv, Israel.

Mitchell was bestowed an honorary degree from the University of South Alabama in 2002. He was selected as Mobilian of the Year in 2006.

For graduating students, reserved parking will be available in the parking lot located behind the Mitchell College of Business on Jaguar Drive. Admittance to the Physical Education Building lot is limited to graduating students only.

Handicapped parking will be limited but is available for students, family and friends. Entrance to this parking lot will be from Old Shell Road only (behind the Mitchell Center). Proper tags must be visible for access to this lot.

Guests entering at Stadium Drive should park in the Gamma Residence Hall Parking Lot.

Parking signs are posted throughout the campus and shuttle service will be available to park in the posted areas. Directional parking signs will be displayed.

The shuttle service will run from noon-6 p.m. It will deliver guests to the Mitchell Center.

Shuttle pickup and drop-off points are University Commons, Gamma Residence Hall parking lot, Humanities Building parking lot, Administration parking lot and Jaguar Drive.

U.S. News & World Report Names Six USA Physicians to Annual “Top Doctors” List

Six physicians from the University of South Alabama Physicians Group and the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute appear in the “Top Doctors Directory” published by U.S. News & World Report magazine. They are the only doctors in the region to receive the honor.

Dr. Michael Finan, Johnson Haynes Jr., David Lewis, Arnold Luterman, Allen Perkins and William Richards were each listed among the top physicians in the United States.

Finan is professor and chief of the gynecologic and oncology division at the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute and is a professor of obstetrics and gynecology in the College of Medicine. He specializes in the management of cancers of the uterus, cervix, ovaries and the lower genital tract.

He was also the first gynecologist in Mobile to perform robotic surgery. Prior to joining USA, Finan served as the residency program director of gynecologic oncology and chair of the cancer committee at Ochsner Clinic Foundation in New Orleans.

Haynes is a professor of internal medicine and director of the USA Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center. He also serves as assistant dean for diversity and cultural competence at the College of Medicine. His interests are in the research and treatment of sickle cell disease. Haynes is a graduate of the USA College of Medicine and conducted his residency training at the USA Medical Center. He completed his fellowship in pulmonary medicine at USA, as well as a fellowship in pulmonary vascular research at the University of Colorado in Denver.

Lewis is a professor and chair of the department of obstetrics and gynecology at the USA College of Medicine. He is board-certified in maternal-fetal medicine with more than 20 years of experience in academic medicine. Lewis’ clinical and research interests include maternal-fetal and perinatal medicine focusing on the diagnosis and treatment of disorders in the mother and fetus during pregnancy and childbirth, concentrating largely on pre-eclampsia and hypertension. Lewis earned his medical degree from Louisiana State University School of Medicine. Prior to his appointment at USA, he was professor and vice chair for the department of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine.

Luterman retired as the RippMeisler professor of surgery at the USA College of Medicine and medical director of the USA Burn Center. He is a nationally known burn care expert, and he is noted for...
Six USA Physicians Named “Top Doctors” — Six doctors from the USA Physicians Group and the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute have been named to U.S. News & World Report magazine’s annual listing of outstanding doctors. Named as Top Doctors were, from left, Dr. Michael A. Finan, professor, USA Mitchell Cancer Institute; Dr. David F. Lewis Jr., chair of obstetrics and gynecology, College of Medicine; Dr. William O. Richards, chair of surgery, College of Medicine; Dr. Allen Perkins, chair of family medicine; Dr. Johnson Haynes Jr., director of USA Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center; and Dr. Arnold Luterman, who recently retired as Ripp-Meisler professor of surgery at the USA College of Medicine and as medical director of the USA Burn Center.

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his leading-edge burn and wound treatment and research. He helped establish the USA Burn Center in 1981 and has played a vital role in the care of burn victims in our region for more than 30 years.

Richards is a professor and chair of family medicine at the USA College of Medicine. He has been a member of the College of Medicine faculty for 20 years. During that time, he has been involved in many educational and clinical facets of the USA Health System, including serving as director of the family medicine residency program and as medical director for the USA Family Medicine Center. His academic interests are devoted to improving care delivery to underserved populations and care of patients with chronic diseases.

Richards serves as professor and chair of surgery at the USA College of Medicine. He directs the laparoscopic and bariatric surgery programs at USA and is also a member surgeon with the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute. Richards’ clinical interests focus on surgical treatment of achalasia, paraesophageal hernias, Barrett’s esophagus, adrenal tumors, gastroesophageal reflux disease, Type 2 diabetes and motility disorders of the gastrointestinal tract using minimally invasive surgical procedures. He has performed thousands of laparoscopic procedures since 1989 and is internationally recognized for his research and surgical expertise in these disorders.

U.S. News & World Report’s Top Doctors was created in collaboration with Castle Connolly Medical Ltd. It draws from their database of America’s Top Doctors, all recommended for their clinical skills by other doctors and individually vetted by a physician-led research team. Consumers can search for a Top Doctor by location, hospital affiliation, and a full range of specialties and subspecialties. The site lists nearly 30,000 peer-nominated physicians across the country.

The selection process for America’s Top Doctors is based on a rigorous research process that begins with mail and telephone surveys of board-certified physicians. A comprehensive review of the training and credentials of those physicians considered for the inclusion is conducted by the Castle Connolly physician-led research team.

Beard Equipment Co.’s “Rent Pink” Project Reaches $60,000 Goal

Beard Equipment Co., a John Deere equipment distributing company in Mobile, has reached its year-long goal of donating $60,000 from the rental of a pink tractor to support cancer research at the USA Children’s & Women’s Hospital and the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute.

The “Rent Pink” project, which began Oct. 1, 2012, involved the rental of the pink tractor, actually a 20-metric ton excavator, to a total of 22 customers and local businesses to raise awareness and support for fighting cancer. All of the equipment’s rental revenue is being donated to USA Children’s & Women’s Hospital and to the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute.

Members of the Beard family and some employees who were instrumental in the rental program presented the $60,000 check on Nov. 12.

Beard Equipment also announced the company will extend the “Rent Pink” Project for another year and split all rental revenue for the pink equipment between USA Children’s & Women’s Hospital, Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola, Fla., and Wolfson Children’s Hospital in Jacksonville, Fla.

“As we begin another year of “Rent Pink,” we are thrilled to partner with three incredible institutions that offer cancer research and treatment to both women and children across our entire territory,” said Kristen DeLaney of Beard Equipment Co. “The first year of our ‘Rent Pink’ Program was so well received by our customers and employees, we look forward to doing it again.”

For more information about renting the pink equipment, visit www.beardequipment.com, or call Beard Equipment Co. at (855) 462-3273 (GOBEARD).

Pink Equipment Rental Helps Children’s & Women’s — Beard Equipment Co., a John Deere equipment distributing company in Mobile, recently donated $60,000 in proceeds from rentals of a pink tractor, bottom photo, to the USA Children’s & Women’s Hospital and the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute. Attending the check presentation were, top photo, Dr. Laurie Owen, left, Barbara Colle Chair, associate director of basic and translational sciences and professor of oncologic services, USAMCI; Brooke Dodson and Kristen DeLaney, Beard Equipment Co.; and Owen Bailey, administrator, Children’s & Women’s Hospital.
Celebrating Our New Additions

As academic physicians associated with Mobile’s premier hospital for the care of women and their children, our goal is to provide you with the very best care available.

Our practice provides a wide range of care for women, including infertility, prenatal, and obstetrical care to high-risk obstetrics and advanced gynecologic treatments.

Drs. Donna Bennett and Nicolette Holliday are the most recent additions to our practice that includes: Drs. David Lewis, Susan Baker, Frankie Bodie, John Lafleur, Eric McCathran, Peter Rizk, Craig Sherman, Robert Stauffer, Stephen Varner, Ruth Kennedy, W.H.N.P., and Cynthia Messer, C.N.M.

We invite you to visit us at www.usahealthsystem.com/womens-health to learn more about our physicians. To make an appointment with any of our providers, call (251) 415-1496.
Dr. Ishara Ramkissoon Receives Three Grants during 2013

Dr. Ishara Ramkissoon, assistant professor of speech pathology and audiology, has received three extramural grants during 2013.

Ramkissoon received $1,300 from the University of Oldenburg in Germany through EU/EFRE Project HurDig, the Network for Multi-lingual Hearing and Speech Intelligibility Diagnostics, for “Validation of the American English Matrix Sentence Test.”

Ramkissoon completed her undergraduate work at the University of Durban-Westville in South Africa where she also received her master’s degree and her doctorate. She completed additional graduate studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2005.

Ramkissoon serves as an advisor to the USA Indian Student Association and as an advisor to the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association.

Dr. Brooks Cash to Speak at December Med School Café

Dr. Brooks Cash, professor of internal medicine, and a gastroenterologist with the USA Physicians Group, will speak at the Dec. 17 Med School Café.

Cash, who is a new faculty member in the College of Medicine, previously served as the deputy commander for medicine at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md.

The Med School Café will begin with lunch being served at 11:30 a.m. in the Faculty Club on USA’s main campus. Cash’s presentation, “Irritable Bowel Syndrome,” will begin at noon.

Cash will discuss IBS, a functional gastrointestinal disorder, and include information on symptoms and causes as well as strategies to manage the common disorder.

The Med School Café lecture and lunch are provided free of charge, but reservations are required. For more information, or to make reservations, call Kim Partridge at (251) 460-7770, or e-mail kpartridge@southalabama.edu.

Med School Café is a free community lecture series sponsored by the USA Physicians Group. Each month, faculty from the College of Medicine share their expertise on a specific medical condition, providing insight on the latest treatment available.

Dr. Brooks Cash

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Items may be submitted to the calendar the following ways:

- E-mail items to midweekmemo@southalabama.edu and pubrel@southalabama.edu
- Fax to the Office of Public Relations at 460-7827
- Mail to the Office of Public Relations in Room 256, Administration Building
- Use the submission form on the calendar page Web site

You can access the calendar at www.southalabama.edu/usacal/campuscalendar

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA CAMPUS CALENDAR

Tuesday, December 10, 2013

Three organizations dedicated to the care of children and families will celebrate the excitement and wonder of this holiday season with the annual “Lights of Love” tree lighting at USA Children’s & Women’s Hospital at 6 p.m. Co-sponsored by the USA Children’s & Women’s Hospital Ronald McDonald House and the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute, the “Lights of Love” tree lighting directly in front of the hospital will also feature visits from Santa Claus and Ronald McDonald, as well as performances from local choirs. Visitors can enjoy cookies and cocoa while strolling the grounds of the Geri Moulton Children’s Park that forms the entrance to the hospital. Parking will be available at the nearby USA Mitchell Cancer Institute. For more information, call (251) 415-1636, or e-mail cwhdevelop@southalabama.edu.

Saturday, December 14, 2013

Winter Commencement begins at 2 p.m. in the Mitchell Center.

Monday, December 23, 2013

Holidays for staff and administration begin.

Thursday, January 2, 2014

Faculty, staff and administration return to work.

Editor: Alice Jackson. “Midweek Memo” is published by the Office of Public Relations for University of South Alabama personnel. News should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event. Visit us at www.southalabama.edu/publicrelations/midweek/