Southern Miss Alumnae Deployed to Qatar

By Hanna Knowles

By a twist of fate, two alumnae from Southern Miss have crossed paths some 7,600 miles away from Hattiesburg, Miss. After getting acquainted, Major Chastity Howard, ’13 and Captain Cassie Johnston, ’14 realized they both earned their master’s degrees from the College of Health’s Department of Medical Laboratory Science. Major Howard and Captain Johnston are currently deployed to Qatar with the U.S. Military.

Major Howard is serving as the officer in charge of the 379th Expeditionary Blood Transshipment Center (EBTC), which is the sole supplier of all blood products and dry ice for the Central Command Area of Responsibility (AOR). The EBTC is responsible for shipping more than 1,650 units of blood and blood products along with two tons of dry ice monthly. It also responds to resupply needs when necessary. Captain Johnston manages daily operations of the 379th Expeditionary Clinical Laboratory, providing care to 11,3 thousand service members throughout the AOR.

Doctor of Audiology White Coat Ceremony Held

By Kimberly Ward

On April 18th, 2015, The University of Southern Mississippi Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences hosted its annual Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) White Coat Ceremony. This annual ceremony honors the Au.D. doctoral students who have completed their academic coursework requirements and will begin a year-long externship in the Fall of 2015.

Honorees at this year’s ceremony were Lee Helen Weeks, Michael Rude, and Holly Murphy. Guests in attendance include faculty from the Au.D program at USM, families and friends of the honorees and our special guests who included Provost Denis Wiesenburg, College of Health Dean Michael Forster, and Dr. Susan Hubble-Burchell.

Alumni Spotlight

Jenna Dixon, PA-C, ATC graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelors of Science degree in Athletic Training from The University of Southern Mississippi in 2008. Since that time, she has been a certified athletic trainer. Jenna earned a Masters of Medical Science degree in Physician Assistant Studies from Lincoln Memorial University in Harrogate, Tennessee in 2013. Jenna holds membership with the National Athletic Trainers’ Association, Mississippi Athletic Trainers’ Association, Southeast Athletic Trainers’ Association, and Mississippi Academy of Physician Assistants. She’s currently employed with North Mississippi Health Center in Tupelo, Mississippi as a family practice physician assistant.

Jenna wrote, “I am honored to be selected for this recognition. I am grateful for the memories, friendships and education while at USM.”
Early Intervention Important for Speech-Language Issues

By Catherine Lott

As recent studies indicate that speech and hearing disorders are growing causes of disability for children in the U.S., May’s Better Hearing and Speech Month is the perfect time for parents to learn how to recognize the early signs.

The DuBard School for Language Disorders at The University of Southern Mississippi is encouraging parents to educate themselves through the Identify the Signs campaign, a national effort of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). The campaign is designed to combat an overall lack of awareness about communication disorders — a major barrier to treatment to the many who struggle.

Speech, language, and hearing disorders are among the most common disabilities in the United States. However, unlike many other disabilities, these disorders often are reversible and even preventable with early intervention. Unfortunately, many parents do not recognize the first signs of these disorders. In young children, early treatment can help prevent them from falling behind academically, socially, and in other key areas at a critical time in their development.

“As an ASHA member, certified speech-language pathologist, educator of the deaf and hard of hearing, and certified academic language therapist, I see the benefits of early intervention every day,” said Dr. Maureen Martin, DuBard School director.

“Unfortunately, I also see the consequences of waiting too long to seek treatment—which is why the Identify the Signs campaign is so important.”

Southern Miss Students Complete Extensive Leadership Training Program

Alanna Buckley and Ashley Moffett, graduate students at Southern Miss, recently completed extensive training through the Institute for Disability Studies’ Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) program.

The Institute is Mississippi’s University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Services, and is headquartered at Southern Miss. LEND is a network of 43 programs throughout the country that are funded by the Maternal Child Health Bureau.

Buckley, a native of Vicksburg, Miss., and Moffett, a native of Natchez, Miss., are both graduate students in Speech and Language Pathology at Southern Miss. They are on track to earn their degrees in December.

As participants in LEND, Buckley and Moffett completed more than 300 hours of training in leadership, research, and clinical services. Their accomplishment has prepared both students to assume leadership roles upon graduation in order to provide the best possible services and supports for children with developmental disabilities and their families.

Medical Laboratory Science Students Win ASCLS Student Bowl Competition

By Hanna Knowles

Medical laboratory science students from The University of Southern Mississippi’s College of Health won the student bowl competition at the Mississippi/Louisiana American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS) annual meeting in Shreveport, La. April 13-16.

This is the first victory for the Southern Miss Department of Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) in the past 10 years. Two Southern Miss teams, each comprised of five students, faced stiff competition from 23 other participating teams from Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi. While other MLS programs dedicate class time to prepare for the competition, the Southern Miss student participants volunteered their own time to study.

Members of the winning team included team captain Paul Wolford, Wade Saucier, Kyle Creel, Sally Chang, T’kylia Moss and Jillian Lindsay. The other team from Southern Miss included Kristina Knotts, Caleb Dykes, Keri Sanford, Joseph Saucier, Ashley Harris and Jessica Welch Maddox.