Leah Boozer says the flashing light from her cell phone woke her up just shortly after 3:30 a.m. the morning of Jan. 23 when the B-ALERT system was activated, warning UAB's campus and its employees that a tornado was close to the university.

Symposium on sustainable solutions set for Feb. 16

UAB has made it a priority to be a good steward of its resources. Recent initiatives that embody the university’s efforts to ensure the sustainability of its education, research and health-care facilities include building the Campus Green, installing green roofs, launching a comprehensive recycling program and creating a campuswide Sustainability Committee. The university is pursuing its next initiative Thursday, Feb. 16, when it hosts the inaugural UAB Sustainable Smart Cities Symposium. Experts in green design and transportation, intelligent technologies, environmental sustainability, health and livability, economic development and government and public policy will share their ideas for making Birmingham a model of smart growth, healthy living and sustainability. Register for the free symposium at www.UABSSC.org.

“As the world’s population continues to urbanize, we need sustainable, smart cities with a strong infrastructure that makes them environmentally friendly, increases residents’ quality of life and cuts costs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs,” says Fouad H. Fouad, Ph.D., professor and chair of Civil, Construction and Environmental Engineering. “Sustainability is a newer approach to solving many of the world’s greatest challenges, including climate change, energy, water, food and health.”

Volker Hall renovations will enhance, increase study space

UAB’s plan to become the preferred Academic Medical Center of the 21st century — known as AMC21 — has seven priority areas focusing on some of the greatest medical needs of our time, including cancer, obesity, infectious disease, cardiovascular biology and other areas. But other key elements of the AMC21 plan include investing in infrastructure and technology platforms to keep the education of UAB students on the cutting edge.

That includes major renovations to Volker Hall, which houses the School of Medicine and Dentistry. Phase I includes a renovation of classrooms and updating the study space areas in the schools of Medicine and Dentistry. This

B-ALERT prepared employees, students for deadly Jan. 23 tornado

Leah Boozer followed her normal pre-bedtime routine Sunday, Jan. 22 — a routine that includes taking her hearing aids out and placing them in her cell phone on the nightstand next to her bed.

The flashing light of Boozer’s cell phone awakened her just after 3:30 a.m. Then the Center Point resident’s home telephone rung, and an e-mail quickly followed on her cell phone. A text message appeared a few seconds later, too.

The messages came via B-ALERT — a technologically advanced emergency notification system that came online Feb. 3, 2011 — and were delivered by UAB’s Emergency Management Team, alerting Boozer that a thunderstorm producing a possible tornado was close to the university.

“I listened to the cell-phone message first and then got the call on my home phone,” says Boozer, training coordinator for the Center for Community Outreach and Development’s Alabama Math, Science and Technology Initiative. “I ran upstairs and woke my son and his wife, and I got my husband out of the living room. We could see the tornado was coming out direction, and we grabbed our animals and all went downstairs in the basement. If it had hit my house, the B-ALERT message is what would have given us a chance to live.”

And it was a close call. Just two miles away from Boozer, the Paradise Valley neighborhood in Center Point was heavily damaged when a pre-dawn, EF-3 tornado, estimated to be about 800 yards wide, hit the George Brook, Steeplechase, Pilgrim’s Rest and Rosewood subdivisions and had a damage path length of 15.5 miles. The January tornado outbreak in Alabama killed two people, injured hundreds of others and damaged or destroyed roughly 500 homes.

Boozer didn’t go to bed unprepared for the storms, either. She knew there was a severe weather threat and had her weather radio in the room with her. The weather radio, however, never worked during the storm, she said.

“I went to a weather workshop not long ago and got the alert radio there, but for whatever reason it never went off,” Boozer says. “I don’t know what happened. I carried it downstairs, and when I flipped it on a different setting, I didn’t get anything — no updates or alerts. It was as if it were dead, so I thought the batteries may be dead, although it had been used very little. When I got back upstairs after the storm passed and sat it on my dresser, all of a sudden it started giving the”
New Faculty & Staff Learning System is live

The Faculty and Staff Learning System is live at www.uab.edu/learningsystem, and employees can log-in with their Blazer IDs. Course registration and training history will now be accessed using this. Resources and guides to help employees get acclimated with the new system also are online. Demonstration sessions will be held at 9 a.m. Feb. 6, 11 a.m. Feb 13 and 1 p.m. Feb 27 and will include a Q&A.

WBHM, APT partner to enhance political coverage

Public Radio WBHM 90.3 FM/WGNN 91.5 FM and Alabama Public Television have joined forces to help employees get acclimated with the new system also are online. Demonstration sessions will be held at 9 a.m. Feb. 6, 11 a.m. Feb 13 and 1 p.m. Feb 27 and will include a Q&A.

School of Business has accreditation reaffirmed

The UAB School of Business has had its accreditation reaffirmed by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, a hallmark of excellence in business education earned by less than 5 percent of the world’s business schools.

“We are thrilled that AACSB has recognized our commitment to continually evaluating and improving our programs to ensure that UAB business students receive the highest quality of education possible,” said School of Business Dean David R. Klock, Ph.D.

“Our exceptional faculty and staff, who go above and beyond to help students achieve their educational goals, deserve credit for this outstanding achievement.”

Apply for faculty grants by March 26

UAB full-time faculty members may apply for funding for new efforts in research, teaching and service-related projects designed to bolster their efficacy.

The application and guidelines are on the Faculty Senate website at www.uab.edu/facultysenate. The deadline for submissions is 11:30 a.m. Monday, March 26. An original and a copy of the submission must be received by the Faculty Senate Office in Administration Building Room 420.

Two-day immigration forum set for Feb. 9-10

The Birmingham Area Consortium for Higher Education will host a free, public forum Feb. 9-10 on Alabama’s immigration law. Thursday’s presentations and panel discussions on will be in UAB’s Alys Stephens Center Jemison Concert Hall; events on Friday will be held in Sanford University’s Dwight Bessom Hall. A complete list of confirmed speakers and panels is online at www.uab.edu/bache/immigration-forum/participants. Learn more at www.uab.edu/

Global economics of health care is Feb. 16 Jordan lecture topic

John Bardis, CEO of MedAssets, Inc. in Atlanta, is the keynote speaker for the annual L.R. “Bunk” Jordan Lecture to be held at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 16 in the Wynfrey Hotel. Bardis’ topic is “Global Economics: The Reality is Finally Here for Healthcare.”

Dialogue to present ethnoarchaeological films

Michele Forman and Rosie O’Reirne, co-directors of Media Studies in the UAB College of Arts and Sciences, will present student ethnoarchaeological films, “Under One Roof,” about Mitchell’s Place, and “Let Everything Flow,” about Studio by the Tracks’ adult art program, during the next UAB Discussion Book Dialogue at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 16 in Heritage Hall Building Room 549. This event is free and open to the public. For more info, www.uab.edu/discussionbook.

Watch the game at the Alumni House

The UAB National Alumni Society is hosting a viewing party for the UAB vs. Memphis Basketball game on Feb. 11 at the UAB National Alumni Society House. The party is free for NAS members and $10 for guests. The game will be shown on our big screens.

Al Jarreau to perform at ASC Feb. 24

Jazz singer Al Jarreau will make his debut appearance at UAB’s Alys Stephens Center at 8 p.m. Feb. 24. Tickets are $62.50, $49.50, 38.50; student tickets are $20. Call 975-2787 or visit www.AlysStephens.org.

DXA facility receives ISCD re-accreditation

The UAB Osteoporosis Prevention and Treatment Clinic/DXA Facility in the Kirklin Clinic has its accreditation reaffirmed by the International Society for Clinical Densitometry. The clinic and DXA, or dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry, facility is a multidisciplinary clinic specializing in metabolic bone disease and osteoporosis.

“We are very pleased to be recognized in the skeletal-assessment community for providing outstanding services in accordance with international standards and benchmarks in this field,” said Sarah L. Morgan, M.D., medical director of the facility.

Capture your healthy resolutions, win prizes

Take pictures of healthy activities, images, choices and decisions you and your colleagues are making daily, and share them with UAB Employee Wellness by posting to Twitter (@UABWellness, Facebook at UAB Wellness or email uabwellness@uab.edu. Winners will be chosen each week. There’s no limit to the number of pictures you can submit. Winners must “Follow” or “Like” the UAB Wellness pages to be eligible for prizes.
Students to construct a 20-foot concrete canoe to race

Almost sounds like something you would hear on The Sopranos. "Hey Silvio, we're out of concrete shoes, go get me the concrete canoe."

However, UAB civil engineering students have constructed a solid concrete canoe that will do what seems to be impossible — float on water.

The students recently completed construction of a 10-foot concrete test canoe that is a scale model of a 20-foot concrete canoe they plan to race in the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) regional concrete canoe competition in March. The students, part of UAB's ASCE student group, began work on the project immediately after this past year's competition — one in which they were unable to compete.

“We’ve made a concrete canoe each of the past three years, but it's always broken for one reason or another,” says Ethan Parker, a senior civil engineering major from Odenville and concrete mix specialist on the project. “We started working on this year's during summer break. We had to do a lot more testing, and we were here building the mold during winter break. We're trying to get as much done as we can to make sure we're ready.”

The students decided a test canoe was needed, and they took their scaled-down canoe to the Campus Rec Center for its first real test.

Once they got it in the pool, senior Paisley Marotta climbed on board; they were pleased with what they saw.

“The calculations said it would float, and it did,” says Daniel Brown, president of UAB ASCE and the mold design and construction specialist. “The density of water is about 62 lbs per cubic foot. The density of our canoe was 58 to 60 lbs per cubic foot. We knew based on the math and the wide hull, the buoyant force of the water was going to give it some support.”

UAB's ASCE is a volunteer student organization that has been active for almost 40 years. The main motivation for the students' concrete canoe project is to represent UAB and their developing skills as young engineers at the annual student conference. UAB students compete head to head against their peers at Alabama, Auburn, Tennessee and other regional institutions in a number of civil engineering-related events.

Jason Kirby, Ph.D., associate professor of Civil Engineering and advisor to the ASCE, says this contest has been a difficult one for UAB students the past few years despite their dedicated efforts.

“This event is the most challenging competition and requires year-round student participation,” Kirby says. “Regardless, UAB ASCE members continue to push the envelope of design and this year have an approach unique to our region.”

The ASCE National Concrete Canoe Competition provides students with a practical application of the engineering principles they learn in the classroom, along with important team and project-management skills they will need in their careers. The event challenges the students' knowledge, creativity and stamina, while showcasing the versatility and durability of concrete as a building material.

The winners of the ASCE National Concrete Canoe Competition are determined by compiling the team’s total number of points from the academic and race portions of the competition. Academic scholarships totaling $9,000 are awarded to the winning teams' undergraduate civil engineering program.

Brown says this year’s UAB team decided to try a new concrete mix after the difficulties of previous years. The students consulted with other schools that had been successful in the competition. They then went to Atlanta to visit several different companies to find the materials they needed.

The students began testing concrete mixes in the fall, built the molds and poured the mini canoe in October.

“Building the molds is actually the most time-consuming part,” Parker says. “We have to cut out cross sections, build a frame for the mold and put plumbing along the mold so we can put fiberglass on it, which adds strength and holds the concrete. Then we sand it down and give it a smooth finish. It does take a while, probably close to 300- to 400-man hours to do the molds. And we're a small group. There's a lot of work we have to get done, which means all of us have to put in more time.”

The project is not connected to any class or grade, but the student effort doesn’t go unnoticed, Kirby says. In addition to donating their free time and skills, students often use their financial resources to design, build and hopefully compete in their vessel.

“As the UAB ASCE faculty advisor, I've always impressed by the innovation and independent spirit of our students,” Kirby says. “Each year I share in their victories and disappointments. I'm proud of UAB ASCE and know that all of these students will graduate and become fine young engineers.”

In addition to Parker and Brown, the UAB team comprises senior Jennifer Kao of Birmingham, senior Paisley Marotta of Huntsville, junior Joe Phillips of Odenville, junior Loyney Taylor of Montgomery and doctoral student Jaquice Hughes Boyd of Brighton.

“Having a good team backing you up is the most important thing when taking on an endeavor like this,” Brown says of the group. “It's great having good, dependable people you can trust to work with.”

While graduation is on many of the students' minds, so is March 22. That's when they have to have their vessel completed and ready to display at the Southern Regional competition in Tallahassee, Fla. The winning school in Tallahassee will represent the South Region in the national competition later this semester. The regional competition will be tough. The students will have to display the canoe, including the material that shows their work on the canoe, give a presentation and, ultimately, race the canoe in five events.


Celebrate Black History Month with ArtPlay's talented teens

Join the talented students of ArtPlay's Make It Happen Performing Ensemble Feb. 11 for "Our Journey: A History through Song, Dance and Spoken Word," a celebration of Black History Month.

“Our Journey” is a play within a play. The story is guided by abolitionist and women's rights activist Sojourner Truth. A few of the iconic characters portrayed include American opera singer Grace Bumbry, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, civil rights activist Rosa Parks, Birmingham leader Richard Arrington, actress and singer Dorothy Dandridge and Phillips Wheatley, the first black American poet to publish her writing. This story of a family patriarch who learns to embrace his own history is performed and co-written by the MIH Ensemble, under the direction of ArtPlay Teaching Artist Alicia Johnson.

“Our Journey: A History through Song, Dance and Spoken Word” will have two shows, at 10 and 11:30 a.m. Feb. 11 in UAB's Alys Stephens Center. Tickets are $8 kids, $10 adults. Call 975-2787 or visit www.AlysStephens.org.

The MIH Ensemble comprises 21 students from Ramsay, Minor, Center Point, Oak Mountain, Huffman and John Carroll high schools, Alabama School of Fine Arts, Bragg Middle School and W.J. Christian Academy. This show is part of the "ArtPlay Presents" series at the Alys Stephens Center and the “Meet the Artist” series of performances offered for local schools. Recently the Alys Stephens Center’s ArtPlay “Make It Happens” Performing Ensemble was named the Top Theatre Group by Birmingham and Alabama Baby & Child magazines’ Parent’s Choice Awards.

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Leaders in diversity honored with President’s Awards

UAB President Carol Garrison honored seven outstanding UAB community leaders during the 2012 President’s Awards for Diversity. Awards for contributions to inclusion on campus and beyond were given in five categories:

Staff – Michael “Josh” Carter
Carter, director of the UAB Office for Study Away, has been described as a master of cultural competence. His passion for educating students about international culture has given them a greater appreciation and sensitivity to their global neighbors and makes the UAB environment more diverse, friendly and open for all.

Faculty – Waldemar Carlo, M.D.
Carlo, a professor of neonatology in the UAB Department of Pediatrics, is devoted to improving outcomes for low-birth-weight infants in Alabama. He works to combat infant mortality in developing countries and has mentored more than 30 postdoctoral trainees of diverse cultural backgrounds. Carlo is also responsible for bringing a number of minority fellow and junior faculty to UAB.

Faculty – Kay Emfinger, Ph.D.
Emfinger, an associate professor in the UAB School of Education, has facilitated a number of diversity projects that include work with the LGTBQ student organization, preschoolers and homeless children, the School of Education’s diversity committee and more. She is committed to research in the area of diversity, writing and presenting on under-represented groups.

Faculty – Marilyn Kurata, Ph.D.
Kurata, director of core curriculum enhancement, is noted for her work on the One Great Community Executive Committee, UAB Diversity and Equity Council and the Commission on the Status of Women Planning. She has been heralded for demonstrating an exceptional commitment to educational excellence and enrichment to the UAB campus.

Undergraduate student – B-ALERT

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weather updates but still no alerts”

At UAB, Emergency Preparedness, the UAB Police Department, Information Technology and the Office of Public Relations & Marketing teamed up to implement B-ALERT one year ago, upgrading from a system previously in use. All registration for the system is connected to your BlazerID. The registration form is online at www.uab.edu/BALERT. A link to the registration form is always at www.uab.edu/emergency.

Bouwer was among a number of UAB employees and students who wrote follow-up emails to the Emergency Management Team crediting B-ALERT with notifying them of dangerous weather conditions.

“The UAB alert system phone call is what actually woke me up when the storm was coming, and I subsequently woke my family,” business student Cheryl Boozer wrote. “I never heard the sirens.”

Smith spent the Monday morning and afternoon after the tornado hit helping neighbors evacuate their homes, supporting her community through organizing and distributing donations and just lending an ear to those affected.

Bouwer business alumnus Paul Smith says he’s not sure how the tornado sirens would have awakened him or his wife. The phone ringing, he says, woke them up and gave them time to prepare.

“Thankfully, the tornado was a mile north of us, but because of this system, my family was able to prepare as best that we could have to get in our safe places,” Smith says.

B-ALERT messages were sent to more than 40,000 faculty, students and campus and health-system employees. Though there has been much positive feedback for B-ALERT, Brelend says some were unhappy to have their phones ring at 3:30 a.m.

“Purcell says. “We are fortunate at UAB to have increasing numbers of employees and students in crisis situations. UAB Police Chief Anthony Purcell says this event shows that a system like this is most helpful.”

“Only call you if we need to, but when we do, take it seriously.”

Emergency response on campuses around the country have dramatically shaped the way universities notify faculty, staff and students when a system is activated. The work we have done with other departments this past year to determine which system to purchase and implement and the ongoing training that we all participate in truly has made a difference in our ability to communicate quickly in multiple ways to those affected.”

Anyone with a BlazerID can register up to 10 phone numbers for B-ALERT by visiting www.uab.edu/ BALERT. SMS-capable mobile devices also can be registered to receive text messages. All BlazerID-connected UAB email addresses automatically are included in the system. If there are other email accounts at which you would like to receive notifications, register those separately in the system.

“Hearing the stories of people who were able to get themselves and their families to safety because of B-ALERT just underscores the importance of a team approach to emergency management,” Purcell says. “The work we did with other departments this past year to determine which system to purchase and implement and the ongoing training that we all participate in truly has made a difference in our ability to communicate quickly in multiple ways to those affected.”

Professional student – Natasha Varma
Varma, a senior in the UAB School of Dentistry, has served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Nicaragua where she carried out an oral health-education program. The Mobile, Ala., native organized and implemented a series of lessons for low-income Alabama youth and their parents. She is noted for inspiring others to pursue higher education as a means to achieving their goals.

Elizabeth Casswell
Casswell, a senior with an individually designed major in non-profit management, is noted for her innovative contributions in advancing the cause of justice and equality on campus. The Denver, Co., native is dedicated to the pursuit of fairness and has served to strengthen UAB as an institution.

Graduate student – Michelle Cardel
Cardel, a doctoral student in nutrition sciences in the UAB School of Health Professions, is committed to driving diversity initiatives within the community. She is an Orlando, Fl., native who uses her bilingual skills to further her research and public service, which includes studying Type 2 diabetes and its effects on the Hispanic community.

UAB President Carol Garrison presented the 2012 Diversity Awards honoring students, faculty and staff who lead the way in community building on campus and beyond. This year’s recipients are Natasha Varma; Michelle Cardel; Kay Emfinger; Elizabeth Casswell; Marilyn Kurata; Waldemar Carlo and Josh Carter.
Campus Rec Center has you covered from Aqua to Zumba

One of the best and most efficient ways to exercise is in the water. Water-based workouts are better for your joints, and with the right type of exercise, you could burn more than 1,000 calories in a one-hour workout.

UAB’s Campus Recreation Center is offering several new programs to faculty, staff and students, including the new Aqua Zumba classes in the Rec Center pool. The class, which recently started, meets each Wednesday from 5:30 p.m. to 6:25 p.m. “This is really an up-and-coming program,” says Jennifer Probert, assistant director of marketing at the Campus Rec Center. “We had 25 people participate in our first class — both men and women — and they had a great time. We are already looking to add another lane for participants to work out in!”

Probert says Aqua Zumba participants can burn as many as 1,100 calories an hour if they match the intensity of the instructors. She says the low-impact nature of Aqua Zumba enables participants to push through a longer workout. “It really doesn’t feel like you’re working out,” Probert says. “You’re just dancing, laughing and having a great time.”

UAB has partnered with a local aqua-fit instructor to teach the class, which is open to employees, students and community members. Aqua Zumba is free to all Rec Center members and $8 per class for non-members and will feature an instructor to teach the class, which is open to employees, students and community members. Aqua Zumba is free to all Rec Center members and $8 per class for non-members and will feature an instructor to teach the class, which is open to employees, students and community members. Aqua Zumba is free to all Rec Center members and $8 per class for non-members and will feature an instructor to teach the class, which is open to employees, students and community members.

Other activities, events

The Rec Center recently partnered with Student Involvement to host its first Family Fun Night, which Probert hopes to continue throughout the year. “We’re trying to have Family Fun Nights every other month,” Probert says. “We’ve done a movie night in the past, but ice skating night was really the first big event, with 144 participants. We’re looking into other ideas, including a magic show and pool parties when it gets warmer.”

Other programs also are available, including Wellness Catering and Massage Therapy. Campus groups or offices can call the Rec Center to have a staff member present information on any program as part of its Wellness Catering initiative. Programs and activities highlighted can include Outdoor Pursuits, Leave No Trace Training, intramural sports, team-building activities, fitness tips, personal training and nutrition.

Massage therapy also is a new service for Rec Center members. A board-certified therapist who specializes in deep tissue, sports, myofascial release, neuromuscular and myoskeletal therapy is available for 30-, 60- and 90-minute massages. The cost begins at $30 for members. E-mail fitness@uab.edu or call 934-075 to schedule an appointment.

Probert says she hopes to continue the idea of Aqua Zumba and other activities and events.

Health trends get back to basics, ahead with technology

Each year flashy trends in health and wellness emerge — from celebrity diets to cure-alls for belly fat. UAB experts weigh in with their recommendations for 2012.

Put down that stick of butter, y’all. News that celebrity chef Paula Deen has Type 2 diabetes will put prevention and management of the illness in the spotlight. Says Beth Kitchin, Ph.D., UAB assistant professor of nutrition sciences. “When it comes to diabetes, prevention is of utmost importance; so I think dietary behavior changes will become of interest now,” Kitchin says.

Deen’s new role as pharmaceutical spokes- woman also may lead to backlash against expensive treatments. “If you had to pay out of pocket for the drug she is endorsing, it would set you back $500 per month,” Kitchin says.

Back away from the fads and get back to basics. Healthier foods will be in more kitchens and on more plates, Kitchin says, and more people will be interested in learning to cook. “I think the interest in fad diets is fading,” Kitchin says. “Getting bigger celebrity spokespeople for good diets like Weight Watchers will help.”

Get out of that desk chair and get moving. When did movement become a thing of the past? Retta Evans, Ph.D. UAB associate professor of health education, says we have become too sedentary.

“Daily activity is important,” says Evans. “It simply could be walking around your floor after eating lunch or strolling through the neighborhood after dinner. Adding just a little movement can help you tremendously.”

Evans says some of last year’s exercise fads are waning, but others will climb in popularity. “I don’t think the kettle bell craze will last. Most people and health clubs are familiar with the classic free-weights instead of these trendy pieces of equipment,” Evans says.

On the other hand, Zumba is big, and I think it will continue to grow. This Latin-style dance class is easy to follow even for those who cannot dance, making it a perfect choice for people of all abilities,” Evans says.

Log those workouts. There’s a health app for that. Lauren Whitt, Ph.D., UAB Well-ness coordinator, says it’s one of the best trends yet in wellness. “Using technology to track, educate and motivate health-behavior change makes it easier,” Whitt says.

“There are excellent apps for smartphones that enable you to track the calories you consume daily, the exercises you log and even the number steps you take,” Whitt says.

And social media is center stage in the wellness arena. “The ability to go online and connect with information, motivation and strategies for healthier living is a great way to learn new things,” says Whitt. “The UAB Wellness program uses Facebook and Twitter to share daily health tips, sponsored activities and encouraging stories.”

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Take this to heart: The No. 1 killer of women is preventable

If you ask women to name the No. 1 cause of death, most will say cancer. But UAB experts say more women die from heart disease than all forms of cancer combined, and many of these deaths are preventable.

“One of every three women will die of heart disease,” says Donna Arnett, Ph.D., chair of the UAB Department of Epidemiology in the UAB School of Public Health. Arnett, who is president-elect of the American Heart Association, says one in eight women get breast cancer each year as many as 94 percent survive, yet women are more afraid of cancer than heart disease.

“I think with all the media coverage of breast cancer, women are unaware that heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women, young and old,” Arnett says.

“For some reason women still don’t perceive themselves to be at risk for heart disease,” says Vera Bittner, M.D., professor of medicine in UAB’s Division of Cardiology and Section head of Preventive Cardiology.

“Women see it as a man’s disease, and they are more likely to interpret chest discomfort as coming from indigestion instead of a heart attack,” says Bittner. Symptoms of a heart attack in women also may differ from those in men.

“Many women may not have the classic chest pain or jaw discomfort. Women may often have more nausea and vomiting or back pain instead of chest pain,” Arnett says.

To combat the onset of the disease, Arnett points to the Life’s Simple 7 plan, which focuses on managing blood pressure, reducing blood sugar, quitting smoking, losing weight, getting active, controlling cholesterol and eating better.

“Women need to take as much care of themselves as they do for their families. You cannot put yourself last, but women tend to do that,” Arnett says.

But during American Heart Month, Arnett and Bittner want to draw attention to the good news about this disease—it’s preventable.

“A lot of people think if they are genetically predisposed, that is a fate they cannot alter, and that is not true,” Bittner says. “The patient has a lot of control.”

The heart-healthy focus needs to start as young as childhood. Bittner says. Any risk factors you have as a kid can become exaggerated as an adult, she says.

“We like to do primordial prevention, which is prevention of risk factors themselves. In the younger age groups the focus needs to be on lifestyle—getting regular exercise, having a healthy, heart-healthy diet, maintaining normal weight and staying away from smoking,” Bittner says.

“If you make it to age 50 with normal cholesterol levels, are non-diabetic, not overweight, have a healthy diet, get physical activity and have never smoked, then your chances of developing heart disease are close to zero,” Arnett says.

But if you don’t get to that magic number without some bumps in the road, both doctors advise you not to despair—it’s almost never too late to start focusing on heart health.

**UAB to evaluate CPR, drugs after sudden cardiac arrest**

UAB is part of two, multi-site clinical trials to evaluate treatments for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest to improve survival rates. The trials are sponsored by the National Institutes of Health.

One study will compare continuous chest compressions combined with pause-free rescue breathing to standard cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The other trial will compare treatment with the drug amiodarone, another drug called lidocaine or a salt-water placebo in participants with shock-resistant ventricular fibrillation, a condition in which the heart beats chaotically instead of pumping blood.

“Although immediate CPR can be life-saving, more than 90 percent of people who experience a cardiac arrest outside of a hospital die before reaching a hospital or soon afterward,” says Jeffrey Kerby, M.D., Ph.D., UAB trauma surgeon and lead investigator at UAB. “The goal of both of these trials is to reduce that number.”

“Increasing survival rates for people who experience out-of-hospital cardiac arrest is a major public health goal,” says Susan B. Shurin, M.D., acting director of the NIH’s National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, which is the lead federal sponsor of the studies. “These new trials could provide critical insight about which regional medical care providers. The heart stops beating during cardiac arrest, and the person usually dies unless it is restarted within minutes.

The trials will serve a combined population of nearly 21 million people from diverse urban, suburban and rural regions across the United States and Canada, including people across Jefferson County, Ala.

The first study, referred to as the CCC trial, will compare survival-to-hospital discharge rates for two CPR approaches delivered by paramedics and fire fighters. Persons experiencing cardiac arrest will be randomly assigned to receive continuous chest compressions or standard CPR by emergency responders. Standard CPR, the approach recommended by the American Heart Association for use by emergency responders, includes chest compressions with short pauses for assisted breathing. This approach has been called into question by emerging data suggesting that stopping chest compressions to provide ventilation and breathing interrupts overall blood flow, thereby lowering survival.

Previous studies have shown that people who suffer cardiac arrest outside of the hospital and are treated by bystanders are more likely to survive when given compressions alone.

The CCC trial will enroll up to 23,600 participants at eight regional locations across the United States and Canada.

The second study, known as ALPS, will determine if amiodarone or lidocaine improves survival-to-hospital discharge rates for participants with shock-resistant ventricular fibrillation. Participants will receive one or the other drug or a placebo.

About 25 percent of cardiac arrests are due to ventricular fibrillation. When shock treatment with a defibrillator fails to restore normal heart rhythm, medications such as amiodarone or lidocaine are often given, but their effectiveness in improving survival is unknown. This trial will enroll up to 7,700 participants at nine locations across the United States and Canada.

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area of research and one we recently have been focusing on at UAB. The research is highly interdisciplinary in nature because smart cities involve engineering, business, medicine and public health. It’s a perfect initiative for UAB because our institution really ties together the tools of sustainability—environment, economy and the social aspect—with some of the best researchers and brightest minds in the world.”

The daylong symposium is a joint initiative of the UAB schools of Engineering, Business and Medicine plus the UAB Minority Health and Health Disparities Research Center. Alabama Power is a presenting sponsor. Funding agencies include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. It will be held in the Alumni House. Birmingham Mayor William Bell will present the symposium’s opening remarks and discuss the city’s successes and future plans for developing a smarter Birmingham. Other speakers from UAB include President Carol Garrison, Vice President of Research and Economic Development Richard Marchase, Ph.D. Senior Vice President and Dean of the School of Medicine Ray Watts, M.D., and Director of the Division of Preventive Medicine and the Minority Health & Health Disparities Research Center Mona Fouad, M.D., interim UAB Provost Linda Lucas, Ph.D., and UAB School of Business Dean David Klock, Ph.D., will moderate a panel discussion that will include keynote speakers:

- Cathy Crenshaw, president and CEO of Sloss Real Estate
- Oscar E. Diaz, co-founder and president of Global Solutions Dynamic Plus
- Frank Franklin, M.D., Ph.D., professor emeritus of the UAB School of Public Health
- Manuel Olivera, regional director of the CCC Clinton Climate Initiative
- Enrique Peñalosa, former mayor of Bogota, Colombia
- Caro Ratti, Director of MIT SENSEable Labs, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

The symposium also will feature a strong health component—a vital factor to sustainable smart cities. Fouad says “Ultimately, a healthy city promotes the health, safety and well-being of its residents,” Fouad says. “Green urban design and planning can motivate people of all ages to be more physically active—to walk and ride bikes rather than travel by car. Innovative, healthy solutions are especially important for the city of Birmingham because it is facing residents high rates of obesity, heart disease, diabetes and other chronic diseases linked to sedentary lifestyle and poor fitness.”

**A center for research**

The future of Birmingham and competitive worldwide demands the sustainability of our urban resources. Fouad Fouad says, and UAB wants to be at the forefront.

The creation of the UAB Sustainable Smart Cities Research Center, to be housed in the School of Engineering, is a first step. The center, awaiting approval by the University of Alabama System Board of Trustees, will promote interdisciplinary research and fund grants related to sustainability.

“We have been getting tremendous support from Dick Marchase and Linda Lucas for this new center,” Fouad says. “The university has been very supportive. This center and the symposium are just the first steps to highlight where we can go and what we can do as a university and community.”

Following the event, a summary of the meeting’s discussions and recommendations will be presented to the City of Birmingham and posted online at www.UABISC.org. Organizers say this forum will become an annual opportunity to obtain expert input and information that will benefit the metropolitan area in its drive to create sustainable and healthier communities.
Substance abuse and addictions cost American society an estimated $510 billion a year for health care, lost productivity and criminal justice expenses, according to the American Psychological Association (APA). Research into causes and treatments is supported by the National Institutes of Health, but increasing or even maintaining funding is difficult in this economy.

This past fall, the APA enlisted 100 premier U.S. substance-abuse researchers to help educate Congress about the dangers of cutting funding and the need to increase it. UAB's Julie Tucker, Ph.D., professor and chair of health behavior, and Joseph Schumacher, Ph.D., professor of medicine in Preventive Medicine, were the two chosen from Alabama.

Specifically, the scientists asked Congress to focus on four initiatives:

- Supporting the House Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee's request for a $1 billion (3.3 percent) increase for NIH for FY2012.
- Oppose amendments that would de-fund NIH peer-reviewed research projects.
- Retain the Senate-passed funding of $581 million for the VA Medical and Prosthetic Research Account in the final FY2012 appropriations bill.
- Retain the Senate Appropriations Committee's $50 million in FY2012 for the Department of Defense Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program and maintain drug abuse as an eligible area of research for funding.

Each of the 100 scientists — including Schumacher and Tucker, who is a member of APA's Board of Scientific Affairs — spent almost two days training to speak to Congressional leaders and staffers. "It was a cram course on how to advocate on The Hill when you have five minutes to make a point," Tucker says. "The APA had specific people in Congress that wanted to hear its message, particularly Republicans and newly elected representatives," Tucker says.

Tucker and Schumacher spoke to the staffers of Republican senators Richard Shelby and Jeff Sessions, Congressman Spencer Bachus and 7th District Congresswoman Terri Sewell, a Democrat from Alabama.

"Our local connection is very important," Schumacher says. "They're interested in the relationship with their constituency. We're constituents as well as experts. And these members of Congress have offices in Birmingham, so we can invite them to see our work and clinics and continue to develop a relationship with them." Tucker and Schumacher also discussed some related issues with the staffers, including the importance of NIH funding to UAB — it received $270 million from the NIH in 2010, ranking 10th among public universities — and its research efforts, including addressing the HIV epidemic sweeping the Black Belt.

Tucker, Schumacher lobby for substance-abuse research funding

Congresswoman Terri Sewell, a Democrat who was first elected to Congress in November 2010.

Many conversations centered on encouraging them to oppose amendments to de-fund NIH peer-reviewed research projects, especially those targeted because grant titles may be politically incorrect. "That threatens the peer-review process of selecting grants and research, and peer review is a time-tested mechanism through which NIH ensures that taxpayer-funded research is of high quality and high priority," Schumacher says.

"Congressional staffers were not as aware of this as they were other issues," Tucker says. "They were intrigued and wanted to learn more. They said, 'We don't want to mess with the scientific peer-review process.' They seemed to appreciate the dual review process of an initial scientific review and a higher order council review that involves senior funding agency staff and lay people. They can shift priorities of approved grant applications after scientific review. They don't do that often, but they can.'"

Another reason the APA selected Tucker and Schumacher to lobby is because they are voters in their districts.

"Our local connection is very important," Schumacher says. "They're interested in the relationship with their constituency. We're constituents as well as experts. And these members of Congress have offices in Birmingham, so we can invite them to see our work and clinics and continue to develop a relationship with them." Tucker and Schumacher also discussed some related issues with the staffers, including the importance of NIH funding to UAB — it received $270 million from the NIH in 2010, ranking 10th among public universities — and its research efforts, including addressing the HIV epidemic sweeping the Black Belt.

We wanted their feedback so we would have an idea of their needs and also what they would like to see in these areas," Witherspoon says.

The third phase is scheduled to begin this spring on the second floor plaza, an outdoor area between the research and lecture halls that connects to the University Boulevard cross walk and the Learning Resource Center.

The plaza is a heavily traveled area, Witherspoon says, but right now it's not much more than concrete. It's strictly a walkway with no seating or other amenities. "It's really wasted space," Witherspoon says. "Dr. Watts and the Provost Office put their heads together and came up with some ideas for how to use the space, and UAB architects produced some really nice renderings of those ideas. It will be a greener area with some shrubbery, and it will have tables and chairs. We're hoping to start this project in the next couple of months and have it completed by August 2013."
DO RIGHT BY EATING CHILI

11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
THURSDAY, MARCH 8

at the

2012 UAB EMPLOYEE CHILI COOK-OFF

The event will feature the best chili recipes from more than 30 teams.

COOK-OFF LOCATIONS:
UAB Hospital Highlands Cafeteria and UAB Hospital West Pavilion Atrium

THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED:

START A TEAM
Register your team of creative cooks by 4 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 10. Each team will receive five 2012 Chili Cook-off T-shirts and five Cook’s Passes for entrance into the event.
The number of teams is limited, so register soon! To sign up your team, email Audrey McClinton at amcclinton@uabmc.edu.

BUY A TICKET
Tickets are only $5 and allow you to taste each chili and vote for your favorite team.
Tickets will go on sale Monday, Feb. 6, at the following locations:
- Jefferson Tower Cafeteria
- Gourmet Goodies and Gourmet Goodies Express
- North and West Pavilion Gift Shops
- Spain Rehabilitation Center Cafeteria
- UAB Hospital Highlands Gift Shop
- UAB Hospital Highlands Cafeteria

BUY A T-SHIRT
Chili Cook-off T-shirts will be available for $10 each and will be sold at UAB Hospital and UAB Hospital Highlands, as well as various locations around campus.

All proceeds benefit the UAB Benevolent Fund, UAB’s employee-managed program for employee charitable giving. For more information about the cook-off, visit www.uab.edu/benfund.