

New Junior Board of Visitors Created to Support School of Nursing

by Anita Smith



The UABSON Junior Board of Visitors

Sixteen years ago, a Board of Visitors was established to support the School of Nursing. Working with Dean Rachel Z. Booth in founding that board was advertising/public-relations executive and community leader Robert E. “Bob” Luckie Jr., who helped recruit the board’s founding members, including its first chairperson, Lella Bromberg. The Board of Visitors has been very successful in generating public awareness about the UABSON and raising funds for scholarships and programs.

Now, as the board continues its work, it is sometimes referred to as the “Senior” Board of Visitors. That’s because this board’s success has inspired the creation of a second board to support the UABSON—a Junior Board of Visitors, comprised of a young generation of community leaders.

As was true with the Senior Board, a leader in organizing the Junior Board is a member of the Luckie family. The

Junior Board’s first chair is Bob Luckie’s granddaughter, Mary Katherine Luckie Cabaniss.

When Bob Luckie helped establish the Senior Board, he was motivated by compassionate nursing care that had been rendered to his wife, Lois—known affectionately to her grandchildren as “Loie”—who died in 1987 after a long battle with breast cancer. Cabaniss is motivated by the same pas-

sion that drove her grandfather, who supported the Senior Board up until his death in February 2007—including two nursing scholarships from the Luckie family.

“A key goal of our Junior Board is to build further awareness about the School of Nursing,” says Cabaniss. She notes that many Alabamians really never appreciate having a great school of nursing at UAB “until they end up in a hospital and need a nurse.”

Cabaniss’s father, Robert E. “Bobby” Luckie III, offers this perspective: “Mary Katherine was my parents’ first granddaughter, and she was very close to her grandmother Loie. After her grandfather died, it was important to Mary Katherine to do something to honor her grandmother’s memory and at the same time continue to support the School of Nursing, which has been so important to our family.”

Cabaniss lists the following 21 young Birmingham-area residents who, in addition to herself, thus far are Junior Board members: Gerry Cabaniss, Sidney Wood Clapp, Anna Bishop Cook, David Darden, Ashley David, Susanna St. John Davis, Ginny deBardeleben, Lindsey Tomlinson Druhan, Beth and Bo Gresham, Kate Wood Hamilton, Carolyn Jordan, Julia King, Elizabeth Hassinger McCain, Kim Parsons, Barnes Ray, Laura Hale Robertson, Janet Skinner, Carey Thomasson, Ivy Watson, and Amanda Starnes Welden.

For its first fundraising event, the Junior Board sponsored a “No-Show Ball” on September 30. The concept called for board members to deliver delicious meals to the homes of all persons who purchased

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tickets—thus, instead of dressing up and attending a fundraising gala, “you could put on your fuzzy slippers and stay home, and we would bring a wonderful meal to your doorstep,” Cabaniss says. “It doesn’t get any easier than that!” Proceeds from that fundraiser were directed toward a UABSON pediatric-nursing scholarship.

Serving as liaisons with the Junior Board are Senior Board members Jean Tomlinson and Paula Midyette.

UABSON Dean Doreen C. Harper, PhD, RN, FAAN, is excited about the Junior Board’s potential to generate community awareness of and support for the School of Nursing. “The Junior Board represents a generational approach to what our Senior Board has begun,” she says,

“and is engaging a younger generation to invest in nursing’s future.”

Carolyn Jordan is a Junior Board member who, by virtue of being a former School of Nursing staff member, has particular insight into what the new board can do. “Our Junior Board has great potential to create a broader reach and build on the Senior Board’s success in generating support for UAB’s great School of Nursing,” Jordan says. “Just as was true with the Senior Board, our Junior Board can start out with members mainly in the Birmingham area and then expand to include members from other parts of our state.”

Cabaniss invites anyone wanting to know more about the Junior Board to contact her at mkcabaniss@charter.net.

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Mary Katherine Luckie Cabaniss,
First Chair of UABSON’s
Junior Board of Visitors



Ivy Watson *by Doug Gillett*

School of Nursing’s development department after having spent almost eight years in UAB’s events office. “As an events specialist, I constantly interacted with major donors. Through planning events, I saw their deep commitment to UAB through their generosity. Now, my interest is not only to attract donors to the School of Nursing but also to experience the satisfaction of working directly with them through the entire process of giving, recognition, and beyond.”

In her previous position, Watson also had frequent contact with UAB leaders. “I’ve been fortunate to have worked with the UABSON through its volunteers on the Board of Visitors and to have collaborated with them on their annual fundraisers over the last seven years. This gave me insight into a fine school and a noble profession, and I knew I wanted to help in even greater ways,” she says.

At the School of Nursing, Watson serves as the program coordinator for the World Health Organization Collaborating Center (WHOCC). Watson’s bachelor’s degree from Birmingham-Southern College in international studies with a focus on Spanish and Latin American studies has been an asset in her work with the WHOCC.

“I’ve traveled down there and seen a lot of the poverty—I’ve been able to witness firsthand what they’re dealing with, particularly many of the infants and children being so sick in some of the rural areas,” she says. “I know the School of Nursing, through the WHOCC for International Nursing Education, is doing some great work in Latin America.”

With both an aunt and a godmother who attended the UAB School of Nursing, Ivy Watson gained an early respect for the school and for the nursing profession. “I am especially inspired by my grandmother, who became a nurse at the age of 58 and worked for 13 years until she retired,” Watson says.

In the summer of 2007, Watson accepted a position as the major gifts officer in the