

**DSG-ALABAMA
BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER
APRIL 2010 NEWS**

We had a "GREAT" meeting last Saturday. 25 attended and obtained lots of information from our speakers, Dr. Yuqing Li, lead Dystonia Researcher at UAB and his graduate ass't, Chad. It is absolutely mind boggling the progress that's being made in finding the cause and cure for Dystonia right here at UAB where but a few years ago they couldn't even spell D Y S T O N I A. A great deal of THANKS must go to Dr. David G. Standaert who was recruited from Harvard Medical Center to "start up" a MOVEMENT DISORDER CENTER with all its related components. Quality medical professionals from Doctors, PhD's, researchers, graduate students, etc. follow "talent"....and that's what was triggered by UAB recruiting Dr. Standaert.

RESEARCH FUNDING also follows "research talent". UAB recently obtained a \$1.5 million grant for Dystonia Research on which they will collaborate with Harvard Medical School & Mt. Sinai Med Center. Dr. Li explained the specifics of this particular research having to do with the DYT1 gene, now identified as associated with early onset dystonia...plus 3 other gene's associated with late onset dystonia (i.e. being struck by Dystonia after age 28 as many of us were).

The Dep't of Defense also has found that "head trauma" causes Dystonia and many Army, Navy, Air Corp's & Marine's are returning from the battlefields with DYSTONIA. So-o-o, the Dep't of Defense has joined in the DYSTONIA RESEARCH efforts throughout the USA and this produces a new "funding source" in add'n to Nat'l Institutes of Health. UAB, too, has qualified for Dep't of Defense funding for dystonia research.

Next meeting is 10:00 am Saturday, May 20th, where we've invited 2 speakers, each to make a 45 minute presentation on "non medical-surgical" approaches to Living & Coping with Dystonia.

One speaker is a well known author who's books will be available at the meeting. Her subject is DYSPHONIA.

The other invited speaker works with "Health & Wellness Programs for persons with Movement Disorders", another new center established within the UAB neurological dept.

If you haven't paid your membership dues of \$35, please do so if you can possibly afford it. Or, make a donation to DSGA or DMRF.....or set up a fund raising campaign of your own ---- something simple like asking friends & family to donate to Dystonia Research instead of buying you a "toy" for birthday's, Christmas, etc.

We continue to attract new members, mostly from people recently diagnosed with Dystonia who are seeking HELP and SUPPORT.

Ken L. Williams, Volunteer Director
Dystonia Support Group of Alabama