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Writer: **Kim Cretors**, 706/542-6927, kcretors@uga.edu
Contact: **George Francisco**, 706/542-1911, gef@mail.rx.uga.edu
Marsha Aarons, 229/430-4670, marsha.aaron@asurams.edu

Albany State and UGA contribution to Regents' Health Professionals Initiative producing results for both the universities and Southwest Georgia

Athens, Ga. – A collaboration between the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy and Albany State University, part of the University System of Georgia's Intellectual Capital Partnership Program® (ICAPP®), is producing positive results for both areas of the state in its first two years of existence.

Today the University System released results of Phase One of its ICAPP® Health Professionals Initiative, a project matching private sector healthcare providers with system colleges and universities to create programs that are producing fast-track graduates in the fields of nursing, medical technology and pharmacy.

System officials also announced that the initiative has received a “booster shot” of \$2.05 million for year one of Phase Two, which will be combined with \$1.75 million in cash and in-kind support from 26 private employer partners. ICAPP® has allocated \$374,832 to the UGA pharmacy college for Fiscal Year 2005 to administer its program at Albany State.

“The ICAPP® Health Professionals Initiative is a great example of how academic training and economic development can effectively meet the needs of Georgia's citizens,” said UGA President Michael F. Adams. “I am especially glad that the University of Georgia is a participant in today's announcement and a major player in an effort to provide more pharmaceutical professionals in Southwest Georgia.”

Through the Health Professionals Initiative, UGA has collaborated with Albany State University to educate pharmacists, addressing a shortage of pharmacists statewide that has reached a critical level in Southwest Georgia. In addition to creating educational opportunities for area students interested in pharmacy, the collaboration has also earned the promise of jobs in Southwest Georgia with ICAPP® corporate partners CVS, Eckerd and the region's Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital. Along with those jobs, more than a quarter million dollars annually in projected state income taxes will be paid by ICAPP® graduates.

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“Albany State University prides itself in being a viable part of the Albany and Southwest Georgia communities,” said Albany State President Portia H. Shields. “Being a part of the ICAPP® partnership allows the university to provide training facilities for professionals who can have a vital impact on this area.

“Phase One of the program offered dramatic positive results,” she continued. “It is important to our students and to our community that we continue this success during Phase Two.”

UGA’s partnership with Albany State will have produced 81 pharmacists during Phase One and another 50 during Phase Two. Twenty-five are scheduled to graduate in May 2007 and 25 more in May 2008. In addition, eight students did their clinical rotations in Southwest Georgia during the 2003-2004 academic year, and half of the students took jobs in Southwest Georgia because of their positive experience there. Twenty-three students are doing their clinical rotation in Southwest Georgia now. ICAPP® funding makes the clinical rotations there possible.

“We are excited that the new funding will allow us to continue the pharmacy training program in Southwest Georgia as well as allow us to consider admitting more students from this area of the state,” said George Francisco, program coordinator and professor in UGA’s pharmacy college.

The first phase of the ICAPP® Health Professionals Initiative was a \$6.75 million public/private partnership between Georgia healthcare providers and the University System. Thirteen University System institutions worked with medical providers in 19 Georgia communities. Many of the colleges and universities and private sector employers involved in Phase One will continue similar programs in Phase Two.

“To assure that the College of Pharmacy is serving Southwest Georgia in the best possible way, we are exploring ways to increase the likelihood that pharmacy graduates will settle and practice in this area,” added Francisco. “We also are currently exploring ways to admit more students from the area and to attract more of our current students to Southwest Georgia during the final three semesters of their training.”

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This and other news releases detailing the ICAPP® Health Professionals Initiative may be found on the ICAPP® Web site at www.icapp.org/employees/hpi.phtml.