The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, in partnership with the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center, is the recipient of the 2009 Roy M. Pitkin Award from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

The award recognizes outstanding research published during the preceding year. UAB's honor is for the study " Results from Four Rounds of Ovarian Cancer Screening in a Randomized Trial " published April 2009 in the journal
Obstetrics & Gynecology
by lead author Edward Partridge, M.D., Cancer Center director and president-elect of the American Cancer Society National Board of Directors. The award was announced May 16 during the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists' annual meeting in San Francisco.

The study is part of the Prostate, Lung, Colorectal and Ovarian Cancer Screening Trial (PLCO trial) and included more than 72,000 women aged 55 to 74. The study looked at a screening regimen that combines ultrasound and a blood test for CA-125, a marker for women's cancer.

Results show the only available screening tests for ovarian cancer fail to catch early signs of the disease and often result in unnecessary surgery, Partridge says. Knowing the limitations of the combo screening means research and testing continue for a better way to detect ovarian cancer. Ovarian cancer ranks as the fifth leading cause of female cancer death, and it is diagnosed primarily in women aged 55 and older.

The UAB study was a partnership between PLCO investigators at the Huntsman Cancer

Institute in Salt Lake City; University of Colorado Cancer Center in Denver; Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis; Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.; University of Pittsburgh Medical Center; Henry Ford Health System in Detroit; Pacific Health Research Institute in Honolulu; University of Minnesota in Minneapolis; and National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland. Funding is from the National Institutes of Health.

The Roy M. Pitkin Award comes with a $5,000 prize. Each year, a distinguished panel of former editorial board members selects the top articles and recognizes the winners.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists is the nation's leading group of physicians providing health care for women. As a private, voluntary, nonprofit membership organization, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists strongly advocates for quality health care for women, maintains the highest standards of clinical practice and continuing education of its members, and promotes patient education and increased awareness among its members and the public of the changing issues facing women's health care.

The UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center is among the 40 cancer centers in the nation to meet the stringent criteria for the National Cancer Institute's comprehensive designation. The center is a leader in groundbreaking research, reducing cancer disparities and leading-edge patient care.

The UAB Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology provides comprehensive care for every

stage of life – from routine gynecologic care, to childbirth, to menopause and beyond. Its physicians are leaders in their fields in a nationally ranked program dedicated to giving patients the best care available.

May 25, 2010