A researcher in the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center has been selected for the inaugural Ovarian Cancer Academy Award, part of the U.S. Department of Defense funding for cancer research. Assistant Professor Charles Landen, M.D., of the Division of Gynecologic Oncology, is one of seven early career investigators chosen for the grant. The award is $1.06 million from the Office of Congressionally Directed Medical Research.

Landen works to identify and characterize a subpopulation of ovarian cancer cells that have enhanced ability to survive chemotherapy and cause recurrence. Understanding this class of cells may lead to discoveries of key pathways than can be targeted with novel anti-cancer therapies.

This five-year defense award is part of the Office of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research managed by the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command.

The Office of Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs was born from a powerful grassroots effort led by the breast cancer advocacy community that convinced Congress to appropriate funds for breast cancer research, according to a statement. This enabled a unique partnership among the public, Congress and the military. Created within the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command to manage these critical funds, the program office has grown to encompass multiple targeted programs and has received billions in appropriations from its inception through fiscal year 2010.

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.

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