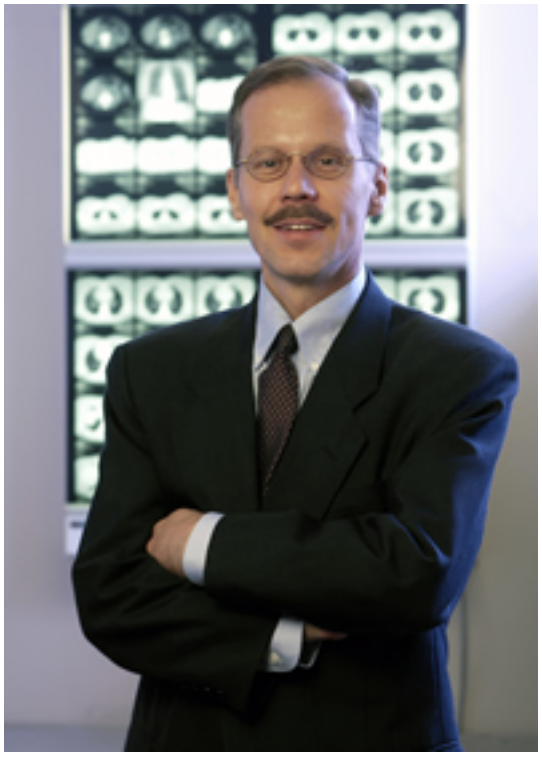
James A. Bonner, M.D., the Merle M. Salter professor and chairman of the UAB Department of Radiation Oncology, has been elected as president of the University of Alabama Health Services Foundation. His potentially renewable three-year term began Oct. 1, 2012.



The University of Alabama Health Services Foundation is a nonprofit, group-physician practice including The Kirklin Clinic and The Kirklin Clinic at Acton Road. The HSF was founded by pioneering heart surgeon John W. Kirklin, M.D., in 1973. Since that time, the foundation has achieved national prominence for high-quality patient-care services and the unique knowledge, dedication and compassion of its employees.

“It is a tremendous honor to represent the Health Services Foundation in the role of president,” says Bonner. “This group truly has a long track record of seeking to offer the most technically advanced and highest quality of care for all patients.”

Bonner received his undergraduate degree from Duke University and his medical degree from Wayne State University. After training at the University of Michigan, he was a faculty member at the Mayo Clinic, where he was named Teacher of the Year in Radiation Oncology in 1994 and 1996. While at Mayo, he was chairman of the department’s research committee and chairman of the lung cancer program for the North Central Cancer Treatment Group. He also ran an NIH-funded laboratory. Since coming to UAB in 1998, Bonner has been a co-chair of the lung cancer program for the Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group. He also served as co-chair of the experimental therapeutics program at the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center for 12 years, and is now a senior advisor to the Cancer Center director.

Bonner’s research interests focus on methods of enhancing radiosensitization, such as combinations of chemotherapy or targeted therapy with radiotherapy. He was the principal investigator of the landmark trial of cetuximab and radiation in head and neck cancer. This project was designated as one of the top six contributions to oncology by the American Society for Clinical Oncology
in 2006. His current laboratory interests are directed at new gene therapy-based approaches to enhancing the effects of radiation.

Bonner has been the principal investigator of numerous clinical protocols and has published more than 300 manuscripts or abstracts. He has been a noted speaker at organizational meetings throughout the world, including the American Head and Neck Society, Korean Society of Head and Neck Oncology, and Italian Association of Head and Neck Oncology. He is a fellow

of the American Society for Radiation Oncology.