

For Immediate Release, June 15, 2010

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Tuscaloosa Civic Leaders Receive Statewide Award

MONTGOMERY – Sarah Patterson, head gymnastics coach and associate athletic director for the University of Alabama, and David DeSantis, co-owner and general manager of Tuscaloosa Toyota, were recently honored by the Alabama Hospital Association (AlaHA) with its Special Citation Award at the organization's annual meeting in Destin, Fla.

“Coach Patterson and Mr. DeSantis are individuals who truly care about the health of our citizens, especially women and the battle against breast cancer,” said J. Michael Horsley, FACHE, president of the Alabama Hospital Association. “They were instrumental in increasing cancer awareness and access to health care among women, particularly in the Tuscaloosa area. We celebrate their dedication to women's health and are pleased to be able to recognize their outstanding service with this award.”

In collaboration with the DCH Foundation, Coach Patterson and Mr. DeSantis created the DCH Breast Cancer Fund that educates women about early breast cancer detection and pays for diagnostic tests for women with little or no insurance. Coach Patterson created the Power of Pink initiative, the centerpiece of the Drive 4 the Cause meets of which Mr. DeSantis is a sponsor. Through their partnership, more than \$850,000 has been raised for the DCH Breast Cancer Fund and almost 1,200 women have received breast cancer screenings. While all University of Alabama women's athletic programs incorporate breast cancer awareness in their respective seasons, the campaign has reached far beyond West Alabama as a result of every SEC team participating in a Pink Meet, along with 30 other programs across the nation.

The Alabama Hospital Association, based in Montgomery, is a statewide trade organization that represents more than 100 hospitals and numerous other health care

providers by offering membership services designed to enhance the provision of health care in Alabama.