March 28, 2012

**Drug Discovery Scientist Presents First Chu Lecture**

Jack Secrist, president and chief executive officer of Southern Research Institute of Birmingham, was the inaugural lecturer for the Chu Lectureship Series at the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy. He presented “Nucleosides: A Fertile Field for Drug Discovery” to faculty, graduate students and guests of the College’s Department of Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences.

Secrist has been involved with drug discovery research since 1979 when he joined Southern Research Institute. Throughout his career he has focused primarily on the development of new anticancer, antiviral and antibacterial agents, largely through support from the National Institutes of Health.

The Chu Lectureship Series was established to honor the outstanding accomplishments and contributions of Distinguished Professor Emeritus David Chu, by bringing nationally and internationally recognized leaders in drug discovery to UGA.

As a medicinal chemist, Chu has spent more than 30 years in drug discovery of anticancer and antiviral agents to treat such diseases as HIV, cancer, bio-terrorism-related viral diseases, and hepatitis B virus. His program in drug discovery is recognized as one of the top academic research laboratories.

Over the past 25 years Chu has received more than $18.7M in research grants, mostly from the National Institutes of Health, and $1,364,798 in royalties or endowments. In 2001 he received the highly selective MERIT (Method to Extend Research in Time) award from NIH in recognition of his superior competence and outstanding productivity in research.

Chu has published more than 300 peer-reviewed research papers, edited four books and received more than 50 patents. He has trained more than 120 graduate students and postdoctoral fellows and has maintained an active research program in drug design and synthesis even after his retirement in 2008.