

Tuesday, April 10, 2007

Today's people

Physician's assistant offers quick treatment for painful injuries

By Joel Martin
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Matt Jones / Daily News

Greg McCollum, a physician's assistant at the Southern Center for Orthopedics, checks out a patient's shoulder injury.

Greg McCollum, a physician's assistant at Southern Orthopedics on Vernon Road, treats patients who need to be seen right away and can't wait a week or two for a regular appointment.

Patients can always go to a hospital emergency room, but it's usually busy and "they have to see us anyway," said orthopedic surgeon Jim Bruce. "It saves the expense of an emergency room visit."

Bruce started the Southern Center about 25 years ago and was joined by orthopedic surgeons Daniel Guy, Randy Comerford and Brian Terry in 1987, 1993 and 2002, respectively. Affiliated operations, all in the same building, include Southern Therapy Services, Southern Surgery Center and open MRI services.

McCollum, 40, started Feb. 1 and "it's been even better than we anticipated," Bruce said. "He sees about 20 folks a day, and there's no way we could accommodate 20 unscheduled patients if he were not here."

An Atlanta native who grew up in Peachtree City, McCollum graduated from Georgia Tech in 1994 with a bachelor's degree in management and from South University in Savannah in 2005

with a master's in physician assistant studies.

He served two years in the Navy as an interior communications electrician, and has worked in Atlanta, Newnan, Peachtree City, Alpharetta, Stockbridge and Lawrenceville. He was a volunteer at the 2004 U.S.A. Wheelchair Basketball training camp.

McCollum, who enjoys boating, fishing and going to Georgia Tech football and basketball games, said his brief time in LaGrange has been a pleasure.

"LaGrange is growing, but it still has a small town feel," he said. "It seems like everybody is related to everybody. I like the friendly attitude of the people."

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