Agreement Clears Way for MRI Research Center at Auburn

Siemens Medical Solutions USA Inc. has signed a master research agreement with Auburn to establish the Auburn University Magnetic Resonance Imaging Research Center. The MRI center, to be constructed in the Auburn Research Park, combines Auburn’s expertise in the areas of engineering, science and pharmaceuticals with Siemens’ expertise in magnetic resonance imaging.

University officials said the alliance with Siemens, one of the world’s largest suppliers to the health care industry, will advance Auburn to the forefront of biomedical engineering and has the potential to bring lifesaving technologies to the citizens of Alabama and the region. Examples of current and potential areas of MRI-related research include cognitive neuroscience, metabolic imaging and pharmaceuticals, as well as research into diabetes and heart disease.

“This effort supports Alabama’s goal of becoming known as a key state in advancing the biomedical frontier,” said Auburn President Jay Gogue. “We believe that this collaboration sets an example and establishes a precedent on which programs between Auburn University and other institutions, both private and public, can build to strengthen Alabama’s future.”

The first phase of this center involves the location of Siemens 7 Tesla (7T) Investigational Device and 3T MRI scanners in a newly constructed facility in the Auburn Research Park. MRI scanners are classified by the strength of the magnet used for imaging. The equipment is designed to produce finer anatomic detail with shorter scan times.

The 3T open bore scanner contains the strongest magnet certified for clinical diagnostic use. The equipment is designed to produce finer anatomic detail with shorter scan times.

Witt Retiring
New Dean to Lead Nursing at Auburn, AUM

Gregg E. Newschwander, professor of nursing and chair of the Department of Nursing at the University of Virginia’s College at Wise, has been named dean of the schools of Nursing at Auburn University and Auburn Montgomery.

“Dr. Newschwander brings to Auburn significant experience in strategic planning, program expansion and new program development,” Provost Mary Ellen Mazey said in announcing the appointment. “His administrative and academic leadership combined with his vast clinical experience make him a perfect fit to lead the Auburn and Auburn Montgomery programs.”

With more than 20 years of undergraduate and graduate teaching experience,

(A Nursing, continued on page 5)

Auburn Commons Printing Final Issue

Auburn University’s Office of Communications and Marketing has announced plans to cease printing Auburn Commons this fall and instead disseminate news through eCommons and Wire Eagle online communications.

The decision to eliminate the print publication was one of several cost-cutting moves the university made to reduce its expenditures in response to a decline in state revenue.

Alumni and friends of Auburn can still receive eCommons for free by submitting new or updated e-mail address information to aurecords@auburn.edu. You can also subscribe to updates via e-mail at http://wireeagle.auburn.edu/

By becoming a member of the Auburn Alumni Association, you will receive a quarterly subscription to Auburn Magazine.
Dear Auburn Alumni and Supporters,

As most of you know, for 17 years Auburn University has ranked in the top 50 of public institutions in U.S. News and World Report. However, did you know that this same publication also just reported what Auburn residents have known for a long time — that the loveliest village of the plain is a great place to live, attend school and raise a family? U.S. News selected the city of Auburn as a top 10 choice among all the places in America, recognizing it as “this diamond on the eastern Alabama plain,” and Auburn University as a major contributor to the quality of life of city residents.

Two examples of the university’s myriad contributions that go far beyond the city limits are found in bioenergy research and our new Center for Science, Technology and Commerce.

In September, the U.S. Department of Energy awarded Auburn a $4.9 million grant to develop new production systems to collect woody biomass from pine plantations for making bioenergy. This is a very important grant that will allow us to further develop ways of producing more biofuel. It will help our nation find alternatives to oil and will boost the economy in areas of Alabama that rely on forests for jobs.

Auburn’s Center for Bioenergy and Bioproducts will lead the project as part of a consortium that includes central Alabama company Corley Land Services, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service and companies from the U.S. and Canada.

Auburn will also receive $14.4 million in federal stimulus funds for construction of a science, technology and commerce research facility in the Auburn Research Park.

The competitive grant will aid Auburn researchers working on standards, measurements and forecasting related to food safety, bioenergy technologies, aquaculture development and sustainability, and water and environmental quality.

The innovations coming out of the new 68,000-square-foot center will advance national priorities that benefit key sectors of the economy and the public in Alabama and beyond. It will feature 21 research laboratories for five major multidisciplinary research groups.

Sen. Richard Shelby and other members of the Alabama congressional delegation have worked hard to support such growth to ensure that the state plays an important role in achieving federal research goals.

Initiatives such as these will further establish Auburn as a major research university, and the fact that we’re part of a community recognized as a great place to live makes such accomplishment even more special for our students, staff, faculty and graduates.

War Eagle!

Jay Gogue

**MRI**

(continued from page 1)

is cited as the next generation MRI scanner for cutting-edge research and is designed to provide unprecedented insight into how the human body is structured and how it works. Auburn faculty in engineering, science and pharmaceuticals will solely direct the research needed to bring the benefits of 7T MRI to the general population. The Auburn unit will be the first actively shielded whole body 7T MRI scanner in the world.

University and company officials said the Auburn MRI Research Center represents the first step in a broader initiative designed to bring together Alabama’s intellectual and business capital to create a unique resource for the state. “This collaboration will provide a research platform of the highest level,” said Heinrich Kolem, president and CEO of Siemens Medical Solutions USA. “We believe this alliance will result in improvements in health, education and economic growth for the state of Alabama and the nation.”

“The MRI Research Center and the supporting alliances it will generate are prime examples of how state funds can be invested and state educational institutions collaborate with the private sector to develop a world-class research center to advance science and technology, improving quality of life in the global community and promoting economic development for the state of Alabama,” said Larry Benefield, dean of Auburn’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering.

Auburn COMMONS

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Successfully transitioning from high school to college can be one of the toughest assignments in a student’s life, but an Auburn professor hopes to help smooth the process.

Michael Bozack, a physics professor who has taught at Auburn for 20 years, recently wrote “Street-Smart Advice to Christian College Students (From a Professor’s Point of View).” Bozack covers multiple aspects of student life, including how to choose a major, how to manage a schedule, how to study and even how to understand professors.

There are a lot of students who come out of high school who are just not ready for college,” Bozack said. “That’s sad to me. These are important years of life for students and they should do various things to ensure their success.”

Bozack is best known on campus for teaching the freshman course “Foundations of Physics,” called “Dave Letterman Physics” by many students, which he describes as his version of the television show, “Mythbusters.” He said he encourages students to treat class the same way they would a job by being on time, being professional and getting the job done.

“If I could boil it down to one thing, it would just be to develop a good work ethic,” Bozack said. “A lot of students don’t have that and have never been taught how to study or discipline their life. They hit a speed bump of professors who aren’t going to settle for mediocrity, but expect students to keep up with them, rather than them slowing down to the student.”

Bozack, who became a Christian during his undergraduate years at Michigan State, said his book isn’t only about how to succeed academically; it also advises students on how to successfully live a Christian life in college.

“It’s what I passionately believe a college student should know to do better,” Bozack said. “A lot of books on the market I saw were too fluffy. I wanted to be honest. There’s a little tough love in there.”

“I think it’s good for a Christian student to get involved in a local church here,” Bozack said. “I think you need that spiritual input in your life. I don’t think it’s good for a Christian student to come here to Auburn and float. I’d say visit a few churches and then plant yourself in one because you’re going to need that boost in your life every week.”

Bozack has a doctorate in surface physics from Oregon Health and Science University and a master’s degree in systematic theology from Western Conservative Baptist Seminary.

“Street-Smart Advice to Christian College Students” is available from a variety of online booksellers and may be purchased locally at the Auburn University Bookstore and J&M Bookstore. The 304-page book is published by VMI Publishers.
Panel Nominates Campbell, Roberts for Seats on Board

The Auburn University Trustee Selection Committee unanimously selected Randy Campbell of the Birmingham suburb of Shoal Creek on Aug. 26 to fill the Board of Trustees District 6 position currently held by Paul Spina of Pelham.

Campbell, one of the most prominent Auburn students of the 1980s, is president of Campbell Financial Partners and Harlan Partners, both in Birmingham.

Toomer's Corner Bricks
Funding Scholarships

For a limited time, the Auburn Alumni Association is offering authentic Toomer's Corner bricks for $100 each. Proceeds benefit the organization's endowed scholarship fund. Workers recently excavated more than 1,000 of the red-clay pavers from under the beloved twin live oak trees at the corner of Magnolia Avenue and College Street.

In an effort to improve the live oaks’ health and thereby continue one of Auburn’s most beloved victory rituals, the rolling of Toomer’s Corner, the university has replaced the bricks with mulch and a pervious sidewalk that allows air, water and nutrients to reach the trees’ roots.

Each brick sports a metal plate marked with Auburn’s familiar interlocking AU logo and the words “Toomer’s Corner.”

Bricks may be ordered online at http://www.aualum.org/scholarships/toomerscornerbricks.html and picked up from the Auburn Alumni Center at the corner of College Street and Miller Avenue, or for an additional charge, shipped via PAKMAIL (334) 821-0629.

“All contributions to the Toomer’s Corner brick campaign will be applied directly toward scholarships aimed at attracting the best and brightest students to Auburn University,” said Debbie Shaw, vice president for alumni affairs at Auburn and executive director of the Auburn Alumni Association.

If you need additional information, you may contact Toni Littleton-Rich at tonilittletonrich@auburn.edu.

He graduated from Auburn in 1984 with a bachelor’s degree in industrial operations management, has served as co-chair of the Birmingham region for the “It Begins at Auburn” capital campaign and is a member of the Planned Giving Advisory Council and the Auburn Athletic Advisory Council.

As a student, he was quarterback for the football team from 1981-83 and received the Cliff Hare Award, the highest award presented to a student-athlete. Also, he was an assistant coach under Pat Dye in 1992.

District 6 on the Board of Trustees encompasses eight Alabama counties south and west of Birmingham. Spina’s term expired on Sept. 2 but the Alabama Constitution provides for a trustee to retain the seat for up to one year during the selection process for a successor.

Gov. Bob Riley, chair of the Selection Committee, will send Campbell’s nomination to the Alabama Senate, which must confirm the selection before the new trustee can be seated. Unless called into special session, the Legislature will convene for its 2010 session in January.

Ben Tom “B.T.” Roberts of Mobile was nominated to complete the term of the late John C.H. “Jack” Miller Jr. on the Auburn University Board of Trustees.

If confirmed by the Alabama Senate, Roberts will represent District 1 on the Auburn Board through May 10, 2012.

Roberts is president of Roberts Brothers Commercial and Property Management Inc. in Mobile. He graduated from Auburn in 1972 with a degree in industrial management and has been active in Auburn alumni and development activities for many years.

Veteran Architecture Professor, Co-founder of Rural Studio Dies


An Auburn alumnus and a member of the College of Architecture, Design and Construction faculty since 1989, Ruth and the late Samuel Mockbee founded the college’s internationally famous Rural Studio in West Alabama in 1992. In recent years, Ruth created the college’s Design-Build graduate program. During his career at Auburn, he also served as department head and interim dean of the College of Architecture, Design and Construction.

He was the recipient of more than 20 teaching and design excellence awards, including the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award for service to humanity.

In addition to a bachelor’s degree in architecture from Auburn, Ruth held a master’s degree in architecture from Harvard University Graduate School of Design. Before joining the Auburn faculty 20 years ago, he practiced architecture and taught at Mississippi State and the University of Tennessee.
NIH Grant to Consortium Aids Search for Cure of Tay-Sachs

The National Institutes of Health has awarded a $3.5-million grant to the Tay-Sachs Gene Therapy Consortium, which includes Auburn, to continue research targeting the fatal genetic disorder.

The NIH grant will help advance an experimental gene therapy for Tay-Sachs and Sandhoff diseases from animal tests to human clinical trials.

Consortium research directors include Henry J. Baker, University of Massachusetts Medical School and Miguel Sena-Esteves of the Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Cambridge in England, Florian S. Eichler of Begoña Cachón-González of the University of Boston College, Timothy M. Cox and Nancy R. Cox and Aime K. Johnson.

“We’re fortunate to be part of a consortium of world-class scientists dedicated to providing realistic hope for Tay-Sachs patients and their families,” said Martin, an assistant research professor in Auburn’s Scott-Ritchey Research Center. “With great support from private donors and foundations, the initial stages of the project have made success a realistic possibility in the NIH-sponsored research.”

“This is a tremendous achievement,” said Susan Kahn, executive director of the Boston-based National Tay-Sachs and Allied Diseases Association, which made establishing the consortium a top research priority. “While we know much work lies ahead, the potential success of this gene therapy effort gives hope to our member families and may one day go beyond Tay-Sachs to other diseases that affect the brain.”

Nursing

(continued from page 1)

Newschwander previously held administrative positions at the University of Vermont, Catholic University of America and the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. He has remained active in clinical practice throughout his career, with expertise in pediatric emergency and trauma nursing.

Newschwander was selected for the Auburn job from a list of four finalists following a national search and will begin work Dec. 1. At Auburn and AUM, he will work collaboratively with the academic colleges and schools to provide leadership to enhance and promote existing programs, to develop innovative new programs and to recruit high-quality students. He will also be instrumental in shaping and executing the strategic plans for both campuses.

Prior to his appointment at the University of Virginia’s College at Wise, Newschwander was the chair of the department of nursing at the University of Vermont in Burlington for four years. During that time, he was responsible for the administration of both the undergraduate and graduate nursing programs which included 400 students and 40 full- and part-time faculty.

Newschwander served for 10 years as the assistant dean for student affairs in the School of Nursing at the University of Virginia. In that position, he started the UVA International Studies Program in Comparative Health Care at Oxford University in England.

Newschwander holds a bachelor’s degree from Rutgers University’s College of Nursing and a master’s from the University of Colorado’s School of Nursing, where his major was pediatrics and his clinical focus was the primary health care of adolescents. He received his doctorate from Marquette University’s School of Education.

He has received research funding through the Department of Health and Human Services and the Health Resources and Services Administration, published in nursing and education journals and presented his research findings in the United States and Canada.

Newschwander succeeds Barbara Witt, who is retiring. Witt became dean of the Auburn Montgomery School of Nursing in 1998. Shortly thereafter, she was given the responsibility of consolidating the administration of the schools of Nursing at AUM and Auburn University. She has led both nursing schools for 10 years.

Tay-Sachs is a fatal genetic disorder, historically known as a disease that affects Ashkenazi Jews. Those of Eastern European Jewish descent, Cajun, French-Canadian and Irish descent are at higher risk for this devastating disease, although this disease can strike anyone. Approximately 25-30 individuals die from the disease annually, though genetic screening has greatly reduced deaths from Tay-Sachs.

Infants can show signs of the disease as early as six months, cease meeting developmental milestones, and then begin to lose motor skills. Most children do not survive past age 5. Children affected by juvenile onset show signs after age three and quickly begin to regress physically and mentally. For adults afflicted by late onset Tay-Sachs, symptoms are often confused with mental illness or other neurodegenerative diagnoses.

Tay-Sachs and Sandhoff diseases are known collectively as GM2 gangliosidoses. Like Tay-Sachs disease, Sandhoff disease is a progressive neurological genetic disorder that is always fatal in children and can occur in all ethnic groups.
English Manor Houses Offer Clues on Class, Cloth, Culture

Screen adaptations of classic works by 19th and 20th century British writers ranging from Jane Austen to Agatha Christie hold a special interest for Ann Beth Presley in Auburn’s College of Human Sciences.

But, unlike traditional fans of the PBS and BBC productions, who focus on the characters and story, Presley, an authority on textiles and apparel, pays extra attention to the characters’ clothes and the home’s furnishings. In those details, the associate professor in the Department of Consumer Affairs sees clues into the social class and behavior of people who actually lived during various periods in British history. Yet, besides the standard limitations of any staged production, a screened image can only yield so much information.

This summer, Presley broke through the two-dimensional barrier of television and cinema to gain a fuller perspective on the lives of the people on whom Austen, Christie, Charles Dickens, Evelyn Waugh and others based their fictional characters. During an intense 18 days in July, Presley was part of an invited class of museum curators and scholars in a field study of historic palaces and manor houses throughout England.

Presley was the only academic scholar accepted and participating in a study group dominated by hands-on museum professionals from around the world. Since 1952, the Attingham Trust, an organization for the study of upper-class 19th century England, has led the summer study tours into legendary British houses and collections, including New York’s Metropolitan and London’s Tate.

Sessions in the summer program were at some of England’s most famous national heritage sites. Among these are the Victoria and Albert Museum, Arundel Castle, Broughton Castle, Chatsworth, Hardwick Hall and Wentworth Castle.

Instead of tourist walk-throughs of a few rooms in manor houses and castles that are open to the public, the Attingham group spent intense 12- and 13-hour days exploring the history, grounds, architectural features and furnishings of private estates and sections of public estates that are normally closed to outsiders. For Presley, the program presented a rare opportunity to closely examine clothing, textiles, carpets, wallpaper and furnishings from different historical eras in their natural environment. Each home contributed a different aspect to the participants’ understanding of the historic diversity of English country homes, she noted.

Especially notable, she said, was the rare collection of textiles at Temple Newsam, an expansive country house near Leeds. “That was an incredible collection which was not only extremely well preserved but also had a direct connect with the current owners through many generations,” she said.

Among insights gained during the tour, Presley said, was a greater awareness of how people through the centuries used textiles and apparel to express themselves and their families in terms of social standing, economic status, politics and religion. Sometimes those expressions would be obvious, as in the richness of materials and design of clothing and furnishings for the British upper classes.

When a noble’s true political or religious views were counter to that of the crown, the expression of those views, even in the home, would be hidden from view or coded to prevent detection. For instance, Presley noted, during decades of strife after England’s state religion was changed from Catholicism to the Protestant religion under Henry VIII, many nobles secretly sewed crosses and rosaries into fabrics in places visitors would not see, such as inside a corner of the canopy of the lord’s or lady’s bed. If detected they could have been persecuted or even beheaded for treason to the crown.

Although Presley was aware of the importance of class distinctions and inheritance through male lineage for much of Britain’s history, she said the study tour of British estates showed how deeply embedded those factors were in British culture for several centuries. The nobility distinguished itself from the lower social classes through attitudes, language and clothing, and similar distinctions existed between levels of the nobility. Those distinctions can still be observed in the estates of the nobility, where the fabrics and furnishings of the houses became noticeably richer as the nobility progressed up the peerage ladder from baron to duke.

During the summer program, Presley collected an array of samples and slides that she plans to share with students in her apparel and textiles classes in the College of Human Sciences. “For my teaching, I gathered a massive amount of pictures and information about places that are closed to the public,” she said. “A lot of this information ties into social history and how dress and furnishings reflect change over time. That is an important concept for students in this field.”

These stock images illustrate the classic manor house and style of men’s clothing (photo in upper-right corner) in upper-class 19th century England. Ann Beth Presley of the College of Human Sciences studied historic apparel and furnishings in similar locales this summer through Britain’s Attingham Trust.
With Help from Horticulture Department

Ariccia Chefs Go Poolside for Restaurant's Fresh Herbs

Guests at The Hotel at Auburn University are sure to notice the beautifully landscaped pool area. What they might not notice is that the area includes a bountiful herb garden providing the hotel's restaurant with the freshest herbs during the South's long growing season.

Prepared and cultivated by Auburn’s College of Agriculture, the garden is one of the latest partnerships between the hotel and the university.

Parsley, sage, rosemary, thyme, basil, mint, oregano, chives and a bit of lavender are among the aromatic herbs that flourish against a backdrop of muscadine and scuppernong vines in the garden, which also contains a flowing fountain.

Almost every morning from late spring through fall, John Hamme, executive chef of the Ariccia Italian Trattoria inside the hotel, visits the herb garden. With scissors in hand, he starts snipping, not stopping until his large wicker gathering basket is filled with a medley of fragrant herbs.

In Italy, it’s a culinary custom to use the freshest ingredients, and at Ariccia — named after the ancient town of Ariccia, Italy — Hamme honors that tradition by growing some of his own ingredients and by purchasing as many farm-fresh fruits, vegetables, meats and other ingredients as possible from producers across the state through community-supported agriculture partnerships.

About four years ago, Hans van der Reijden, managing director of operations at the university-owned hotel and conference center, decided that, given the restaurant’s focus on freshness, Ariccia should have an on-site container herb garden in the pool area, where chefs could gather herbs one minute and have them in the kitchen the next.

There was just one problem.

“Of course, the garden must be extremely attractive and healthy and well maintained at all times,” van der Reijden says, “but we have no gardeners on staff.”

This is where, in late 2006, the College of Agriculture entered the scene.

The obvious prospective collaborator on the herb garden project was the College of Agriculture’s Horticulture Department. Van der Reijden enlisted the help of Cynthia Channell-Butcher, an academic program administrator in the Horticulture Department who’s also an avid gardener and grows herbs.

Channell-Butcher, in turn, recruited Jane Hoehaver, director of the college’s Plant Science Research Center. Hamme, Hoehaver and Channell-Butcher work together to make the garden a success. Hamme specifies the herbs to be grown, Hoehaver gets the plants started in a greenhouse at the research center and Channell-Butcher takes things from there.

In spring 2007, Channell-Butcher planted the first crop of herbs. That fall, van der Reijden brought in a landscape architect who designed a beautiful garden space, running the length of the brick wall parallel to the pool, filled with raised beds and enclosed by a knee-high wooden fence.

Channell-Butcher and her brothers completed the space by donating a fountain to the garden in memory of their father, 1963 Auburn alumnus Dewey Bowes Channell of Huntsville who died in 2005. A plaque at the fountain’s base identifies it as a memorial to Channell, given by his three children.

Another plaque, displayed by the wrought-iron gate to the pool area, notes that the herb garden is a collaborative project of the hotel and conference center, the College of Agriculture, the Horticulture Department and the Plant Research Center.

All participants say the garden has been a success. In mid-April, Channell-Butcher and Hoehaver planted this year’s garden, and Hamme is once again harvesting fresh, fragrant herbs.

Hannah Dixon
Auburn University’s official 2010 calendar, *Jordan-Hare Stadium: Points of View*, is a collection of images, along with a brief history, of a campus site that roars to life on Saturdays in the fall. Produced by Auburn’s Office of Communications and Marketing, the 12-month calendar sells for $9.95. The Jordan-Hare photos that appear on the top half of each month’s spread will easily fit an 11” x 14” frame. To order *Jordan-Hare Stadium: Points of View*, contact Auburn University Photographic Services at 334/844-4560, auphoto@auburn.edu or www.auburn.edu/photo.