Fairley Engaged

Journalism’s Nan Fairley Receives the 2011 Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach
ON THE COVER
Professor Nan Fairley, the 2011 Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach recipient

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Taking every opportunity to elevate and enrich the Auburn academic experience is one of the principal goals of Auburn University’s strategic plan. Through the diligent efforts of our faculty, staff, and students, we have accomplished more than half of its objectives and made great strides in improving Auburn’s academic quality. Among them:

• Graduation rates increased 2.3 percent from 2009 to 2010.
• New freshman enrollment is 4,202 students, just two fewer than last year’s record class. The class compiled an average score of 27.2 on the ACT college entrance exam, outpacing last year’s then-record of 26.9. They also earned an average high school grade-point average of 3.81, up from 3.79 last year.
• Auburn surpassed its goal of securing funding for 80 professorships and established more than 90 professorships in 2010.
• The Core Curriculum was revised to include nearly 20 new courses in literature, humanities, fine arts, and social science areas.
• Campus-wide input led to selection of electronic portfolios for Auburn’s Quality Enhancement Plan, a key component of the university’s re-accreditation process. A campus committee has been established to develop a long-term implementation plan.
• Since 2008, Auburn has increased the number of technology-enhanced classrooms to 500.
• Graduate School enrollment increased to approximately 5,000 for the first time in 2011. This figure includes students in Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy.
• The New Honors Curriculum was implemented in 2010 and includes new interdisciplinary Symposia, new Honors Departmental courses, Honors seminars, Honors participation courses, and the capstone “Apogee Experience.” The Apogee Experience offers Honors students the choice of completing the Thesis/Project Option or the Seminar Option.
• Forty-six Learning Communities are now in place for every college and school. Learning Communities are unique academic opportunities for first year Auburn students. Each Learning Community comprises 20 to 25 students who are co-enrolled in three core courses surrounding a particular theme or interest.

• Auburn rose to 36th place among public universities nationwide, up from 38th last year, in an annual survey by U.S. News & World Report. This is the 19th consecutive year the magazine has ranked Auburn among the nation’s top 50 public universities. Auburn is also included in the magazine’s list of A-Plus Schools for B Students, which identifies schools that admit solidly prepared high-school students and do a good job of helping them advance toward their educational goals.
• In a state that has the highest percentage of people on food stamps, Auburn’s outreach into communities is ever more important. This past year, Auburn made the Presidential Honor Roll for community service, and earned the highest level of distinction for Outreach by the Carnegie organization, a significant recognition.

As we think of the world that our graduates will face, it is important that we use the goals of our plan and ongoing planning to ensure they have the appropriate skill sets and abilities that will make them successful throughout their careers. Our dedication to this priority must span the decades as it reaffirms the importance of student success to our institutional mission.

War Eagle!

JAY GOGUE
PRESIDENT
AUBURN UNIVERSITY
Recognizing Real Engagement

When I think about what makes Auburn University such a special institution, of course the Auburn Creed comes to mind. In the creed, George Petrie included the line “I believe in the human touch, which cultivates sympathy with my fellow men and mutual helpfulness.” That element of “mutual helpfulness” as one of our core institutional values is much akin to what the Carnegie Foundation describes in their definition of “community engagement.” To Carnegie, engagement is a collaboration between university and the community that results in a “mutually beneficial exchange.” Whether you prefer Petrie’s definition or Carnegie’s, no one reflects that core value for engagement better than this year’s recipient of Auburn University’s Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach, Nan Fairley. An associate professor in the Department of Communication and Journalism in the College of Liberal Arts, Nan’s exemplary work with student journalists in communities across the state is making a significant impact on all parties involved. Professor Fairley’s accomplishments are highlighted in the feature story of this edition. She is a model of real engagement, and I offer my congratulations to her on this singular achievement.

Auburn has once again been recognized for its devotion to engagement and the mutual helpfulness that our faculty and students provide in communities throughout Alabama and well beyond. Newsweek and Washington Monthly magazines named Auburn University to their list of top schools in the nation for “their contribution to the public good.” No other Alabama or SEC college made the list. Newsweek and Washington Monthly considered various measures of that

“public good” from student, faculty and even alumni service perspectives. But the bottom line is clear – the Auburn Family takes its outreach mission seriously and substantively.

I participated in a first-hand demonstration of Auburn’s “all-in” engagement this summer in Tuscaloosa. A group of Auburn students, faculty, parents, and alumni, including a number of students from our sister campus at Auburn-Montgomery, responded to a call from our Office of Public Service to conduct two building projects in the tornado-devastated neighborhood of Holt. This group labored in scorching heat on two Habitat for Humanity construction sites over a week. The diverse nature of this Auburn group truly models how well ingrained the ethic of service is across the whole Auburn Family. At Auburn, outreach is more than just a land-grant institutional motto – it is real engagement just as Dr. Petrie envisioned in the Auburn Creed.

As always, I encourage you to join the Auburn Family in this great and mutually helpful enterprise that is making a difference.

War Eagle,

ROY RICKERS COOK
ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT FOR UNIVERSITY OUTREACH
AUBURN UNIVERSITY
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Fairley Engaged

Nan Fairley - 2011 Recipient of the Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach.
Fairley Engaged

Journalism’s Laura “Nan” Fairley Receives the 2011 Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach

Journalism, the so-called “fourth estate” guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, is one of the cornerstones of our democratic society. Journalism not only keeps citizens informed, it sustains communities and can be a powerful tool for learning and engagement. The latter is a concept close to the heart of an Auburn associate professor of journalism who regularly challenges her students to get off campus, off the interstate, and deep into the communities about which they are writing. In fact, one could say that she is “Fairley engaged” herself. Nan Fairley, that is – recipient of the 2011 Auburn University Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach.

Fairley teaches a variety of courses ranging from feature writing to community journalism in the College of Liberal Arts, where she also serves as one of the college’s Engaged Scholars. She completed her undergraduate education at Mississippi University for Women and received her master’s degree in journalism from the University of Alabama in 1988. Fairley joined the journalism program at Auburn in 1992. Her philosophy of pushing students “off the interstate” has been a cornerstone of her journalism classes.

“Professor Fairley’s extensive body of work in civic engagement, scholastic journalism, and community partnership is recognized by her peers here at Auburn and across the academy,” says Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach. “Nan’s devotion to student engagement and her exemplary outreach scholarship is clearly having an impact in the community.”

In the 1920s, American philosopher John Dewey challenged the conventional view that the role of the journalist was simply to report the news. Dewey believed journalism should be a participatory process engaging both the reporter and citizens in discussing issues of importance to the community. For Fairley, it is a matter of making connections: connecting students to community,
connecting university resources to communities, connecting community partners’ needs to student talent and other resources, and connecting students to real people dealing with real issues.

“I believe that the educational experience is much richer when students see the impact they can have in communities,” says Fairley. “I’ve been inspired to continue to grow in this area by the outstanding learning outcomes I see in my students and the positive outcomes of such connections in different communities.”

Fairley’s zeal for journalism is framed by love of family, community, and the art of storytelling. “My mother, Cora Matheny Fairley, taught me to use my imagination and the wonder of stories,” says Fairley. “I was raised on stories about grandmother Nan, widowed with five young children as the Depression approached in a part of Mississippi far from the rich soil of the Delta.” The struggles of her grandmother to raise crops and her children with nothing much more than a mule and strong faith still inspires her namesake. “All five of her children managed to go to college, becoming teachers, preachers, doctors,” notes Fairley. “She used what she had -- a few acres and strong faith -- to accomplish great things; she left her mark on this world in countless ways.” Courage in the face of adversity was a common theme stressed by other inspirational figures in Nan’s life – her sister, Karen, and a dear friend and mentor Cynthia Shackelford – both of whom passed away this summer. “This was a painful reminder that we need to do what we can in the little time we have.”

“I believe all of us need to use our God-given talents - as a tenured professor, as an extension agent, minister, teacher, or farmer -- wherever we are,” says Fairley. “We don’t have much time, and we should use it as best we can by getting our toes in the mud, dealing with tough topics like poverty and education inequities. In my case, my role as a teacher and journalist provide the tools I can use.”

According to Fairley, that’s what Outreach at a university should be all about. “I believe the greatest reward of civic engagement can be making a difference in the world.” Outreach is the fundamental core of her innovative teaching strategy. “It is my belief that future journalists need to be actively engaged in their communities on a very practical level. While I do not abandon traditional class lectures, the civic engagement projects I have directed literally throw them out in the streets where they can test those theories and lessons in the real world.”

That practical experience is a valuable commodity in the educational process, one that Nan Fairley had to gain the hard way. Young Nan worked her way through the Mississippi University for Women as a journalist, with her first job at the Columbus (Miss.) Commercial Dispatch coming at the age of 18. “I enjoyed my work in professional journalism immensely, and it continues to inform my experience in the classroom. I appreciate the Auburn journalism program’s emphasis on practical experience, which provides a strong foundation to many of my outreach efforts.”

Like her mother before her, Nan Fairley is all about telling a good story. “By deep immersion in specific communities, students are finding rich stories,” she says. “In the process, objectives of civic engagement, including the development of outlets for deep civic conversation, are being met.”

According to Fairley, the impact on individual students, the communities where they work, and the citizens they come into contact with can be profound. “Students like Grace Henderson turned one of my journalism assignments into not one but two outreach trips to a Honduras orphanage,” reflects Fairley. Another of Fairley’s students, Katie Horn, leveraged her class project to work as a mentor at a school. “I appreciate all of my students who rise to the challenge of finding and telling the stories of everyday heroes and communities.”
One such story of community and “everyday heroes” emerged through Fairley’s Valley Vision project, a class-based student community journalism exercise. During Valley Vision, students developed a special newspaper about Valley, a city incorporated from several former mill towns in eastern Alabama. Valley was struggling to redefine itself both economically and civically, as it sought to create a new image for the community and redevelop its historical riverfront mill properties. The special newspaper created by Fairley and her students so captured the history, culture, and aspirations of the town that it became the centerpiece of Valley’s development initiative. The project received national recognition at the 2010 Imagining America Conference in Seattle, Wash., and later that year at the National Outreach Scholarship Conference in Raleigh, N.C.

Fairley’s journalistic engagement with students and communities has now produced a glossy, feature magazine called “Front Porch.” The title is an allusion to simpler days when communities and citizens were bound together by conversations with neighbors from the front porches of each others’ homes. “Front Porch” highlights ten Alabama towns, and is a part of a multi-year Living Democracy project with Mark Wilson in the College of Liberal Arts and the prestigious Kettering Foundation.

Fairley believes that the heart of the project is learning through the journey of discovery. “Without the journey, there’s not as much authentic discovery,” observes Fairley. “In other words, classroom lectures on topics ranging from the meaning of community to stereotypes can only go so far.” Along this journey, her students discovered hometown heroes fighting to better their towns, friendly mayors, tough issues, and hugs from welcoming community members. “Of course, none of the above would be possible in the confines of a classroom,” notes Fairley. “They also discovered something about themselves as journalists: the value of taking time to sit on a front porch and have real conversations; the challenge of finding just the right sources; the beauty of spending an afternoon with folks from Selma to Bayou La Batre to Collinsville.”

As the saying goes, printer’s ink runs through the veins of Nan Fairley. “I love print journalism and can’t make it through the day without reading at least one newspaper -- have to get that newsprint!” However, Nan’s personal interests reflect family and the warm Southern culture that is so much a part of her upbringing. She loves gardening and professes to “grow tons of tomatoes.” “Both of my grandmothers were teachers and farmers, so I like to fancy myself that way,” smiles Fairley. She is an avid reader, especially of great Southern literature.

Fairley says the proudest moment in her life was becoming a mother to two daughters, Gracie and Eliza, who are adopted from China. “Being a mom is the greatest adventure of my life -- my athletic daughter Gracie, 12, has turned me into a soccer mom, and Eliza, 8, keeps me tuned in to music when she plays the violin and piano,” says Nan. “Gracie is my pride, and Eliza is my joy I like to say.”

Nan counts among her favorite spots the campus gate under the trees at Toomer’s Corner. “I have wonderful memories of celebrating all that is good about Auburn with my family there. I think of all the thousands who have walked through that gate toward higher education and back out with a degree.”

For this storytelling professor, Auburn is special because of its outreach mission. “I love Auburn and the good soldiers who operate according to the Auburn creed,” reflects Fairley. “I also appreciate the great support I’ve had for my outreach efforts. The [Award for Excellence] is important to me because it indicates Auburn University’s commitment to outreach in all its many forms; it is a recognition that outreach matters, and that is so much more important than receiving an individual reward. Of course, this honor is a tribute to the hard work of my students,” adds Fairley who also credits her success to support from the College of Liberal Arts and in the Department of Communication and Journalism. “A supportive network is critical in promoting the promise of outreach where it really matters, in the real world.”

Yes, Nan Fairley loves a good story. And as a journalist, educator, and mother, Nan’s living a good story too, one punctuated by the impact she’s making in the community she shares with colleagues, students, family, and friends. As Nan would say, it’s all about getting your toes in the mud – a simple formula for any of us who want to be “Fairley” engaged.
Students In Service Program
Rewards Students in Many Ways

Students in Service is a part-time AmeriCorps program that offers scholarships to students who serve their community. The goal of the program is to get more college students involved in serving their community. SIS encourages members to develop their civic skills and attitudes as well as their transferable work skills while serving.

In addition to the skills gained through participation, students also receive an educational award of $1,100 that may be used to assist with tuition or pay off student loans. Last year, 10 Auburn students participated in the program. This year Auburn plans to enroll at least 20 students.

Erin Jakia Hutchins, a graduate student working on an MPA, completed a term of service last year as an intern with BigHouse Foundation, a non-profit organization located in Opelika, Ala. BigHouse Foundation was incorporated in February 2009 to meet the needs of children in foster care. BigHouse is committed to enhancing foster children’s quality of life through a variety of outreach programs and events including after-school care, preschool, a clothes closet, a birthday gift closet, an annual swimsuit and towel drive, and academic tutoring. BigHouse also offers dance, art, music, and sports opportunities for area foster children. During her internship, Hutchins performed a number of tasks.

“During my time at BigHouse I was involved in attaining a $10,000 Pepsi Refresh Grant to fund care packages for foster children,” said Hutchins. “I was also instrumental in gathering school and hygiene supplies for foster children, cleaning and organizing the Clothes Closet where the foster families can shop free, registering participants for the Auburn Links Men’s Golf Association 4th Annual Charity Classic benefiting BigHouse, embroidering and packaging towels for the 2011 Swimsuit and Towel Drive, and working as a counselor during our Science Adventure and Music Mania Summer Camps.”

Hutchins says she found the experience very valuable stating, “I enhanced my interpersonal, organizational, and leadership skills, while gaining a stronger appreciation for non-profit services in the local community.”

A student can qualify for SIS by: volunteering at a legitimate non-profit, government, or education institution; completing a non-paid internship/practicum at a non-profit organization; student teaching at a Title I school in special education, ESL/bilingual education, or math and science education; and completing service-learning requirements for a class.

The SIS program is being administered by the Office of Public Service. For additional information visit www.studentsinservice.org or contact Joyce Thomas-Vinson at 844-5117.
Mentorship Award Offers Opportunity to Hispanic Students

Faculty members are more than fixtures in the classroom – they often take on the role of mentor. Virginia Davis, faculty member in Auburn University’s Department of Chemical Engineering, and chemical engineering senior Khristine Pizarro, have been recognized for their successful collaboration beyond the classroom. Last month, they received the 2011 Mark A. Spencer Creative Mentorship Award, which was established in 2008 by faculty members Samia and Bill Spencer, and their son Mark, an Auburn engineering alum and founder of Digium, an open source communications company based in Huntsville. The award recognizes the importance of mentorship in a student’s success in the same way that Auburn Electrical Engineering faculty member Thad Roppel played an important role in Mark Spencer’s success as a student.

Davis and Pizarro have been working together as student and teacher since Pizarro first came to Auburn in 2007 to work in Davis’ lab as part of a 10-week summer Research Experience for Undergraduates in Micro/Nano-Structured Materials, Therapeutics, and Devices, a program funded by the National Science Foundation and led by Chemical Engineering faculty members Mark Byrne and Steve Duke. When Pizarro returned to her native Puerto Rico, she realized that she could further her career at Auburn, where she received continuous support and guidance from Davis and Chemical Engineering faculty members.

Davis, who has Hispanic roots – her grandfather emigrated from Cuba in the early 1920s to study civil engineering – continues to support and facilitate opportunities for Hispanic students. Last year, she was among 85 recipients selected by President Barack Obama to receive the prestigious Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers, which recognized her innovative research in nanomaterials, as well as her involvement in outreach activities involving K-12 students from underrepresented groups.

While Davis had been working towards the creation of a Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers student chapter at Auburn for several years, she needed a dedicated student to help get others involved on campus. When Pizarro returned to campus to complete her degree in 2008, Davis knew she was the right partner to help make that happen.

“I had been thinking about starting this chapter for a while, but my interaction with Khristine cemented the decision. She was someone to help get it off the ground,” said Davis. “The Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers student chapter provides a networking resource because there are so many scholarship opportunities out there for Hispanic students.”

In addition to forming the organization together, Davis and Pizarro continued their research relationship while Khristine completed her chemical engineering degree, continuing to work in Davis’ lab on projects such as assembling dispersions of nanocylinders. Pizarro helped Davis with her research on the dispersion of silicon nitride nanowhiskers and the synthesis of silver nanowires, earning a first place award for a coauthored published paper from Sigma Xi, the scientific research society, at the organization’s undergraduate research forum.

Pizarro, who graduated on May 9, has joined the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, the organization’s national chapter, and will be involved with the society’s regional chapter, which includes Auburn. She will be working with Chevron in Pascagoula, Miss.

“Being a part of this organization, founding the chapter, and working with Dr. Davis on research was a great experience that impacted my college career in different ways,” said Pizarro. “I was able to develop my leadership skills and learn more about the dynamic of working with people who have different personality types. I learned from Dr. Davis both in and out of the classroom, and I hope the chapter has a strong foundation for future leaders to build on.”
The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Auburn University, or OLLI at Auburn, is a peer-led institute for non-credit learning. Members gather to learn—for the joy of learning. Learning takes place in classrooms and lecture halls, but there are no entrance exams, no prerequisite courses, no tests and no required homework. OLLI at Auburn has become more than just life in the classroom. Members enjoy each other’s companionship through social events and informal learning luncheons. They take advantage of the opportunity to have a university library card and use Auburn’s outstanding libraries. They attend university lectures, music recitals, and theatre performances. In addition, OLLI members may informally audit Auburn University credit courses, with permission of the instructor, on a space-available basis. OLLI at Auburn continually seeks opportunities to work with other university and community programs.

OLLI members who are also members of the Auburn Alumni Association may participate in an online course with Auburn University undergraduates. This allows them a unique opportunity to join in an intergenerational conversation between distant alumni and current Auburn students on crucial political issues concerning Alabama, the United States, and the entire world community. Global Politics and Issues, POLI 1050, is taught by the Alma Holladay Professor of Political Science, Dr. Ted Becker. Online participants are able to watch live lectures in real time via streaming video—which are archived so they can be watched at any time. Since the auditors are virtual college students at Auburn, they use the same Blackboard online educational systems as today’s Auburn students. This allows live electronic discussions with a classroom of honors students, an online section of Auburn undergraduates, and the professor about the required readings.

Fall 2011, OLLI members participated in the Auburn Connects Program, along with entering freshmen. This past summer, all members were introduced to the common book, Tracy Kidder’s Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, A Man Who Would Cure the World. During the fall term, a course of the same name was offered, and class members attended lectures by Auburn faculty and staff, OLLI members, a local priest, and a surgeon. Most of those presenting had visited and/or volunteered in Haiti. One faculty member, Dr. Dennis Shannon, was actually in Haiti when the earthquake struck the island nation in 2010. Participants discussed the book and the current situation in Haiti, the country’s history, and its hope for the future.

“Our second Alice M. Leahy Lecture will be a partnership, as we join with the Department of Music to bring soprano Julianne Baird, an expert in early music, to the campus winter term 2012,” noted Linda Shook, OLLI at Auburn coordinator. Ms. Baird will present a master class, and a public lecture. “Mrs. Leahy was an enthusiastic supporter of the arts, especially music, so we are glad that her fund can be used to provide such an opportunity to Auburn University students and the greater community.” The lecture fund was established in 2009 by the children of Alice M. Leahy, to honor their late mother, an active OLLI member and instructor.

“The Jule Collins Museum of Fine Art at Auburn University welcomes the opportunity to partner with OLLI,” remarked Marilyn Laufer, museum director. “There are so many wonderful people involved in the program who have become museum regulars. They visit our cafe’ and shop before or after classes. They spend time in our changing exhibitions and participate in our many special lectures, movies, musical programs, and events. We are happy to serve as a venue for some of their
classes and are pleased that museum staff members are able to share their expertise by actually teaching classes from time to time. It is a great collaboration and it assists the museum in its mission to reach diverse audiences."

Another beneficial relationship is that with the Encyclopedia of Alabama. Managing editor Pat Kaetz said, “Our cooperation with OLLI has provided excellent opportunities to showcase the wealth of information offered by the Encyclopedia of Alabama. EOA’s articles on the state’s culture, history, and environment are a natural fit for people exploring the world around them. Often an OLLI speaker is also one of the experts who has written articles for the topic for EOA, and he or she references the sites as a place for free additional information. A growing number of OLLI presentations rely on EOA’s articles as supplemental materials. The most recent development in this remarkable partnership was the development of an eight-week course about Alabama for people who are new to the area.”

OLLI believes that “use it or lose it” applies to both body and mind. To support that belief, OLLI offers a variety of wellness programs in partnership with other campus and community organizations. Fall term, OLLI members had the opportunity to participate in a program offered in cooperation with HealthPlus Fitness Center. They were able to attend seminars, participate in group exercise classes, and receive individualized exercise prescriptions by qualified fitness specialists and nutritionists. OLLI at Auburn has a long-running partnership with Auburn University’s Harrison School of Pharmacy. OLLI members have participated in health and wellness programs offered as a part of the school’s outreach activities, including being volunteer patients in the Health and Medication Monitoring Service. Some have been employed as actors by HSOP’s Office of Teaching and Assessment to role-play patients in student pharmacists’ clinical exams. Additionally, HSOP faculty and staff frequently provide educational programs and informational updates at OLLI meetings. “We appreciate the willingness of OLLI members to support the mission of our school, “says Emily Mann, director of Pharmacy Health Services.

OLLI at Auburn supports Auburn University’s mission to extend the resources of the university to the larger community. A good example is our continuing relationship with the Bradshaw Library in Valley, Ala., which is partnering with OLLI at Auburn and offering residents of the Greater Valley Area a chance to participate in member-led learning programs. During the fall term, two study groups were held in Valley, The Great Indian Wars of 1540-1890 and The Rise and Tragic Fall of the Textile Empire. Mary Hamilton, library director, remarked, “This is a unique opportunity, one which allows the library to offer lifelong learning experiences to members of our community. We are pleased to be able to work with OLLI at Auburn. Valley members also appreciate having the opportunity to interact with main campus OLLI folks, and enjoy the special lectures and socials. I hope we are able to enjoy this programming in the years to come.”

“My husband, Al, and I are great Auburn fans. We moved to Auburn upon retirement. We love being around Auburn students through our membership in OLLI, and being part of the Auburn University family,“ declared OLLI at Auburn president, Diane English. “OLLI continues to seek even more ways to be involved at Auburn University,” stated OLLI founding director Mary Burkhart. “The Auburn University Academy for Lifelong Leaners was started as a partnership between the Auburn Center on Aging, Continuing Education and local retirees. Now, as OLLI at Auburn, we are expanding the ways to cooperate throughout the university.”

For more information about OLLI at Auburn, contact the Auburn University Office of Professional and Continuing Education, or visit the website at www.olliautauburn.org.

www.olliautauburn.org
In June 2011, the Truman Pierce Institute in the College of Education and the Office of Professional and Continuing Education, in partnership with a number of state and non-profit agencies, hosted a statewide summit to address the issue of bullying in schools. The summit facilitated action-oriented conversations to share information, current thinking, and research about the seriousness of bullying in our schools and communities. One of the primary goals of the Anti-Bullying Summit was to facilitate the creation of on-going local, state, and national coalitions for PK-12 educators, higher education faculty and administrators, student leaders, mental health practitioners, researchers, community leaders, policymakers, and other professionals who are engaged in on-going work to address PK-20 bullying and cyber-bullying in learning environments.

The day-and-a-half long program, held in Mobile, Ala., hosted 161 participants, from Alabama and surrounding states. The summit program featured educators, administrators, and leaders of various education and non-profit organizations, who focused their presentations on identifying the seriousness of the bullying epidemic and providing strategies that participants could take back to their schools and communities to address the challenges associated with bullying. The summit program concluded with a panel discussion featuring state and local education officials, as well as law enforcement and leaders of civic organizations.

A program of this scale would not have been successful without the support and collaboration of many partners. Auburn University’s Truman Pierce Institute took the lead in developing relationships and fostering collaborative partnerships across many organizations, identifying speakers, and coordinating summit content. These partners included the Alabama State Department of Education, the Alabama Department of Children’s Affairs, the Alabama Department of Public Safety, the Alabama High School Athletic Association, the Alabama Department of Mental Health, Auburn University Outreach, Alabama State University’s College of Education, the Black Belt Community Foundation, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, the Mattie C. Stewart Foundation, the Mobile Area Education Foundation, Samford University’s Orlean Bullard Beeson School of Education and Professional Studies, the Southern Poverty Law Center, the University of Alabama’s Office of Community Affairs, and the University of South Alabama’s College of Education.

Auburn University’s Office of Professional and Continuing Education played an integral role in developing the conference by facilitating the logistics planning, marketing and promotion, registration service, and on-site event management. The summit’s success is a testament to the strong partnership between the Office of Professional and Continuing Education and the Truman Pierce Institute.

For more information on the 2011 Anti-Bullying Summit, please visit www.auburn.edu/antibullying. The site contains information on summit speakers as well as a link to video recordings of the sessions presented at the summit.
Science Education Students Enjoy Teaching in “Informal” Setting

As he introduced a gaggle of elementary school students to a musk turtle, a broadhead skink, and a corn snake, David Laurencio could immediately gauge the success of his teaching methods by the outpouring of “ooh’s” and “aah’s.”

Laurencio knew he had his audience hooked because of the volley of questions that came as soon as he pulled a new creature from his box of surprises.

“Do they bite?” one little girl asked about the musk turtle.

“What do they eat?” a little boy asked nervously as the corn snake was held up for display.

For Laurencio and other graduate and undergraduate students in the College of Education’s Department of Curriculum and Teaching, exercises such as these reinforce the value of teaching content in “informal” settings. In this case, the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lee County’s Auburn location served as a more relaxed learning environment.

From June 6 to July 28, elementary school students in the club’s summer program learned about planets, ecosystems, reptiles, and amphibians with the help of the faculty and students in the college’s secondary science education program.

“Our goal is to bridge the gap between science in the traditional classroom and these informal settings,” said Dr. Melody Russell, associate professor and secondary science education program.

Informal learning settings can be found anywhere, from the university arboretum to the Gulf Coast beaches. This summer, the children participating in the Boys and Girls Club program made trips to the Montgomery Zoo and the Georgia Aquarium. As enjoyable and informative as those trips were, there is nothing quite like running your hands over the shell of a mud turtle or wearing an indigo snake as a temporary necklace.

“Animals are the greatest segue, because everyone knows them, they’re real easy to associate with, and they’re fascinating,” said Laurencio, a doctoral candidate in science education. “Informal science education, to me, is a chance to work outside the box and make the heart connection and not just the head connection.”

Making an early “heart connection,” as Laurencio described it, can ignite a lifelong passion for discovery.

Stanton Belford, a science education doctoral student who participated in the reptiles and amphibians session at the Boys & Girls Club, serves as a prime example. One of his high school teachers took him scuba diving to better explore and understand the coral reefs in his native Trinidad.

“That guided me to what I’m doing now in marine biology,” said Belford, who completed a summer scuba diving trip to study coral reefs near the Florida Keys. “The more students see that [hands-on] element here, the more they transform it to content knowledge in the classroom.”

In addition to helping students retain information during the gap between the start of summer vacation and the beginning of the academic year, the informal atmosphere of the summer program also removes some the barriers that may exist in a traditional classroom setting. Instructors aren’t pressed for time and can entertain as many questions as the students want to ask.
The first-ever Project Design Summer Camp attracted high school-aged students to spend a week on the Auburn University campus experiencing the worlds of fashion and interior design.

Faculty, staff, and students in the Department of Consumer Affairs in the College of Human Sciences introduced 19 students from across the country to apparel design and merchandising and interior design.

“We designed the camp to provide hands-on opportunities for students to experience design, learn about careers, and explore their own interests and passions,” said Carol Warfield, head of the Department of Consumer Affairs. “We hoped it would be a recruiting tool for us because we want the best students in our program.”

The camp included field trips, guest speakers, and design workshops on lighting, costumes, retail buying, dorm room planning, and visual merchandising. Students also learned design concepts for handicap accessibility.

All participants were encouraged to return to Auburn in the fall for a campus visit and the opportunity to sit in on a class.

Jessi Ogle, a senior from Prattville, Ala., might do more than return for a tour. She will likely enroll in the fall of 2012. The camp not only confirmed her interest in design, but also that Auburn would be ideal for her to get an education.

A student like Avi Goldsmith, a freshman from Birmingham, Ala., has more time to consider her future beyond high school, and will likely return to camp next summer.

Warfield said they intend to use student and faculty feedback in designing the next camp. There is also discussion about creating a similar camp for middle school-aged students, she added.

Nicky Wholey had never been to Auburn, but knew about the university from the BCS National Championship. She traveled the farthest – from Hollis, N.H. – because Model U.N. and Project Design summer camps appealed to some of her many interests.

“In many cases, a creative person has so many interests it’s hard for them to zero in on what they are most interested in,” explained Warfield. “I think we helped some identify that. They had lots of different experiences in the short time they were here.”

Project Design Summer Camp was a partnership with the Summer Youth Program in the Office of Professional and Continuing Education.
Extension and School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences Restoring Habitat – and Lost Culture

When William Bartram first explored Alabama in the late 1700s, he traveled for “20 miles through vast meadows of cane” containing specimens “as big around as a man’s arm.”

Nothing would compare to that today. If he were alive today, Bartram would be hard-pressed to find cane meadows, or canebrakes as they were once commonly called, as large as a quarter acre with canes as big as a man’s thumb. Giant cane, also known as rivercane or simply cane, is one of only two native bamboos in the Southeast United States.

This rapidly disappearing habitat was home to numerous wildlife species, but, equally significant, it also supplied raw material for building a vast array of items by Native Americans. For Native Americans of the Southeast, rivercane had more than 300 uses. Practical items such as baskets for food processing and storage, thatching for houses, arrow shafts and blowguns, and ceremonial items such as dance sticks and tubes for blessing herbal medicines were all items fashioned from rivercane.

“I was completely astounded by just how important rivercane was and continues to be for many Native American tribes,” said Mark Smith, an Alabama Cooperative Extension System wildlife specialist and assistant professor in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences at Auburn University.

As rivercane stands, especially stands with plants the preferred size of an inch in diameter, grow more scarce, Native Americans are turning to nonnative bamboos imported from Asia to construct their cultural items.

“The nonnative bamboos don’t have the same workability as native rivercane,” said Alex Alvarez, cultural educator for the Poarch Creek Indians.

Items made from native rivercane are in high demand and can be sold at a premium.

The thought occurred to Smith that the value of rivercane not only lies in ecosystem restoration but also in the cultural identity that many Native Americans derive from it. The idea spurred Smith to move beyond his academic comfort zone — to study rivercane not only as an environmentally challenged species but also as a specialty crop of vital importance to several tribes.

“Rivercane restoration calls for a bigger picture — not only wildlife and habitat restoration but also the cultural and economic value of the species,” he said.

Smith’s search will focus on ways to ensure more stands of rivercane, not only for the sake of the environment, but from the people who have derived cultural and economic value from it for centuries. With a grant from the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Conservation Innovation Grants Program, Smith will work with Poarch Creek Indians in Atmore to develop research and demonstration plots to identify the best means for growing, managing, and harvesting native rivercane with the long-term goal of ensuring a sustainable source of the cane for the production of Poarch Creek cultural items.

“This is a great opportunity to tie in not only the ecological and environmental benefits of rivercane, but more importantly the cultural aspects,” said Graeme Lockaby, associate dean for research in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences.
Auburn and AUM Faculty Collaborate Across Disciplines to Continue KEMET Academy Outreach Program

Dr. Cheryl Seals, Dr. Shirley Scott-Harris, Dr. L. Octavia Tripp, Dr. Chippewa Thomas, Professor Chichi Lovett, Dr. Constance Hendricks, and Dr. Denise Davis-Maye joined supporters from the Jule Collins Smith Museum, the Auburn University Career Counseling Services, and the Auburn University Multicultural Center to assist more than 30 high school students from the black-belt area in learning more about personal branding, professionalism, mathematics, and art. KEMET (Knowledge and Excellence in Mathematics, Equilibrium and Technology) Academy and Camp KEMET 2011, a University Outreach-sponsored program now in its sixth year, is designed to enrich the learning of youth living in economically and educationally underserved communities. KEMET scholars interacted with doctoral and international students and faculty focusing on character education and ACT and SAT preparation during this summer’s camp.
Volunteer Turnout for House United Reflects Spirit of Auburn Family

When the call went out from Auburn University’s Office of Public Service for volunteers to man the recent House United effort, a joint tornado recovery home building project in Tuscaloosa’s Holt community, members representing every part of the Auburn Family answered.

More than 40 Auburn men and women, including faculty, staff, students, family members, and alumni from Auburn’s main campus and Auburn Montgomery arrived at the site in groups and individually from Auburn, Montgomery, Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, and surrounding counties to raise two Habitat for Humanity houses in Holt.
All but a handful of the approximately 100 homes in the Holt community were destroyed by tornadoes that swept through Alabama in April. House United was a joint effort by the Auburn University Outreach Office of Public Service, the Alabama Association of Habitat for Humanity Affiliates and the University of Alabama Community Service Center to begin the community’s rebuilding process.

Spearheading Auburn’s volunteer effort were Ralph Foster, director of the Office of Public Service, and Joyce Thomas-Vinson, the program administrator of student engagement and service learning. They coordinated two teams of volunteers, one from each of Auburn’s campuses and made up of about 30 faculty, staff, family members, and graduate and undergraduate students. The campus teams were joined by about a dozen alumni and other members of the Auburn Family.

“We had a great response from not only our students, but from faculty, staff, and alumni as well,” said Foster. “Thus, the whole of the Auburn Family was represented in this important effort.”

The Office of Public Service promotes faculty, student, and staff engagement through the development of community and institutional partnerships. A year ago, the Office of Public Service and the Alabama Association of Habitat for Humanity Affiliates formed a partnership to develop a summer service learning project uniting teams from both Auburn and Alabama faculty and students.
Although the original project decided on was a Habitat for Humanity house in Baldwin County, the urgent need for help in the Tuscaloosa area after the April tornadoes prompted a change of plans. In a period of one month, the new project went from the planning stage to the start of construction.

“Seeing the Auburn Family come together for such a cause with our friends at the University of Alabama has really shown us what the Auburn Spirit is all about,” said volunteer Taylor Gunter, a graduate student working in the Office of Public Service.
Students Live Democracy Through Year-Long Collaboration

Students and citizens participating in a new program coordinated by the Community and Civic Engagement Initiative in the College of Liberal Arts believe that education and hard work have the potential to help communities realize their dreams. And that’s why they’ve made commitments to collaborate in a unique relationship that will last an entire year.

Living Democracy: A Project for Students and Citizens provides students with a curriculum in civic engagement. During the fall semester, students enroll in CCEN 2000: Introduction to Community and Civic Engagement taught by Dr. Mark Wilson, and in the spring semester they will take JRNL 4970: Communication and Community Building taught by Nan Fairley, associate professor of journalism. During the 2012 summer, students will enroll in LBAR 3910: Practicum in Liberal Arts, live in the assigned community for 10 weeks, and execute a project planned with local citizens.

Faces of Service

THOMAS WESTMORELAND

In February 2012, Thomas Westmoreland will retire after more than 38 years of working to improve the lives of Lee County children through his work with Project Uplift and the Lee County Youth Development Center. After receiving a degree in social work from Moorhead State College in 1971, Westmoreland came to Auburn to visit friends he had met in college. That visit turned into a lifetime stay.

Westmoreland started his career as a teacher with Lee County Headstart. Due to the efforts of Norma Hodson, an Auburn professor in the Department of Economics and Jane Walker of Opelika, Project Uplift was established in 1973 and Westmoreland was appointed as coordinator. Project Uplift is an agency that places at-risk youth with volunteer mentors in order to help the children develop constructive, happy lives. He worked in that capacity until 1998. During this time, he supervised nearly
2,600 Auburn student volunteers and more than 2000 children from Lee County.

Since retiring in 1998, Westmoreland has worked another 14 years as a part-time intake manager, interviewing children and parents coming into the program. This position has allowed him one of his great joys.

“Now, in my position as family intake manager, my greatest joy is meeting the mothers who were children in our program when they were growing up,” said Westmoreland. “They tell me about having such a good experience with their volunteer that they want the same for their child. I have been with the program so long; I am now meeting the grandchildren of some of the children we had in our program during our earliest years. This is most satisfying to me.”

In addition to his career working with children, Westmoreland volunteered as a “big brother” for 22 years, mentoring half a dozen youth. He has been recognized for his efforts receiving the Alabama State Volunteer Administrator award in 1989 and the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award in 1999.

After retiring, Westmoreland is looking forward to spending time with his wife, Michelle, and working on his hobbies: gardening, weaving, and pottery.

For additional information about Project Uplift visit: http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/project_uplift/.

See page 31 for an additional Faces of Service.
New Auburn Aquatic Resource Center to Serve Many

Research, teaching, and outreach are the three primary missions of Auburn University, and a new $9 million-plus Auburn University Center for Aquatic Resource Management that opened north of the main campus in early September serves all those goals.

Construction of the new center, which is located at the E.W. Shell Fisheries Research Center’s North Auburn Unit on Alabama 147, was funded primarily by monies from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. The center consists of a 20,000-square-foot administration building and an adjacent laboratory building with more than 17,000 square feet of space.

The larger building houses classroom and meeting spaces, a teaching lab and hatchery, a reception/visitor-education area, a new sales room with fish-processing space, administrative offices, and a large fish-holding area where fish from the more than 340 ponds at the Shell Center will be sorted, weighed, and counted as needed for research projects. The laboratory building, meanwhile, offers state-of-the-art labs, fish tanks, and a great deal of “flex” space where researchers can set up a wide range of multidisciplinary studies in water quality and fish health, genetics, ecology, and physiology.

David Rouse, head of the Department of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures, said that the Shell complex has been crucial to Auburn’s world-renowned fisheries research program for decades, and that the new center will build upon that by facilitating more controlled studies. It also will fill a real need for classroom space.

“About 18 of the classes we teach have a component that involves the Shell Center, so it has always been an important part of our teaching program, but it has been a problem moving students or specimens back and forth from the main campus,” Rouse said. “Now we can bring classes to the ponds, take fish or microorganism samples from the ponds, and bring those samples right into the center for the students to study.”

Shell Fisheries Research Center director Randell Goodman said he is excited about the outreach opportunities the new facilities will provide. In the administration building’s reception/visitor-education area, for instance, guests will find aquariums filled with interesting fish and kiosks and displays offering virtual tours of the research station, information about Auburn’s world-class international fisheries and allied aquacultures program, and more.

Goodman said the Shell Center attracts hundreds of guests each year, including school and civic-organization tour groups, international visitors, customers who purchase fresh and frozen fish products from the sales room, and a surprising number of drop-ins who are simply curious about the facility. “I think the new center will really increase our presence and our opportunity to serve students, faculty, and also the community. This facility will be a real community asset.”
For the past two years, the Women’s Philanthropy Board in Auburn University’s College of Human Sciences and the Early Learning Center in the college’s Department of Human Development and Family Studies, have joined forces to educate children, ages six to 12, on basic money skills and philanthropic engagement through a week-long summer camp called Camp iCare.

Nine-year-old Joseph McCauley can hardly say “philanthropist;” however, he now knows what it means. “I’m going to give food to people who have hunger issues and just help people, help the community become a better place,” he said.

Kelsey Dalton, a sophomore in the Honors College, said the lessons used to teach the youngsters were the same she learned from the Gender, Wealth, and Philanthropy course taught by WPB director and Camp iCare co-founder Sidney James Nakhjavan.

“It’s the same questions in their workbook that we work through in the textbook,” she said.

Ask a young person what they would do with $1 million, and their wildest dreams may emerge. Ask them what causes pull at their heartstrings, and their answers are quite real.

When Neve Dagg, the youngest iCamper, was asked to make a poster displaying an issue close to her heart, the six-year-old selected healthcare. She may not be aware of the national health care crisis, but it is an important issue to Dagg because her 13-year-old cousin has cancer.

“I had 10- and eleven-year-olds choosing gay rights because they think that equality is important,” said Dalton. “I had a group of boys choosing women’s rights. We had a lot of animal savers. We had some healthcare. They’re really mature topics for eight- to 12-year olds to want to help in the world.”

By describing philanthropy as four T’s – time, talent, trust, treasure – and three S’s of money – save, share, spend – the young campers get the message.

“When it’s on their level, they buy into the whole concept of earning money and spending it wisely,” said Sharon Wilbanks, director of the Early Learning Center and Camp iCare co-founder. “We show them that philanthropy isn’t just about giving money, but that they can give their time, talent, and trust.”

To learn more about Camp iCare and other programs presented through the WPB, contact Sidney James Nakhjavan at the Cary Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies at (334) 844-9199 or jamessp@auburn.edu.
Students Publish Magazine Featuring Diverse Alabama Communities

Auburn University community journalism students were pushed out of the classroom and onto the “blue highways” of Alabama on a journey of discovery in spring 2011. The journalism majors faced the challenge of long-distance travel with the mission of capturing a snapshot of nine distinctly different communities scattered across the state.

Along the way they discovered hometown heroes fighting to better their towns, friendly mayors, tough issues, and hugs from welcoming community members.

The students also discovered something about themselves as journalists: the value of taking time to sit on a front porch and have real conversations; the challenge of finding just the right sources; the beauty of spending an afternoon with folks like Selma folk artist Charlie Lucas. They found ghost stories, fried chicken, and more than a few friendly faces in towns from Bayou La Batre to Collinsville.

All those stories and more can now be found in a publication created by the students, Front Porch Magazine: Discovering Connections in Diverse Alabama Communities, published online at http://issuu.com/fairlln/docs/frontporchmagazine.

Communities featured in the magazine are Cahawba, Selma, Bayou La Batre, Collinsville, Elba, Hopson City, Linden, Marion, Oak Grove, and Valley.

Nan Fairley, associate professor in the Department of Communication and Journalism and College of Liberal Arts Engaged Scholar, taught the course.

She said, “The community itself proved to be the best grounds for educating these aspiring journalists. The questions we explored are ones that journalists practicing their craft in communities across Alabama and beyond confront every day: What does our community value? What does it take to make a community work? How are hometown heroes dealing with tough issues that challenge the community?”

Those same questions will guide the next Auburn students destined to take a seat on the front porches of the nine communities featured in the publication. In the summer of 2012, a group of Auburn University students participating in the Living Democracy project will go even deeper into these communities to learn and grow. “I know this project left a lasting impression on my students, and I hope their stories are a reflection of the special people and places they visited,” Fairley said.

Auburn journalism students who wrote, edited, and designed the publication in Spring 2011 are Colton Campbell, David Crayton, Ariana Diaz, Mary Rose Gillman, Darcie Dyer, Sarah Hansen, Sloane Hudson, Kelly Nicastro, Kristen Oliver, and Rachel Shirey. Alison McFerrin also contributed.
Faculty Engagement: A Vision for Outreach Leadership and Scholarship Optimization

Dr. Chippewa M. Thomas has been “on the move” in her new role of director of faculty engagement since starting in May, 2011. In that time she has been gearing up amidst a number of tasks for optimizing faculty engagement through outreach at Auburn University. The vision Thomas has for faculty engagement involves the application of engagement conceptual understanding (discovery, integration, and application); the execution of the position’s keystones (leadership, advocacy, and social action); an integration of outreach scholarship fitness indicators (expertise, outreach, and deliverables); and the optimization of what engagement means here at Auburn (impact on people).

“Faculty engagement is a vehicle for outreach leadership and scholarship productivity.” Thomas noted. “My goal is to reach faculty who have yet to utilize outreach activity as a way to demonstrate their disciplinary expertise while addressing the university mission to impact others positively and significantly. I’m also aimed at supporting faculty who are passionate about doing outreach.”

With this view, Thomas intends to increase the numbers of faculty who engage in outreach activity at Auburn. “In order to reach faculty, I want to meet with them and discuss their ideas, so that we both can promote their hard work.”

Thomas’ vision is inspired by Boyer’s (1996) work: The Scholarship of Engagement and Wade & Demb’s (2009) Faculty Engagement Model. She is impassioned about the role of endeavoring to employ leadership and optimization in support of the faculty, and community for fulfilling the mission AU as a land-grant institution.

Thomas explains that it will be important to affirm existing linkages like continuing the Outreach Scholarship Symposium that will be hosted in spring 2012 and create new linkages between faculty engagement and the production of outreach scholarship. One such new linkage will be the addition of refereed conference proceedings from the symposium for faculty outreach scholarship publications.

Additionally, Thomas recognizes the need for capacity building for local, state, regional, national, and international exposure and impact. The 2012 symposium conference proceedings will be the exploration springboard for establishing the Auburn University Journal of Outreach Scholarship and Engagement. Furthermore, Thomas is exploring the development of a Faculty Outreach Scholars Program and Fellowship; conducting community-based participatory and action research with community-based organizations; as well as resource and internal supports development. With this view, Auburn University will see a new and improved webspace on the outreach website for faculty resources and online proposal submissions portal to support and stimulate faculty engagement.

In keeping with the university strategic plan for outreach, exploration efforts are under way to determine the feasibility and sustainability of Thomas’ goals. Beginning by interfacing with new and current faculty, associate deans and other unit representatives and administrators on campus, Dr. Thomas’ focus has been on jumpstarting the Outreach Competitive Grants program which has been dormant for the past few years. The call for proposals was announced in September 2011. To contact Dr. Chippewa Thomas, email her at Thoma07@auburn.edu.
Auburn University’s Office of University Outreach kicked off the new school year with “Loachapoka Celebration 2011” to launch the College Prep initiative for the 2011-12 school year, celebrating the partnership between Auburn University and Loachapoka schools. The celebration took place on August 29, at Loachapoka High School.

The event provided an opportunity for students and families in the Loachapoka community to learn about and sign up for various programs offered through the College Prep Initiative under the leadership of Dr. Christiana Russell. The College Prep Initiative is in its second year and was established to engage students and inspire them to attain post-secondary education. The goal of the initiative is to have a majority of each graduating class accepted into a college or university.

“Building high-quality, high-impact partnerships with area schools and school systems across Alabama is a key objective of Auburn University’s Strategic Plan,” said Dr. Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach. “University Outreach’s College Prep Initiative along with the 2011 Loachapoka Celebration represents Auburn University’s long-term commitment to partnering with area schools and communities like Loachapoka.”

Lee County Schools’ superintendent, Dr. Stephen Nowlin, and assistant superintendent of secondary education, Dr. G. Stanley Cox, along with Dr. Royrickers Cook, gave rousing welcome remarks at the event. Auburn University faculty and students were on hand to discuss the specific programs available to Loachapoka students as well.

The College Prep Initiative offers services in three main categories: University Preparatory Enrichment, Advanced University Experience, and Family University. Last school year, students at Loachapoka were provided HP mini-laptops for use as part of the initiative. Students enrolled in the University Preparatory Enrichment program received instruction on problem solving, career
exploration, and ACT preparation. The laptops were used to teach computer skills and enrich the students’ learning experience in all areas of their education. Families enrolled in the family university program were involved in activities designed to help parents address various issues with preparing their child for post-secondary education.

Faculty and undergraduate student leaders from the Truman Pierce Institute, a unit within Auburn’s College of Education, worked with Loachapoka seniors enrolled in the Advanced University Experience. The seniors will participate in a week long residential summer camp and visits to Auburn’s campus. Faculty and graduate students from the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, the College of Science and Mathematics, and the College of Education’s Department of Curriculum and Teaching are actively involved in this initiative as well.

Recently, the College Prep Initiative was expanded to include mentoring through the Auburn University Women’s Resource Center, offering a Young Women’s Leadership Program for Loachapoka’s female students.

Call 334-844-7460 for additional information about the College Prep Initiative.
Pharmacy School Seeking Volunteers for Free Health, Medication Monitoring Service

The Harrison School of Pharmacy is seeking community volunteers to participate in its free Health and Medication Monitoring Service.

Participants, people with chronic health conditions or conditions that require multiple prescriptions, meet with student pharmacists at their homes at least once a month to discuss their medications, conditions, and any concerns; conduct blood pressure and blood sugar checks; and help refill pill boxes, if necessary.

Valerie Dumas of Auburn would love to reduce the number of medications she needs to take, but until then, she enjoys relying on Auburn’s student pharmacists to manage more than 10 prescriptions.

She said the students are professional, courteous, and helpful to her and her father, Ben Dumas. He takes less medication than Valerie, but she recalls one time when the students’ work was extremely helpful.

Ben was on a type of cholesterol medication that had an adverse effect. Valerie said he told the student pharmacists on a visit and they returned with recommendations the elder Dumas then discussed with his doctor.

Ben’s doctor took what the students recommended and found a drug that helps the patient’s cholesterol without the side effects.

“I thought it would be helpful for someone to come in and give us some more information about our medications, the do’s and don’ts,” Valerie said. “You read what you get from the pharmacist at the drug store, but sometimes you need someone to explain it better.”

Besides the medical assistance, Valerie said she and her father enjoy visiting with the student pharmacists. Ben especially enjoys sharing stories.

She believes the interaction is beneficial for the future pharmacists as well.

All first, second, and third-year student pharmacists participate in the Health and Medication Monitoring Service. Students are placed on patient care teams, supervised by faculty mentors. Teams are assigned patients, volunteers from Auburn and Mobile communities.
Ngumbi Appointed to One World Action’s List of One Hundred Women: The Unseen and Powerful Women Changing the World

Auburn graduate Esther Ngumbi was recently appointed to the public service category of One World Action’s list of One Hundred Women: The Unseen and Powerful Women Changing the World. A native of the Kwale District in Kenya, Ngumbi is a recognized expert on issues of hunger, gender, education, youth activism, and sustainability. A strong advocate for all efforts aimed at ending hunger in our lifetime, her educational efforts focused on the reality of global hunger, encouraging young people to step-up and make a difference in their communities as well as our world. Ngumbi also is a motivational speaker and has been featured at university programs across the United States. She recently helped co-founded WISE Partnerships in Kenya, a mentoring support network program that partners Auburn University students with secondary schools in the coastal region of Kenya and students attending Kenyatta University-Pwani Campus. Dr. Ngumbi’s full nomination biography is at http://oneworldaction.wordpress.com/100-unseen-powerful-women/public-service.

Ashlyn Yuratich, a senior majoring in sociology, has participated in numerous service organizations as a student at Auburn including Project Uplift, IMPACT, Auburn University Hunger Week, and the Auburn and United Methodist Church International Missions Team.

Yuratich recalls a recent mission trip as one of her favorite memories. “This past May I traveled to Port-Au-Prince, Haiti, as a part of the mission team from AUMC, and it was truly a life-changing experience.” Yuratich said. “I was able to work with children at a local orphanage/school and aid in the rebuilding of their facilities after the devastating 2010 earthquake. I formed friendships and bonds with the orphans and Haitian people. Their humble and loving personalities helped me better understand the importance of selflessness in service and the duty we all have to one another.”

Yuratich currently serves as the president of Campus Kitchens Project. More than 40 percent of food produced in America is not eaten, which adds up to more than 29 million tons of food wasted each year.

The goal of Campus Kitchens is to reduce this waste by salvaging unused food from on-campus dining facilities and local restaurants and turning it into meals for those in need in the community.

Yuratich will leave Auburn with more than a degree. “My time at Auburn University has helped me find my passion for service,” she added.

See page 22 for an additional Faces of Service.
ATAC Helping Hospital Create Improvement Culture

Students, practitioners and teachers of Lean Continuous Improvement endorse that sustained success is not a quick gain, but moreover, a continuous and disciplined effort based on the development of an organizational culture of problem solvers.

For the past four years, Auburn Technical Assistance Center – an outreach unit of Auburn University's College of Business and an Economic Development Administration University Center – has partnered with East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika, Ala., to assist the hospital along its CI journey.

EAMC began working with ATAC in 2007 when personnel from its process and quality departments participated in ATAC’s open enrollment courses. EAMC administration determined that there was value to be gained by spreading Lean Continuous Improvement throughout the hospital organization and selected ATAC as a training provider and implementation facilitator. Dubbed ‘EPIC’ – EAMC Performance Improvement Culture – EAMC’s CI program represents the hospital’s commitment to instilling and sustaining a culture of problem solving, standardization, and improvement as its daily operating practice.

Recently, EAMC reported achieving a more than $1 million organizational savings as a direct result of its CI initiatives.

“The $1 million goal measured the areas of cost savings, cost avoidance, and additional revenue or revenue enhancement,” said Genia Odom, EAMC director of process management. “It has taken a couple of years to really begin seeing large tangible cost savings generated by our initiatives, but we now are recognizing some truly significant results.”

Savings are not the result of large capital outlays for additional equipment, technology, or manpower, Odom notes. “Much of the savings have been realized through analyzing the situation with an eye toward recognizing and reducing or eliminating waste and non-value-added activity,” Odom said.

In addition to receiving ATAC’s training for senior hospital leadership and other management and operational levels, EAMC multi-disciplinary teams have implemented more than 15 rapid improvement events throughout the hospital and several with an individual departmental focus. Odom says that waste reduction and cost savings have come about as these teams evaluated processes, discovered ways to streamline activity, and in many cases, eliminated a great deal of expense associated with time, supplies, inventory, and purchasing needs.

“In some key areas, we have even been able to capture additional revenue by changing our claims procedures,” Odom said. “We simply made system improvements that enabled us to more efficiently report and bill for services.”

Additionally, EAMC’s EPIC initiatives have developed patient-care procedure modifications that are reducing infection risks and improving treatment methods.

“We are not just focused on finding monetary savings,” Odom said. “Just as importantly, we are finding that having every one of our employees thinking each day about how to make things better and more efficient, we are not only becoming more fiscally responsible, but also, more effective as a healthcare provider.”

Cultural change is arguably the most difficult change to bring about within an organization, and Odom says it
has not been an overnight achievement. “Our internal employee communication program persistently reports CI achievements and other information about EPIC,” Odom said.

Odom adds that support is from the highest level of the organization. “We still are seeing changes in behavior and practice every day, but we can definitely say that everyone is now aware of what EPIC is about and everyone is taking interest.”

Odom says that EAMC’s initial $1 million CI goal was focused only on the elimination of waste. Now that CI is an organizational way of doing business, Odom says the next year’s goal likely will involve multiple measurements of cost savings, visual management, leader standard work, and other metrics that support improvement and efficiency.

Lean Continuous Improvement is based on the production process so effectively employed by Toyota in the automotive manufacturing industry, and is widely used among manufacturing and other industry. Its approach is focused on eliminating or reducing waste and non-value-added activities from a process and its methodology is readily transferable to processes other than manufacturing. A number of well-known hospitals, such as Virginia Mason Medical Center in Seattle, Wash., and ThedaCare of Appleton, Wisc., are implementing Lean into healthcare and achieving some extraordinary results in cost reductions, patient-care improvements and satisfaction, overall efficiency, and boosts in employee morale.

ATAC Lean Specialists have visited and studied Lean implementation at Virginia Mason and at other healthcare facilities and have tailored the training and facilitation programs being conducted at EAMC to healthcare. EPIC includes introductory training in Lean Continuous Improvement for various employee groups, coaching, and facilitation in conducting multi-day Rapid Improvement Events focused on a variety of EAMC processes and strategic planning with EAMC’s Administrative Team.

Auburn’s “All In, All Pink” for Breast Cancer Awareness

Hundreds of Auburn students, faculty and staff were “in the pink” at the first “All In, All Pink” event promoting breast cancer awareness on October 26.

The presentation was hosted by the Office of the Vice President for University Outreach, in collaboration with the Office of Public Service and the Kappa Chi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

In addition to food, information, and free giveaways the event featured a short program which included a presentation by Dr. Brandon Johnson, testimonials from breast cancer survivors, David Barranco, Dr. Karla Simmons and Elizabeth Haeussler and music provided by the Auburn University Gospel Choir. The program concluded with a pink balloon release in honor of breast cancer victims and survivors.

“As part of Auburn University Outreach’s ongoing commitment to public service, we were excited to partner with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and the American Cancer Society to discuss and educate our community on this very important topic,” said Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach. “This was an excellent opportunity to celebrate the survival of many people who have conquered breast cancer and remember those who have lost the battle.”

For more detailed information visit: http://www.auburn.edu/outreach/allinallpink.htm.
ALATEC Receives Regional Recognition

The Alabama Assistive Technology Expo and Conference, a program offered by the Center for Disability Research and Service and the Office of Professional and Continuing Education, in partnership with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, was recently awarded the Program for Special Populations Award by the Southern Region of the University Professional and Continuing Education Association. ALATEC focuses on providing networking and learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities and those who serve them. The award, presented annually at the UPCEA South Regional Conference, recognizes programs that identify and target specific groups with unique needs such as (but not limited to) the elderly, young, rural, military, urban, minorities, and people with disabilities. ALATEC’s recognition in this area demonstrates the positive impact that interdisciplinary partnerships can have with regard to promoting and strengthening high quality, high impact programming.

Historic Home Becomes Center for Philanthropic Efforts

The Women’s Philanthropy Board and the College of Human Sciences at Auburn University received a significant boost this year with the development of the Cary Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies in the historic Halliday-Cary-Pick House.

Frances Pick Dillard, a WPB founding member, gifted the property to the College and enthusiastically supported the plans to expand the influence of the College and WPB beyond Auburn and the region.

“Our family has upheld traditions of patriotism, responsibility, leadership, mentoring, and philanthropy for generations,” said Dillard. “We are thrilled with the establishment of the Cary Center and look forward to the impact that this work will make on current and future generations of leaders and philanthropists.”

The Cary Center will integrate the Women’s Philanthropy Board into its operations and offer programs related to financial and philanthropic responsibility, nonprofit leadership, and mentoring. Plans also include the development of distance education courses, certificate and degree programs, and research.

June Henton, dean of the College of Human Sciences, said it will be a nationally recognized venue to promote the curriculum of a new minor in philanthropy and nonprofit studies for undergraduate students.

Beyond the College of Human Sciences, the home serves as an example of 19th- and 20th-century design, preservation, and architecture for Auburn students and faculty in interior design and architecture. The solid mahogany, free-standing, circular staircase created by the home’s original owner, Dr. Charles Cary, remains a central fixture.

The Cary name is associated with the center to honor the man who supported the establishment of a veterinary department at Auburn and lead the College of Veterinary Medicine as its first dean for nearly 30 years.

The home will continue to preserve Cary’s archives and other artifacts significant to the field of veterinary medicine, students, and faculty.

“The establishment of the Cary Center in the Halliday-Cary-Pick House will preserve Dr. Cary’s legacy and demonstrates our commitment to the advancement of Auburn University,” Henton said.
Auburn’s Center for Governmental Services Helps Train State’s County Commissioners

The Association of County Commissions of Alabama, in cooperation with Auburn University’s Center for Governmental Services, provides a legislatively mandated training program for Alabama county commissioners. The Alabama Local Government Training Institute is the board that provides oversight for the program.

Don-Terry Veal, director of Auburn University’s Center for Governmental Services, reported that of the 95 current commissioners elected or appointed between 2002 and 2007, all had completed the state-mandated program as of June 2011. He said this was an unprecedented accomplishment for the state of Alabama, as well as for comparable programs among the southeastern states.

“The Training Institute is a great example of Auburn University working together with state and local agencies to strengthen Alabama’s civic infrastructure,” said Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach. “This program and others offered by our Center for Governmental Services contribute greatly to improving the quality and effectiveness of governance in our state.”

There are currently 64 commissioners who were elected or appointed between 2008 and 2009. Of these 64, only five commissioners have not completed the state-mandated program. The total number of commissioners elected between 2002 and 2009 who have completed the program is 154. There were 64 commissioners elected or appointed in 2010 and 2011. Of these 64 commissioners, 45 had completed the state-mandated program as of June 2011.

Sonny Brasfield, executive director of the Association of County Commissions of Alabama, said that in the last 20 years this program has helped prepare commissioners for the challenges they face every day throughout Alabama and that never has this training been more important than it is today.

“We are extremely proud of the commissioners who have participated in the program and are confident the experience has prepared them to meet the citizens’ demands and expectations,” said Brasfield.


Wayne Flynt Honored; Memoir Released

Distinguished Auburn professor emeritus, honored historian, and best-selling author, Wayne Flynt was recently honored at a gala reception and dinner in Birmingham. The event was hosted by the Alabama Poverty Project in the historic Woodrow Hall in recognition of the publication of Flynt’s memoir, Keeping the Faith. In the book, Flynt reflects on his extraordinary career as a professor, author, and activist, and he recounts many events from his tenure at Auburn – including a significant section devoted to Auburn’s outreach mission. Long an advocate of community engagement and public service, Flynt chaired in 1997 a campus committee on faculty participation in outreach. Flynt’s influential report was noted at the time by the Kellogg Foundation and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges as a model for advancing engaged scholarship. Flynt’s efforts led to significant changes in the university’s Faculty Handbook, which today remain the basis of Auburn’s tenure and promotion policies for recognizing outreach scholarship.

Auburn makes Newsweek’s 2011 List of Top-25 “Most Service Oriented” Universities in the United States

Auburn University placed 23 on Newsweek magazine’s list of top schools in the nation for encouraging students and faculty community engagement and outreach. No other Alabama or SEC college made the list. Newsweek partnered with Washington Monthly which scoured an exhaustive amount of data to rank universities based on “their contribution to the public good.” Combining data on national and liberal arts schools, Newsweek and Washington Monthly determined which colleges have the most service-minded students, faculty, and policies by measuring these areas: the size of their Army and Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps programs; the proportion of alumni in the Peace Corps; the percentage of federal work-study money spent on community public service projects; the number of students participating in service projects and service hours produced; and availability of service learning courses and service-based scholarships. For the Newsweek list see the website:

Encyclopedia of Alabama’s Jakeman Retires

Robert J. “Jeff” Jakeman recently retired after two decades on the Auburn faculty. Jakeman was instrumental in the creation of the Encyclopedia of Alabama, an online reference work on Alabama’s history, culture, geography, and natural environment. He became the editor of the nascent state-wide collaboration to create a comprehensive, authoritative digital resource about the state in 2003, and under his leadership it developed into a highly respected site. Since its launch in 2008, EOA has been used across Alabama, the other 49 states, and more than 200 countries and territories; it has served more than 1.4 million visitors to date. Jakeman joined the Department of History faculty in 1992, and served as editor of The Alabama Review, a quarterly journal of Alabama history published by the Alabama Historical Association, from 1996 to 2008. He received his BA from the University of South Florida, his MA from Valdosta State University, and his PhD from Auburn University.

Extension’s Smith Honored

The Alabama 4-H Club Foundation has named its environmental science education building at the Alabama 4-H Center near Columbiana after longtime Alabama Cooperative Extension System Director W. Gaines Smith.

Smith’s Extension leadership has spanned 45 years, and he has held leadership positions at the county, district, regional, and state levels. He has led ACES through times of tight budgets, organizational downsizing, and the redesign of the programming process. He currently serves on the National 4-H Council Board of Trustees.

The $5.5 million environmental science education building is the first gold-certified Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design environmental education building in the eastern United States. Since its doors opened in 2007, the building has been used by more than 18,000 youth for a variety of educational programs. The facility has set a new standard in teaching Alabama’s children to be environmentally responsible and energy efficient.

Stockton Appointed Director of Professional and Continuing Education

Hope Stockton was recently named Auburn University’s director of the Office of Professional and Continuing Education in University Outreach. Previously, Stockton served as Executive Director of the Blue Ridge Conference on Leadership in Auburn’s College of Business.

In her new role, Stockton will be responsible for administrative, financial, and academic management of the Office of Professional and Continuing Education’s diverse non-credit program offerings. The largest...
provider of interdisciplinary non-credit instruction on campus, OPCE provides high-quality, fee-for-service, lifelong learning programs to the citizens of Alabama and beyond. The office also offers conference and event management services to faculty and university departments.

“Hope Stockton brings the vision, experience, and capacity to support and strengthen existing offerings, and develop new continuing education programs,” says Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach. “She is a great addition to the University Outreach team.”

Stockton earned a bachelor’s degree in finance and history from Huntingdon College, a master’s degree in management from Troy University, and is a PhD candidate in adult education at Auburn University. She brings 23 years of administrative and financial management experience to the office along with extensive experience in planning, developing, and administering professional and continuing education programs. She also holds several certifications as a corporate trainer.

Stockton’s start date as director of OPCE was September 1, 2011.

SUPER Emerging Scholars Institute

This institute aims to develop students’ writing, reading, and critical thinking abilities by investigating the rhetoric of public discussions addressing the purposes and functions of education. SUPER Emerging Scholars (SES) has expanded to three sites reaching 47 students from its inception in 2009. This tremendous growth and success of SES in such short time is reflective of full board support and engagement. Board member, Royrickers Cook, recently conducted a site visit and secured partnership funds of $11,000 for SES at Auburn University.
Dr. Allison Stewart, an associate professor in equine internal medicine at Auburn’s College of Veterinary Medicine, arrived in Valdivia, Chile, in March 2011, as part of an academic and student exchange program at the Clinica Veterinario at Austral University. Since 2004, seven groups of Auburn veterinary students have worked at Austral University College of Veterinary Medicine for three-week periods.

Bruno Cavalho, a Brazilian veterinarian who is Austral’s equine surgeon, served as Stewart’s host. “Bruno spent two months with us in the clinic at Auburn last summer, and Dean Boosinger needed someone to spend two weeks visiting the vet school in Chile and I, of course, was happy to oblige,” said Stewart, who is originally from Australia.

The following is an excerpt from her e-mail written while in Valdivia:

The level of medicine practiced here has been impressive. Bruno is a very thorough clinician and has great skill with tendon and joint ultrasound. He collects his own bone marrow and isolates stem cells for transplanting into injured tendons and ligaments. They also have radiology and CT facilities. I have also been impressed in the way that Bruno tries to save his clients money. The clinic sees a large number of wounds, and the owners of the urban draft horses have very little money. The interns wash and resterilize the bandage material and the dollars are carefully utilized to provide the best for the horses and their owners. Bruno also obtained a grant to help subsidize the care of these urban draft horses that are so important to the livelihood of their owners...

I have been involved in the medical work-up of several patients and also have been learning a great deal from Bruno about lameness diagnostics. My Spanish is also improving. The Latin foundation of the language makes the anatomic and medical nomenclature very similar to English and I can sometimes get the gist of a regular conversation, but I have a huge way to go. Chilean Spanish also has the reputation as being the most difficult dialect to understand. Several of the interns also speak English, so I am actually doing fine.

When the clinic is quiet, I have been giving some lectures and labs to the interns and students. On my last weekend, I will be presenting five lectures to be translated into Spanish to local equine practitioners on neonatology and metabolic syndrome...

So far it has been a great experience. There is apparently a trip planned to Dean Tadich’s sheep farm and to go riding in the foothills below the volcanoes. I haven’t actually taken my week of vacation as working in the clinic has been so interesting. I am also staying at a gorgeous little two-bedroom cabin on the lake’s edge surrounded by ancient towering conifers. It’s nice to come home and just admire the view, though normally it is after 9:30 p.m. before we get back, but the nights have been clear and in the darkness far from the city, I have a wonderful view of the star-filled southern sky.
Learn more about Auburn University Outreach and read additional issues of Beyond Auburn Magazine.