ON THE COVER
Chris Rodger, the Scharnagel Professor of Mathematical Sciences in the College of Sciences and Mathematics, is the recipient of the 2008 Auburn University Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach.

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As many of you may already know, the Auburn University System recently adopted a strategic plan that will guide our institution for the coming years. While it contains many reasons to grow excited about Auburn’s future, there are two I would like to share with you.

First, it represents a collective effort of the university, its stakeholders, and those who care deeply about it. Ideas and suggestions were requested from throughout the Auburn family and focused on answering a simple question: what should Auburn be in 10 years?

More than 1,300 individuals participated in an Internet survey, and more than 30 meetings were held on and off campus to gather a wide range of views and recommendations. The new plan represents the best-of-the-best in strategic thinking from students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends.

The second reason the strategic plan gives cause for excitement is that it is a living plan that will evolve and grow as we implement its specific, measurable action items to strengthen our university. It will not collect dust on a bookshelf.

If you have not read the plan, we hope you will do so. It is available on the Auburn Web site at www.auburn.edu/strategicplan.

As progress is realized through this new plan, the demand for an Auburn education will continue to grow. Just in the last four years, applications have increased by more than 40 percent, and the academic quality of these students is rising as well. In fact, the average ACT score for the fall 2008 freshman class is the highest on record.

Thank you for your support of Auburn University and the Office of University Outreach. We are excited for what the future holds as Auburn continues to serve our state and nation and fulfill its instruction, research and extension missions.

War Eagle,

JAY GOGUE
PRESIDENT
AUBURN UNIVERSITY
FEATURES

Excellence in Outreach .......................... 05
Auburn University Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach - Chris Rodger

Partnerships ...................................... 10
Alabama Prosperity Forum

Focus on Recycling .............................. 11
Green Concepts for Salvation Army Facility

Faculty Engagement
More Than $91,000 in Grants to Faculty .......... 14
Engagement - UGA’s Art Dunning ................. 15

Focus on Family
COSAM’s G.U.T.S. Program ......................... 25
Healthy Marriage Initiative ......................... 26

Restoring a Community ......................... 30
The Shiloh Community Restoration Foundation
Preserving a Church, a School, a Cemetery

IN EVERY ISSUE

UNIVERSITY OUTREACH UPDATE ............... 37
Message from the Office of the Vice President

BEYOND ALABAMA ............................. 20
Auburn University in Uganda

OUT AND ABOUT ............................... 32
Outreach News

AT HOME ....................................... 36
IMPACT Provides Volunteer Opportunities to Students

CAMPUS TO COMMUNITY

PROMOTING ENGAGEMENT ....................... 09
Auburn Teams Participate in National Programs
Promoting Engagement

FOCUS ON LITERATURE ......................... 13
Center for the Arts Launches Pebble Hill Books

YEARS OF SERVICE ............................. 16
Gary Beard Retires from Veterinary Medicine

GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION ..................... 17
New Dorms at Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center
Dedicated in Summer Ceremony

EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES ...................... 18
Reconsidering the Unthinkable - Nuclear Energy

FOCUS ON ECONOMY ............................ 19
ECDI’s Joe Sumners Pens Chapter for Local Economic Development Book
CGS hosts Alabama County Government Institute

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT ....................... 12
Pharmacy Students Visit School for Career Day
Student-Led Art Projects Benefit Local Community
Election Administration Program Kicks Off Election

AUBURN AND BEYOND ......................... 23
I-85 Corridor Alliance Progressing
Auburn Montgomery Outreach

PROVIDING ASSISTANCE ....................... 24
Auburn Engineering Technical Assistance Program

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH .................... 27
Advanced Placement Summer Institute Expanded
Outreach Hosts “Road Scholar” Programs

READING INITIATIVE ............................ 28
Nationwide Big Read Program
Liberal Arts Institutes Engaged Scholar Program

ADDRESSING ISSUES ......................... 29
Residents Benefit from Health Project

FOCUS ON SENIORS ............................ 38
Nurturing Lifelong Learning Organizations
OLLI at Auburn Wins ACHE South Award
Mathematics: a tough subject to learn; a tough subject to teach. Enter Chris Rodger, an internationally-recognized scholar with a passion for outreach through his love of math, music, and community engagement. Rodger, the Scharnagel Professor of Mathematical Sciences in the College of Sciences and Mathematics, is the recipient of the 2008 Auburn University Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach.

Math + Outreach x Impact = Chris Rodger
Professor Chris Rodger recently was honored at Auburn University’s Faculty Awards Ceremony and received the institution’s top recognition for outreach scholarship. Rodger’s innovative outreach addresses mathematics teaching effectiveness at the K-12 level, making the intimidating subject fun for both instructor and student alike. His faculty development programs build teachers’ confidence as well as their capacity. As a result, students receive an improved level of instruction that in turn helps them increase their performance in mathematics courses. Many of the schools Rodger assists are rural schools with limited resources and a great need to improve their mathematics instruction against the state’s accountability measures.

“Chris Rodger is the very model of engaged scholarship,” said Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach, in announcing the award. “He is recognized for his teaching and research at the very highest levels of his discipline, and has put that considerable expertise to work to enhance the quality of high school math instruction in Alabama.”

The award recognizes not only the application of Rodger’s work but also the significant impact it is having in the schools. “The nomination cited letter after letter documenting the effectiveness of Chris’ program and how it has enriched and added rigor to schools’ mathematics curriculum,” noted Cook.

While many people see Auburn University’s three primary missions of research, teaching, and outreach as being independent activities, Chris Rodger sees a synergy between them, with each feeding off the other.

“My teaching has certainly changed in various ways because of my outreach activities; my research has affected ways in which I interact with teachers; and simplifying current research for presentations in outreach and teaching settings has led to new research,” observes Rodger. “I find the interaction between the three areas invigorating and stimulating!”

A native of Australia, Rodger attended the University of Sydney completing his bachelor and master’s degrees before receiving his PhD from the University of Reading, England. Joining Auburn University in the 1980’s, Rodger received his tenure and by 1990 was promoted to the rank of professor. In 1993, he was awarded a five-year appointment as an Alumni Professor. He presently holds the title of Scharnagel Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. Internationally recognized in his field, Rodger has held a number of visiting professor appointments at universities in Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. He has delivered keynote addresses for scholarly conferences around the globe, including eleven countries in Europe, Asia, Australian/Pacific region, and North America.

So how did this scholar from “down under” end up all the way around the world in the classrooms of rural Alabama? After settling his family in Auburn, Rodger became involved in his children’s local public
school. Participating in some instructional exercises at his daughter’s fifth-grade math class, he noted some innovative techniques and clever exercises the teacher had incorporated into her instruction to make the subject more interesting for the students. Other schools could profit from the example, he thought.

Thus, Rodger began offering his assistance to area teachers, eventually making presentations on discrete math and technology at seven high schools, three university math clubs, a community college, and a middle school. Then in 1998 he was invited to participate in a summer program at Rutgers University in which college professors were paired with high school teachers for an exchange of ideas. The next year, Rodger had become a co-leader of the program. Collaborating with the Rutgers staff, he applied for and received a National Science Foundation grant to launch “Exploring Discrete Mathematics,” an eight-day summer in-service program for teachers, with follow-up sessions throughout the next year. Teachers, primarily from rural school systems, flocked to the sessions which Rodger organized and led himself. The program was an enthusiastic success.

“Much of my activity with teachers in west Alabama and in the counties around Auburn arose from a desire to increase their content knowledge, but over time I realized that many elementary teachers unnecessarily lack confidence in their ability to do mathematics,” says Rodger.

Changing this attitude, while simultaneously infusing a passion for mathematics, became one of his primary objectives.

“Outreach activities have allowed me to present mathematics to Alabama teachers in an accessible non-threatening way, giving them modern applications of mathematics, an increase in their confidence in solving problems, and a heightened comfort in encouraging their students to explore mathematics.”

The key to Rodger’s approach is that he engages teachers in challenging but enjoyable exercises that they can take back to the classroom. “Professor Rodger and his staff were able to take complex ideas and make them fun for all participants,” said Fannie Major-McKenzie, superintendent of the Dallas County School System. “Teachers were shown how to enable students to use their own imagination and creativity in an interactive manner which develops critical thought and deep understanding.”

Importantly, Rodger also encourages his teacher participants to extend their experience beyond their classrooms to other colleagues. “Dr. Rodger works to create teacher leaders,” said Marlene Peace, an educational specialist with the Montgomery County, Ala., Public School System. “Many of these teachers [who participate in Rodger’s program] have shared the materials and concepts learned with others in their respective schools.”

Rodger’s contributions to classroom teaching have been recognized many times with external support from government and foundation grant awards. He has received four “No Child Left Behind” grants for a series of multiple day “Critical Thinking and Problem Solving” workshops in Selma and Montgomery for K-12 teachers in the Black Belt of west Alabama during the summers of 2003 through 2007. He also received a $100,000 Eisenhower Foundation grant to hold an eight-day
“Leadership Institute in Discrete Mathematics” in the summer of 2002 and a 5-day “Second Summer” for K-8th Grade teachers, held in Lowndes County, Ala.

Rodger was one of six principal investigators on “Team Math,” which received a $9,361,840 grant from the NSF and a $100,000 internal grant from Auburn University Outreach and the Colleges of Education and Sciences and Mathematics. During the past five years in this program, he worked with 15 local school districts, Tuskegee University, and faculty in the departments of Math Education and Mathematics to develop an aligned math curriculum that meets both the new Alabama Math Content and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics process and content standards.

Rodger balances his outreach efforts with an equally rigorous teaching schedule and research agenda, all of which has been recognized by his peers in the College of Sciences and Mathematics. Throughout the last decade, he has received every award the college offers in teaching, research, outreach, and student advising and was named an Auburn University Distinguished Graduate Faculty Lecturer.

Yet Chris Rodger’s service agenda is not limited to the scholarly world of mathematics; he is an accomplished musician, athlete, and community volunteer. He plays in the first violin section of the Montgomery Symphony Orchestra and Auburn’s community orchestra. He umpires SEC and NCAA regional tennis matches. Indeed, this is a scholar who truly approaches outreach mind, body, and soul.

A couple of years ago, Chris Rodger added another title to his long list of recognitions—he was naturalized an American citizen. As with the rest of his accomplishments, he is the very model of good citizenship. He serves on numerous civic boards, including the East Alabama Food Bank; he has led the community committee of Auburn Methodist Church and served a term as president of Auburn Rotary Club. Recently, he was appointed his college’s representative on the university’s War on Hunger committee.

For Chris Rodger, outreach adds outstanding scholarship and effective service to the academy and community, and then multiplies it many times over with positive impact on the many lives touched through his professional and civic activities.

“My attitude is that universities should not be islands,” said Rodger. “One does not have to step far outside Auburn University to see places where our abilities and knowledge can make a huge difference in the lives of Alabamians.” Rodger believes that helping teachers fulfill their mission has an immediate effect on the next generation, directly influencing and brightening the future of the state. “Jumping in to meet this need has been one of the most rewarding activities of my professional career.”

It’s a formula for success that this amiable Aussie applies with competence, good humor, and care, over and over to the benefit of his adopted home.
Representatives from Auburn University were selected for two prestigious national planning institutes held this summer focusing on faculty community engagement and student engagement in experiential learning.

In May, an Auburn team attended the Community Engaged Scholarship Faculty Development Charrette, sponsored by Faculty for the Engaged Campus, a national initiative of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health in partnership with the University of Minnesota and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In June, a second Auburn team attended Northeastern University’s Martha’s Vineyard Summer Institute on Experiential Education.

A term mainly used in architecture, urban planning, and community design projects, a charrette is an intensely focused multi-day session that uses a collaborative approach to create realistic and achievable designs. The engagement charrette focused on competency-based campus-wide models of faculty development that support community-engaged careers in the academy.

Auburn was among 20 universities selected for the charrette from some 100 applications. The charrette team from Auburn University included Kimberly King-Jupiter, former director of Faculty Engagement in University Outreach; Sharon Gaber, senior associate provost; Christa Slaton, associate dean and professor in the College of Liberal Arts; and Juan Gilbert, TSYS distinguished associate professor in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering.

The team focused on composing an action plan to develop, support, and reward community-engaged faculty at Auburn University. The resulting plan included goals of promoting community engagement as a value among Auburn’s academic community, developing faculty capacities for successful engagement and documentation for promotion and tenure, facilitating faculty connections with community partners, and pursuing university recognition by national engagement organizations.

The second Auburn team focused on promoting student engagement at Northeastern’s Martha’s Vineyard Summer Institute on Experiential Education. The institute provided a consultative format wherein national experts in experiential education led university teams in developing strategies to strengthen each campus’s efforts to promote learning outside and inside the traditional classroom. The teams also studied best practices and current innovations in cooperative education, service-learning, faculty/undergraduate research, community-based research, study abroad, academic internships, student leadership development, and other related programs.

The Auburn team included Slaton, Karen St. Clair, former associate director of the Biggio Center; Ralph Foster, director of Outreach Information in University Outreach; Ruthanna Payne, academic counselor in Educational Support Services; and Mark Wilson, assistant director of the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities.

The primary goal of the Auburn team was to promote a culture of engagement through experiential education whereby faculty, students, and community partners participate in meaningful collaborations. The team plan promotes the objective through group advocacy, development of communities of interest, hosting campus dialogues on engagement, showcasing student service activities, and networking with faculty scholars in developing more academic opportunities for experiential learning.

The activities of the two Auburn teams were timely given the impetus for student engagement and experiential learning in the recently released university strategic plan. Additionally, the reports of the two teams reveal a number of overlapping interests that provide many opportunities for synergy and collaborative effort between the groups. Already, representatives of the two teams have begun to discuss working together to more comprehensively promote both faculty and student engagement at Auburn University.
Economic and Community Development Institute Initiates Alabama Prosperity Forum

Building upon the success of its annual two-week Intensive Economic Development Training Course, the Economic and Community Development Institute has recently initiated a new educational program, the Alabama Prosperity Forum. This series of issue-based short courses explores strategies that lead to economic prosperity for Alabama communities.

During these courses, ECDI brings in state, regional, and national experts and successful community-based practitioners to present ideas and proven success strategies on the economic development topic being addressed. Unlike traditional training classes, Alabama Prosperity Forum courses are designed to provide maximum interaction and discussion among course participants, including the use of roundtable discussions and deliberative forums. Through these techniques, participants are provided with opportunities to ask questions and engage in constructive dialogue about real-world challenges and opportunities that they face in their jobs and in their communities.

The series has attracted a diverse group of participants, including state and local economic developers, Chamber of Commerce executives, local elected officials, representatives of utilities and state agencies, members of industrial development boards, and concerned citizens. The diverse range of participants contributes to dynamic interaction and stimulating discussion. The mix of expert presentation and participant dialogue has been well-received by attendees.

“We love that these courses have lead to great friendships and partnerships around the state,” said Allyson Martin, community and economic development training specialist. “They have given participants the ability to make connections and to bounce ideas off one another.”

The first course, “Education and Workforce Development: Making the Connection” was held in November 2007. “Strategies for Retail Development” was held in March in Prattville and “Success Strategies for Small Towns” was held in May in Auburn. In total, these courses have had close to 150 participants. The next course in the series is “Strategies for Sustainability: Green Economic Development.”

For more information, contact Allyson Martin at (334) 844-3685 or ahm0007@auburn.edu.

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
With the dedication of a new retail store on Opelika Road for the Salvation Army, Auburn-Opelika residents saw the results of teamwork between AU’s College of Architecture, Design, and Construction and local architects and builders involving some of the latest concepts in environmentally friendly design and construction.

A team of six students from the college’s Design-Build master’s program worked with John Randall Wilson Architects and J&L Contracting in an outreach project to incorporate into the design and construction concepts that the college is developing in its academic programs.

The new facility opened this summer and includes office, retail, and warehouse space. D.K. Ruth, director of the Design-Build program, said integrating alternative practices, sustainability and “green” design was a priority in construction of the new store. The facility utilizes reused and reinvented shipping containers in the major structure. Design team members said the use of the containers is a socially responsible answer for one of the “leftovers” of today’s society, while also functioning as the main load bearing system of the building. Members said the reuse of materials also helps convey the spirit of the Salvation Army, which resells donated clothing and household goods at low cost to consumers.

Dan Bennett, dean of the College of Architecture, Design, and Construction, said such projects are as important to the students as they are to the community. “For example,” he said, “the experience with the new Salvation Army Building provided first-hand experience regarding the value of service learning. That is, as citizens of a community, the students reaped the personal reward of providing a much needed service to others.” Bennett added, “Equally important is the opportunity to experiment with using alternative and environmentally sustainable focus on recycling

Auburn Students Apply Green, Recycling Concepts for Salvation Army Facility
construction materials, and therefore set an example for others to follow. It is also important that the students worked collaboratively with professionals from both the design and construction professions, thus preparing them with hands on examples of the work they will be engaged in after graduation.\textsuperscript{7}

Reconstituted wood particleboard is used for the roof structure, deck, and enclosure walls, and Kalwall, an infill material which reduces ultraviolet rays, is used to reduce heat and produce high ambient light which diminishes the need for interior light fixtures.

Construction on the facility began in fall 2006.

The Design-Build Master’s Program, under the auspices of The Community Outreach Center for Design and Construction focuses on the process of design and construction techniques. It is believed that by 2015, as much as 75 percent of all building projects will be delivered in some form of collaborative process. Through the program, students study the design-build process and work together to solve problems more efficiently, promote trust, and reinforce dynamic thinking, and apply these skills through collaborations with the public and private sector and in outreach efforts to communities.

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**Pharmacy Students Visit School for Career Day**

Auburn University Harrison School of Pharmacy student pharmacist, (R) Jessica Gresham, ’10, and recent Pharm.D. graduate, (L) Pam Wilkins, ’08, explain to Dean Road Elementary School classes what it’s like to be a pharmacy student and a professional pharmacist during the school’s career day. All the children received HSOP name badges for the day. Many were dressed in costumes depicting their favorite profession.
AU’s Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities Launches Pebble Hill Books

Auburn University’s Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities has launched Pebble Hill Books, an imprint series published in collaboration with the University of Alabama Press and whose titles will grow out of or contribute to the center’s outreach mission for AU’s College of Liberal Arts.

The first book in the series, just released, is In the Path of the Storms: Bayou La Batre, Coden, and the Alabama Coast. It is co-authored by award-winning writer Frye Gaillard and artists-in-residence Sheila Hagler and Peggy Denniston.

“The Gulf Coast villages of Bayou La Batre and Coden are two of Alabama’s most distinctive communities, with roots going back to the French settlements of the 18th century,” said Jay Lamar, center director.

In the Path of the Storms captures in words and photographs the uniqueness of these seafood-producing towns, including the significant southeast Asian refugee population, the cheap imported seafood, the extraordinary challenges of higher gas prices, and the rash of hurricanes, including Hurricane Katrina.

“It is a story of tradition as well as the forces of change and of the brave struggle of these Gulf Coast communities to survive and thrive,” said Lamar.

The book’s publication is a result of a community history project funded by the Kettering Foundation of Ohio and undertaken in collaboration with the Truman Pierce Institute in the College of Education at Auburn University.

The Draughon Center is located in Auburn at the historic 1847 Scott-Yarbrough House known as Pebble Hill.

For more information about Pebble Hill Books call (334) 844-4946 or email cah@auburn.edu. For information about the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities, go to www.auburn.edu/cah.
University Outreach Awards More Than $91,000 in Grants to Faculty

The Office of the Vice President for University Outreach at Auburn University has awarded more than $91,000 to fund faculty scholarship grants for 2007-08. Seven projects were funded out of 18 proposals that were submitted for the competitive, faculty scholarship grants.

Assistant Vice President for University Outreach, Royrickers Cook, said the primary goal of the program is to provide Auburn faculty members with resources to connect their research with pressing needs of the state. “I am very pleased with the quality of these proposals and their potential for positive impact toward the needs they address,” said Cook. “We are seeing a significant increase in faculty collaboration across disciplines and with community partners as they seek innovative solutions to some very pressing problems in our state.”

The seven projects selected for funding, the amounts and principal investigators are:

• **Alabama Partnership for Research and Training on Positive Academic and Behavior Supports**, $15,000, Gregory Ern, assistant professor in the College of Education’s Department of Counselor Education, Counseling Psychology and School Psychology. The project will involve the start up stages of a collaborative partnership involving research, training, and technical assistance on School-wide Positive Academic and Behavior Support to serve K-12 public schools in east central Alabama;

• **Auburn Student Athletes Reading with Students**, otherwise known as Auburn All STARS, $10,000, Nancy Barry, professor and chair; Edna Brabham, associate professor; and Bruce Murray, associate professor, in the College of Education’s Department of Curriculum and Teaching. The purpose of the program is to train university student athletes to serve as mentors for at-risk children; the student athletes will participate in responsive reading training and then serve as a “reading buddies” with children at Auburn Day Care for read-aloud sessions;

• **Bridging the Digital Divide to Enhance Internet Technology Among the Elderly**, $10,000, Veena Chattaraman, assistant professor, and Wi-Suk Kwon, assistant professor, both in the College of Human Sciences’ Department of Consumer Affairs; and TSYS Distinguished Associate Professor Juan Gilbert, Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering. The project will implement a multidisciplinary approach integrating computer and social sciences to develop a multimodal, social interface for Internet applications that has the potential to enhance the use of the Internet by the elderly, thus improving their quality of life through increased independence.

• **Communication Infrastructure Pilot Project Proposal for Alabama’s Black Belt**, $20,000, Prathima Agrawal, director of the Wireless Engineering Research and Education Center, and Samuel Gill Distinguished Professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering.

...
and Computer Engineering, Samuel Ginn College of Engineering. Economic development in rural areas is highly dependent on infrastructure investment and communications. The project will deploy state-of-the-art data communication networking capability to select public sites—school, library, municipal building—in Perry County within the economically distressed Black Belt region of Alabama, which currently lacks such infrastructure.

- **Enhancing the Educational Skills of Alabama’s Prison Population**, $15,000, Margaret Shippen, assistant professor in the College of Education’s Department of Rehabilitation and Special Education, and Kyes Stevens, Alabama Prison Arts and Education project director in the College of Liberal Arts’ Department of Psychology. The project will expand basic literacy tutoring programs to other prison facilities, partner with the Alabama Prison Arts and Education Project to enhance Auburn’s prison-based education efforts, and to conduct a “Prison Education Summit” with prisoner education stakeholders in the state with the overall objective of improving the educational skills of Alabama’s prison population.

- **Making A Rural Health Promotion Connection: Caring for Alabama’s Volunteer Citizen Servants**, $15,000, Constance Smith Hendricks, professor, and Libba Reed McMillan, associate professor, in the College of Nursing. The objective of the project is to improve the health status of community volunteers with the premise that continued good health will allow them to extend or expand their service to the community. The project will partner with community service organizations to provide culturally relevant health information to subjects with organizational activities to monitor and enhance participation.

- **Water Education for Alabama or WET**, $6,380, Lorraine Wolf, professor, and Ming-Kuo Lee, professor, in the College of Sciences and Mathematics’ Department of Geology and Geography. The project will deliver water resources education to schools serving primarily African-American students in Alabama’s poorest counties where water quality and aquifer exploitation problems are critical. The goal is to increase knowledge and stimulate interest and concern among teachers and students regarding water resource issues.

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**Engagement: Defining and Redefining the Land-Grant Mission**

-- UGA’s Art Dunning speaks at Outreach Symposium

“Outreach is serious business,” said Art Dunning, vice president for public service and outreach at the University of Georgia. Dunning spoke at the 2008 Outreach Symposium which focused on faculty engagement, tenure and promotion policy, funding, and other key issues.

“We’re transforming outreach and engagement [at UGA],” noted Dunning, who is a nationally recognized advocate for university engagement. “You need to define and redefine the land-grant mission for the 21st century.” Dunning outlined the strategies that his administration has followed during the last few years in advancing faculty participation in outreach.

His office focuses on several banner initiatives including research and public policy on community change in demographics and prosperity, development of service learning and international experiences for students, and promoting engagement on the national level through the National Outreach Scholarship Conference, which he helped organize several years ago.

Dunning stresses the notion of partnership; the university can learn from community partners to enrich its research base. He also noted that building a cadre of faculty leadership on campus is important. “Development, the building of capacity for faculty, and providing resources to allow them to spend time on outreach is important.” Senior tenured faculty can play a role in defining what their disciplines and departments expect and what needs can be met through outreach. The mission also needs to be in tune with the priorities of the academic administration and its aspirations, even up to the president.

As Dunning concluded, a member of the audience asked him to define good outreach. “It is mutually beneficial for both the institution and the community,” replied Dunning. “It is an honest broker and neutral; it looks at communities from the asset view rather than deficits.” Additionally, good outreach must inform the scholarly base and its impact must be measurable, says Dunning. “We have to show how outreach integrates and adds value to the institution—we have to tell the outreach story.”
Beard Retires from College of Veterinary Medicine

Gary Beard, former assistant dean for outreach at the College of Veterinary Medicine, retired April 30 after a total of 27 years at Auburn, including almost 17 years as assistant dean. Beard’s many accomplishments included significant enhancement of the college’s two main outreach events: an annual veterinary conference and an annual open house.

Under his leadership, the veterinary conference became Auburn’s biggest non-football weekend each year, even outpacing football in terms of local revenue generated through area motels for four consecutive nights. More than 2,000 veterinarians, spouses, and vendors converge each year for this event that offers 20-plus hours of continuing education credit.

Beard also developed the college’s open house into a festive, state fair-like event to promote the veterinary profession to people of all ages, from toddlers to adults. Attendance increased from several hundred in the early 1990s to more than 6,000 in 2007.

Prior to joining the veterinary college in the early 1990s, he operated a private veterinary practice in Baton Rouge, La., for 25 years. Beard, who earned his doctor of veterinary medicine degree from Auburn in 1959, became a charter diplomat in the American College of Veterinary Dentistry in 1988 and is one of only 106 board-certified veterinary dentists in the world. He has held numerous positions in veterinary and civic organizations in Louisiana, Alabama, and the nation.

Gary Beard posed by a photograph of Charles Allen Cary, the first dean of the Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine. Beard retired recently as assistant dean for outreach at the college.
Auburn University’s School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences dedicated new dormitories at the Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center near Andalusia this summer. Of the $1.2 million cost of building the dormitories, $950,000 was provided by the Solon and Martha Dixon Foundation.

Dean Richard Brinker presided over the ceremony and AU President Jay Gogue expressed appreciation to the Foundation for its generous contribution. James W. Rane of Abbeville, representing Auburn University and its Board of Trustees, also made comments on the importance of this gift to Auburn University and the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences.

The dormitories include five four-room cottages that will accommodate eight students each. With this increased capacity, the curriculum for the wildlife science major can be expanded to include a 10-week practicum that will provide students with a hands-on experience.

For the past 29 years, Solon and Martha Dixon and their foundation have given more than $3 million to AU’s School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences as well as the 5,300 acres on which the center is built.

The facilities will also be used for adult continuing education programs sponsored by Auburn University and for in-service training for employees of state and federal natural resource agencies.

The School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences is very grateful to the Solon and Martha Dixon Foundation Board of Directors for their continuing generous support. With help from private donors, the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences is able to continue as a distinguished leader in forestry education throughout the region.
What a difference 30 years can make.

In an era of spiking oil prices and mounting global warming concerns, a growing number of policy makers, public intellectuals, and others has developed a newfound appreciation for an energy source once considered almost taboo — nuclear energy.

It’s a far cry from three decades ago when many public figures shied away from any positive mention of this energy source following the Three-Mile Island accident in 1979.

Now prompted by growing concerns about the long-term effects of global warming, many opinion leaders are calling on Congress to set aside more money to fund construction of nuclear power plants.

One public intellectual firmly within the pro-nuclear power camp is Lynn Edward Weaver, president emeritus of the Florida Institute of Technology who explored the issue in an op-ed that appeared in the Orlando-Sentinel.

She observes that electric utilities are hoping to add between four and eight nuclear plants over the next several years — plants that could help the country go a long way toward alleviating the global warming threat. The problem is a lack of funding, something she believes only Congress can solve.

The practice of using subsidies to capitalize on a wider array of energy sources isn’t new, she says, adding that a similar practice already has been followed with oil, gas, and coal.

“Wind and solar power exist only because of government subsidies. The main alternative fuel for vehicles — ethanol — is totally a result of tax credits and subsidies.”

Weaver is convinced a stronger commitment to nuclear power is essential for the national security and environmental requirements.

Equally convinced is Mark Hall, an Alabama Cooperative Extension System renewable energy specialist, who stresses that while the options associated with nuclear energy aren’t perfect, neither is any other alternative.

“There are no perfect solutions,” Hall said. “We’re going to be dealing with problems and problem solving no matter what direction we turn.”

And responding to critics of nuclear power who invoke the memories of Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, Hall raises the question: “What did personal computers look like in 1979 (when Three Mile Island occurred)?”

The point Hall tries to make is that other types of technology that minimize the risks associated with nuclear power have advanced along with strides in nuclear power in the 30 years since the Three Mile Island accident and in the 22 years since Chernobyl.

“Three Mile Island was before Apple and Windows,” Hall said, adding that in many respects, “we simply weren’t the technological society then that we are now.”

This is significant, Hall says, because it means that these new technologies now enable nuclear plant operators to assess risks and safeguard against them in ways that were scarcely imaginable some 30 years ago.

Hall also believes the sorts of grid-power approaches associated with nuclear power and other renewable sources of energy, such as solar and wind power, offer tremendous opportunities, especially for energy-efficient automobiles.

“We could use a combination of these grid-powered technologies to develop all kinds of automotive technologies,” Hall said, adding that an especially welcome development would be a small-engine biodiesel hybrid that also could be plugged into and recharged by a grid-power system powered by a combination of nuclear, solar, and wind energy.

Hall and Weaver aren’t the only renewable energy proponents frustrated by the stalled progress associated with nuclear energy.

Writing last year, erstwhile Republican presidential candidate Rudy Giuliani wondered how the French had pulled so far ahead of the United States, which had pioneered this type of technology.

Roughly 80 percent of the electricity in France is supplied by nuclear energy, while the United States derives only about 20 percent of its electricity from this source — a share that is expected to dwindle even further to about 15 percent unless policymakers can provide more incentives for expanding this energy sector.

Reconsidering the Unthinkable
ECDI Director Joe Sumners Pens Chapter for Local Economic Development Book

Joe Sumners, director of the Economic and Community Development Institute, recently authored a chapter in a new book published by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia. Building the Local Economy: Cases in Economic Development presents a new look at the powerful role of local governments in economic development.

Sumners’ chapter, which is titled “Strategies for Small Town Success,” uses case studies from Tupelo, Miss., and Unicountown, Demopolis, Eufaula, and the Coastal Gateway region of Alabama to promote a holistic approach to economic development.

The author suggests that small towns are best served by promoting strong and diverse community leadership that is inclusive, collaborative, and connected; an engaged citizenry; and a community mindset of pride and optimism. According to Sumners, these characteristics of strong communities actually form the foundation for prosperous small-town economies.

He also recommends that small towns identify their unique assets, create and implement a strategic plan based upon a shared vision, and engage in internal and external partnerships. Finally, the author suggests that, in order for their efforts to be sustainable, leaders in small communities must create community and regional crossroads—organizations and structures that allow leaders to connect regularly and assess, plan, and work together.

“The irony is that strategies emphasizing community development (over industrial recruitment) ultimately make small towns much more attractive in the competition for [the] large manufacturing plants they [so often] covet,” said Sumners.

Building the Local Economy: Cases in Economic Development was edited by former Auburn City Manager Doug Watson and John Morris, who received his doctorate from Auburn University. The book presents stories from 15 communities across the United States to illustrate best practices in the evolving field of economic development.

Other chapter authors with Auburn connections include Donna Milam Handley, former assistant director of economic development for the City of Auburn, who received her doctorate from Auburn University, and Wendy Hasset, who also received her doctorate from the university.

Building the Local Economy: Cases in Economic Development is intended for use as a desktop reference for public officials and as a textbook for both undergraduate- and graduate-level courses in local government administration, urban studies, planning, economic development, privatization, and public governance. The book is available online through the Carl Vinson Institute Bookstore at http://www.cviog.uga.edu/store.

The Economic and Community Development Institute is a partnership of Auburn University and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. ECDI is committed to promoting economic prosperity and improving quality of life for communities throughout Alabama through education and training, research and communication, partnership and connection, and consultation and engagement.

Center for Governmental Services Hosts 38th Annual Alabama County Government Institute

The Center for Governmental Services hosted the 38th annual Alabama County Government Institute in June at The Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center. The institute provides opportunities for Alabama county commissioners, other county officials, and those in local governments to become more aware of targeted opportunities and with initiatives affecting Alabama county governments.

The theme of this year’s institute was “Linking Your County to the Marketplace.” Issues that were discussed included bonds to finance capital improvements, immigration, foreclosures, economic issues, trends in the marketplace, sales tax and gas price impacts on local governments, and public/private partnerships. The featured speaker was David Altig, senior vice president and director of research at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta.

Participation in the institute has increased during the last few years, with the largest number of registrants in the history of the institute attending this year. CGS seeks input from the county commission offices when planning each annual institute.
This ancient proverb is the philosophy behind an Auburn University Department of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures outreach project that, in three short years, has already had a significant impact on the economy and people of Uganda.

The Fisheries Investment for Sustainable Harvest project, or FISH, is a 40-month effort begun in 2005 and funded by a $2.5 million U.S. Agency for International Development cooperative agreement. The FISH project—which focuses on production of Nile tilapia and clarias catfish—is applying Auburn University know-how to develop commercial aquaculture in Uganda by working directly with private fish farmers and training them to use proven feed-based technologies and best management practices.

Ultimately, the project’s goal is to establish an infrastructure that allows Uganda’s aquaculture industry to thrive and expand, which will increase the quality and quantity of protein food for Ugandans, boost employment, and help the African country generate export dollars.

The project has been led in-country by Karen Veverica, an associate with the AU International Center for Aquaculture and Aquatic Environments who has more than 27 years of experience working in aquaculture, 16 of which have been in Africa. Veverica, working closely with AU FISH coordinator Bill Daniels and other AU faculty members, works directly with commercial-scale Ugandan fish farmers teaching them how to better manage their fish and farms, including how to improve survival rates, use high-quality feed, and how to harvest and market their fish. They have worked with industry to manufacture some of the basic feeds and gear that commercial fish farmers require, such as seines and cages.

The project is in its third and final year of USAID funding and results are just now being calculated, but early evaluations indicate the impact of FISH is significant. Not only has FISH helped increase the profits of participating farmers—the hatchery owners have realized 6 to 9-fold increases in revenues in just one year—it also has established an invaluable network among the African nation’s fish farmers. That network will help sustain and expand the industry in years to come.
What’s more, it’s also been an incredible opportunity for one FAA graduate student, Sara Rademaker, who spent four months in early 2008 working with Veverica in Uganda. When Rademaker graduated from Auburn in December 2007 with a bachelor’s degree in FAA, she was looking for a job or opportunity that could help her decide what direction her future should take—graduate school or the job force. That’s when she was offered the chance to join Veverica in Uganda.

“They needed help. I needed experience,” Rademaker explained. The combination of needs proved invaluable for many.

“Sara has been a blessing to this farm,” said Jocelyn Rugunda, one of the Ugandan farmers cooperating with the FISH project and one of several farmers Rademaker assisted during her time in Uganda. “She came in and she easily mixed in with the rest of the staff here and she brought with her new knowledge and hands-on skills.”

“Sara has interacted with the younger Ugandan students and has set an example for them, showing initiative and a can-do attitude,” said Veverica. “No job was too menial nor too overwhelming for her. In return, the Ugandan students have explained to Sara different cultural aspects of Ugandan life and their own student experiences.”

“I think it is really important to do this because we have so much information at Auburn it would be a shame not to spread it around, especially for students who can learn how to apply what they learn at a university to make a difference,” said Rademaker.

“This was my first overseas experience,” she continued. “I didn’t really know what I was getting into, but it was amazing. In fact, it is one of the best experiences I’ve ever had.”

Though the cooperative agreement that has supported the FISH project ended in September, the team hopes to collaborate with new partners to continue the work in Uganda well into the future. Taking this effort to the next level is important to the team, and especially important to Veverica.

“The reason I have spent so much time working in Africa is that I am committed to providing opportunities to Africans who want to work hard and get ahead,” she said. “People here are hard-working but they don’t necessarily improve their lives because of all the constraints acting against them. We at Auburn can show willing fish farmers how to improve their livelihoods and we will leave behind a group of farmers and industry support that will have a lasting effect in Uganda and the region.”

To learn more about the FISH project and other AU fisheries and allied aquaculture programs, visit www.auburn.edu/fishtales.
The twelve students in Visiting Professor of Art Suzanne Hagood’s Special Topics Course learned about more than art spring semester as they worked jointly with residents of Russell County to create nine art projects that reflected the culture of the county’s communities and some of the interests and concerns of its people.

After their project proposals and budgets were approved, the students traveled to Russell County to begin building relationships with its citizens and to gain acceptance for the kind of community-based art they wanted to introduce. The students discovered not only that laying this kind of groundwork was more complex than they had anticipated but also that it would be the most time-consuming part of the work they did for the course.

Russell County, in Alabama’s Black Belt, is made up mostly of small communities. By the end of the semester, the students had developed successful collaborations with some of its senior citizens, church groups, and school children as well as Hurtsboro’s business district in the creation of projects that both expressed and strengthened community identity.

The projects ranged from a collection of small abstract clay sculptures, each with a handprint of a Russell County resident, to a ceramic mural installed on the exterior of the Hurtsboro Library. A group of children created “window paintings.” The lives of senior citizens were recorded in “interview portraits.” Two projects made creative use of photography to identify what was important to some of the county’s high school students. As part of a fund-raising event for Hurtsboro’s volunteer fire department, a laser event provided an opportunity for the public to draw “graffiti” on the sides of buildings with projected light. Hurtsboro citizens provided input about what best represented their community and the result was their own town logo. A stained glass window that was designed by citizens will be installed in a church that was damaged by arson.

The projects were funded by Auburn University’s Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art through a grant by a private donor from Russell County.

Russell County collaborators for these projects include the Woodland Baptist Church, Phenix City, Russell County High School, Russell County Elementary School, Russell County Extension office and 4-H group, Blessed John XXIII Center, the Hurtsboro Arts Association, Hurtsboro Volunteer Fire Department, Hurtsboro Business District, Hurtsboro Community Prayer Group, Hurtsboro Seniors’ Center, Hurtsboro Library, and Cheryl Mann-Harding.

Hagood received her MFA from Texas Tech University in 2003 and began teaching at Auburn as a Visiting Professor of Art in the fall of 2006.

### Election Administration Faculty and Students Kick Off Presidential Election

Anna Gramberg, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, and faculty in Auburn University’s Election Administration Program were invited by the Iowa Secretary of State’s Office to observe the first caucus of the 2008 presidential season. In Des Moines, they visited with top election officials, observed a caucus, and attended candidate rallies, including lunch with Hillary and Bill Clinton.

As a part of the College of Liberal Arts’ Civic Engagement Initiative, 10 students traveled with faculty to Sacramento, Calif., for the Super Tuesday primary. At the voter registrar’s office, they were instructed on ballot design, absentee voting, poll worker training, media relations, voter outreach, and ballot counting. Students also toured the state capitol and the Secretary of State’s Office, visited campaign sites and polling precincts, and watched and discussed the Super Tuesday returns. Each student commented that the trip was a highlight of their educational experience at Auburn and that it helped connect their academic studies with the “real world.”

The expertise of Auburn faculty, who offer the only national certification program for election of voter registration officials, continues to grow with invitations to observe the elections processes firsthand in highly competitive states. Liberal Arts faculty and students have also collaborated with Auburn engineering professor Juan Gilbert, who took his interdisciplinary research team to Washington, DC, to make a presentation on his Prime III voting system before a congressional committee.

For more information, visit the Election Administration Web site at www.auburn.edu/cap.
I-85 Corridor Alliance Progressing

Vision plus teamwork equals progress. It’s a formula for success that the I-85 Corridor Alliance is depending on as it launches a vigorous new strategic plan for the new year.

In 2005 the I-85 Corridor Alliance was formally established to promote productive, cooperative partnership among various stakeholders in the region of central and eastern Alabama defined by counties linked by Interstate 85 from Montgomery to the Georgia line. This not-for-profit organization was seen as an opportunity for government, civic, business, and education stakeholders to come together and have a shared impact on their region, to work as a unified team to accomplish things they could not accomplish individually. The alliance has created an environment for brainstorming, partnering, and educating one another on ways to foster the region’s competitiveness in the constantly changing economic climate.

A lot has happened with the alliance this year. In March, Allyson Martin, a training specialist with the Economic and Community Development Institute, was brought on board to help manage the group and their efforts for the region. Having just completed a strategic planning session, the I-85 Corridor Alliance is ready to expand and strengthen their efforts in the region. One of the members of the organization described the group as a train to which new cars can be added; in other words, keep partnering with one another and continually expand the connection and partnership with one another.

This next year will find the group focusing on the following top priorities: funding, establishing themselves as an information sharing or clearinghouse for the region, establishing an ambassador’s program, and researching the implementation of an adult workforce skill-building awareness campaign or program.

“We have a very busy year ahead of us, but I am excited to have the opportunity to work with this dynamic and passionate group of people from the region,” said Martin.

AUBURN MONTGOMERY OUTREACH

Auburn Montgomery Outreach helps individuals and organizations meet the demands of an ever-changing environment through innovative solutions. With a diverse team of experienced consultants and an array of professional and personal interest courses, outreach helps individuals and organizations reach their potential.

“We have been providing assistance to individuals, businesses, and governments through some of our outreach units for more than 30 years,” said Katherine Jackson, vice chancellor for outreach. “Our mission is to help businesses and government agencies solve the problems that limit them and to provide individuals and organizations with the knowledge, skills, and structure necessary to succeed.”

Through six consulting and training divisions working with individuals, private businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and state and local governments, outreach provides a wide variety of services including human resources and training solutions; grant writing, management, and evaluation; conference planning; technology management; research and data analysis; and organizational effectiveness and performance solutions. For more information about Auburn Montgomery Outreach, call (334) 244-3956 or visit www.outreach.aum.edu.
AETAP recently helped OREX discover a new strippable coating to protect workers from radioactive contamination, enabling OREX to become more environmentally responsible and simultaneously protecting Alabama’s environment. Resource Innovations worked with AETAP to automate their plant and increase global competitiveness; Euro-Pro worked to improve the reliability and noise profile of their vacuum cleaner while minimizing the cost and increasing sweeper weight; Morris Forest Products wanted to improve the layout and efficiency of their factory; Southern Patio worked to potentially reduce manufacturing costs; Walmart Distribution Center wanted to potentially reduce congestion of material handling; Siemens Manufacturing needed to align parts flow; and entrepreneurs would like to implement tests of alternative fuels.

AETAP also works with Auburn’s continuing education group to offer training and courses for industry such as a recent course on discrete-event simulation. AETAP’s training and workshops are beneficial for small companies that may not have the resources to keep their employees up to date with training and education. For example, AETAP is able to provide design assistance, safety training, and assistance with OSHA compliance for companies that may not be able to employ a full-time staff. AETAP has also organized workshops and workforce development seminars that keep Alabama’s workforce informed and ready to compete in the international economy, with programs including environmentally safe production methods and workplace efficiency.

In summary, AETAP’s effective partnership provides Alabama business and industry with access to the scientists, engineers, and business specialists they need to address complex challenges and to maintain and increase their viability in today’s challenging global economy, benefiting all of the citizens of the state by turning ideas into workable solutions and helping industry put those solutions into action.
COSAM Outreach is 
Getting Under The Surface

Have you ever wondered why leaves change color? Do you know what is in your blood? Do you know how to use a lemon to power a clock? The answers to these and many more questions can be discovered at the College of Sciences and Mathematics’ newest outreach program, Getting Under The Surface or GUTS.

GUTS is a bimonthly evening program aimed at first- through eighth-grade students and their parents or grandparents. The evening includes dinner followed by a 90-minute science activity where students get to take something apart to learn how it works. Each activity features a theme that focuses on objects that are familiar to kids (such as radios and roller coasters) and techniques (such as DNA fingerprinting).

“I learn stuff I never would have learned at school,” said seventh grader Justin Smith. “Last time I learned about different germs that are found in milk and cheese.”

Topics appeal to all audiences making GUTS an event that is not only educational but also fun for the entire family. By making science fun, GUTS seeks to enhance science literacy within the community.

Mary Lou Ewald, director of outreach for COSAM, said “By offering education to both the parent and child, we hope parents will begin and continue to encourage their child along the path of science education.”

GUTS activities are led by knowledgeable instructors, such as certified teachers, COSAM undergraduates, graduates,
professors, and anyone in the community interested in a scientific subject, with the hope that both the student participants and the parents gain insight into the world of science.

Sarah Stanwick comments on why she brings her daughter Olivia to GUTS, “I want her to know that science is an option for girls. Plus, this is something we can do together and both of us learn something new.”

For more information on GUTS, visit the Web site at www.auburn.edu/cosam/outreach.

College of Sciences and Mathematics’ newest outreach program, Getting Under The Surface (GUTS) is a bimonthly evening program aimed at first- through eighth-grade students and their parents or grandparents.

Healthy Marriage Initiative

The Healthy Marriage Initiative is a partnership between the Auburn University Department of Human Development and Family Studies, the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention/ The Children’s Trust Fund, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, the Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers, various state agencies, and community partners focused on supporting healthy, stable relationships and marriages in Alabama. It is funded by a five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Family Assistance.

ACHMI’s goal is to strengthen Alabama families by raising public awareness of the importance of healthy marriages for children, family, and community well-being; increasing access to healthy marriage resources for all Alabama citizens; and training community members and professionals in research-based educational programs that strengthen relationships and marriages.

The Healthy Marriage Initiative is for everyone. It provides programming for youth, non-married parents, pre-marital couples, stepfamilies, and married couples.

There is mounting research evidence that the trends of increasing marital and family instability have a negative impact on children, adults, families, and their communities. The research is clear: healthy relationships and marriages, and resulting family stability benefit the physical, social, and emotional well-being of adults and children. Even though it is known that healthy couples lead to healthy families and healthy children, there has been little effort to systematically provide educational resources and prevention programming that focuses on relationship skills for couples. ACHMI is focused on ensuring that this important area is not a “missing link” in family life education and prevention programming in Alabama.

For more information about the program, contact Ami Landers with the Alabama Community Healthy Marriage Initiative at (334) 270-4100, or alanders@auburn.edu.
Auburn Expands Advanced Placement Summer Institute

In late June, Auburn University hosted its second Advanced Placement Summer Institute. Last year, in response to the Alabama AP Initiative, an effort aimed at increasing access to advanced placement courses, AU offered five training sessions for AP teachers. The effort was so successful that this year the number of offerings was increased to 15 teacher training sessions.

The institute was planned, coordinated, and conducted by the Outreach Program Office in cooperation with The College Board and AU’s Truman Pierce Institute and the College of Sciences and Mathematics. A total of 349 teachers and administrators, most of whom represented Alabama school systems, registered for the training.

Feedback received from participants was positive and indicate the training was well received.

“I really enjoyed everything about the conference. I felt that every minute was well spent. The agenda was laid out really well and we covered everything and then some. We were able to receive valuable information from the presenter and share with each other; I really liked that. The presenter was great!! I really enjoyed the staff and the facilities at Auburn—this was my first visit to the university. Claire Twardy did an excellent job of coordinating everything. I was very pleased and will encourage others to attend,” said Kenya Bledsoe of Homewood, Ala.

“The whole institute was fantastic; I enjoyed my time, and I feel much more prepared to teach the course for the first time this fall. Thanks for hosting it, and I hope to return in the future,” said Joel W. Hawbaker of Anniston, Ala.

Auburn University has established a new tradition of assisting Alabama school systems in their efforts to improve the quality of their course offerings. It is a cooperative enterprise that bodes well for the academic futures of students in the state of Alabama.

Outreach Program Office Hosts “Road Scholar” Programs

In the past year, Auburn University, through its Outreach Program Office, has hosted two “Road Scholar” programs. Road Scholar is a not-for-profit organization in educational travel adventures. The vast majority of Road Scholar offerings involve international travel, but those hosted by Auburn focus on what is rapidly becoming Alabama’s greatest tourist attraction: the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail.

The groups are relatively small, never more than 24, and accommodations are carefully chosen for ambience and style. In the case of this particular program, a comfortable motor coach is used to move program participants from the starting point at Oxmoor Valley (Birmingham) to Capitol Hill (Prattville), Grand National (Opelika/Auburn), and Ross Bridge (Birmingham) during the eight-day program.

Along the way, participants stay at on-site Marriott facilities and receive golf instruction by PGA professionals and attend classes on golf-related subjects that range from turfgrass research to golf etiquette to the economic impact of the RTJ Trail. They also enjoyed meals at local venues, and of course, daily opportunities to play golf on the famous trail courses.

Auburn has hosted two programs to date and participants have come from all throughout the United States and Canada. For golfers, it is a wonderfully different way to take a fun, educational, golfing vacation; for Auburn and the State of Alabama, it is a terrific way to showcase Alabama and the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail.
The Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities in the College of Liberal Arts was selected as one of 127 participants in the National Endowment for the Arts’ nationwide Big Read initiative, a community reading program designed to restore reading to the center of American culture.

The Draughon Center partnered with the Marion-Perry County Public Library to offer public programming involving Harper Lee’s novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, during March 2008. More than 2,000 citizens participated in more than 30 programs that took place in a number of venues including libraries, schools, and homes. “The Big Read provided our community many creative opportunities to discuss the familiar themes and challenges of life in rural Alabama,” said Tiffany Vaughn, library director. “We take great pride in participating in a program with national significance.”

“The program allowed us to partner with a library and community that can benefit from the outreach mission of the university,” said Jay Lamar, director of CMDCAH. “Through the Big Read, we had the opportunity to build capacity for local humanities programming, create opportunities for partnership, and promote education and literacy in our state.”

Founded in 1985 as the dedicated outreach unit for the College of Liberal Arts, the center seeks to strengthen the bonds between the academic community and the general public through arts and humanities initiatives in schools, towns, and communities around the state. The NEA presents the Big Read in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and in cooperation with Arts Midwest. For more information, visit [www.auburn.edu/ Cah](http://www.auburn.edu/ Cah) or call (334) 844-4946.

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**CLA’s Caroline Marshall Draughon Center Partners with Black Belt County for Nationwide Big Read Program**

The College of Liberal Arts has named the first five faculty members to its new Engaged Scholar Program. The program is designed to support superior faculty in the college, and, through the quality of the recipients’ work, to strengthen student and faculty engagement in the local community as well as nationally and internationally. The five faculty members selected include Barb Bondy (Art), Brigitta Brunner (Communication/Journalism), Jeff Jakeman (History), Jim Johnston (Psychology), and Carole Zugazaga (Sociology).

Each chosen faculty member will hold the title of CLA Engaged Scholar for a three-year appointment and will receive an annual salary supplement. A committee selected the five recipients based on exemplary professional citizenship and participation in promoting the college’s commitment to civic engagement.
Residents Benefit from Health Project at Boykin Community Center

Access to health care by low-income, underserved populations is a major problem in the United States. Further, care that focuses on prevention and health promotion is especially needed by at-risk populations such as minorities and those with low income. Agencies and organizations such as The Pew Health Professions Commission, the National League for Nursing, and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing have called for the education of health professionals to substantially change curricula to prepare students to meet the health needs of clients from a population and preventive focus. Preparing nursing students to practice from a prevention perspective and to care for diverse populations across health care settings is a mandate in baccalaureate nursing education.

The Auburn University School of Nursing, with generous support from Auburn University Outreach and space and utilities provided by the City of Auburn, has been in partnership with the Auburn Housing Authority, a low-income public housing provider for almost a decade. Starting with a weekly nursing care clinic staffed by students and faculty, the clinics have expanded to three days a week, rotating to four different sites at the housing authority.

This partnership has resulted in significantly enhanced health care and health promotion education for approximately 1,200 impoverished public housing residents who are predominately minority females. Additionally, it has expanded the understanding of diversity and service learning and the impact of poverty on health for eight classes of nursing students and increased faculty expertise in building community partnerships and developing community-based and service learning curricula.

The community partnership with the housing authority continues to grow. In 2006, the team received a grant from Auburn University Outreach to implement a research project titled “Health and Physical Activity Center for Auburn Housing Authority Residents.” This project is multidisciplinary with Peter Grandjean, associate professor in the Department of Kinesiology in the College of Education, and students from exercise physiology as part of the team. With this project, a fully equipped gym was established and 13 African-American women began participating in a study of the impact of exercise on physiologic measures. The data from the first six months of this study is currently being analyzed and prepared for publication.

In 2008, with another grant from Auburn University Outreach and additional space and utility support by the City of Auburn, this project expanded to include 13 more women and a cardiovascular health teaching component. Psychological and qualitative measures have also been added. This summer, both groups of women participated in a walking project in which they walked at least 50 miles with several of them walking 100 miles.

At the one-year celebration, the women reported that they had lost weight, had better flexibility and endurance, and, in general, felt better. Several reported better control of their diabetic condition and blood pressure. With these results in mind, the ultimate goal is to seek funding for a multidisciplinary general wellness center for the residents of the housing authority and the surrounding area.
restoring a community

The Shiloh Community Restoration Foundation Preserving a Church, a School, a Cemetery

Nestled in the town of Notasulga, three sites exist and form a historical trichotomy to tell a powerful story about the Shiloh community: the Shiloh-Rosenwald School, the Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church, and the Shiloh Cemetery. Each site is filled with its own rich history of time and place. Factor in the Tuskegee Syphilis Study and a very special community bond emerges. The Shiloh Community Restoration Foundation, Inc. has developed a model to highlight, preserve, and pass on that unique community history to future generations. A desire to share the Shiloh Community history led to plans for a restoration project.

The origins of the restoration project can be traced to the commitment and dedication of the SCRF founder and board director, Elizabeth Sims. Since then, a diverse team of volunteers and experts have collaborated on the project. Several Auburn University departments have supported the project including Access and Community Initiatives, the Department of Horticulture, the School of Architecture, and Auburn University Outreach. Other volunteers include staff, faculty, and students from Tuskegee University, alumni of the Shiloh-Rosenwald School, local and state politicians, members of the church congregation, and descendants of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study participants.
In July 2006, the team of volunteers met at the Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church to develop plans for the monumental tasks involved in the restoration project. In September 2006, the Alabama Historical Commission designated each site as an Alabama Historical Site.

Shiloh is one of the oldest Rosenwald communities. The Shiloh Rosenwald School grew out of a partnership between African-American educator Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears and Roebuck. Washington and Rosenwald were concerned about the state of education for blacks in the South. In 1917, Rosenwald established the Julius Rosenwald Foundation for the “well being of mankind.” He donated millions of dollars to public schools, colleges, and universities. Among those colleges was Tuskegee Institute, of which he became a trustee.

Amazingly, 5,300 rural schools and teachers’ homes were cooperatively built with assistance from the local African-American communities. Donations of land and labor by the local community were matched by financial contributions from the foundation. The Shiloh school was one of the first six schools built by the Rosenwald Foundation. In 2002, the Rosenwald schools were put on a list of 11 endangered places by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Today, many of these Rosenwald schools are gone, victims of changing times and communities.

The foundation has been working to restore the Shiloh Rosenwald school building through fundraising and donations. After completion, the building will be used as a community education center; a technology/cultural/study center; a museum to include oral histories of Rosenwald alumni and descendants of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study participants; and as a community center for holding meetings, senior activities, and other community needs.

Currently, applications have been made to have all three sites designated as National Historic Sites. Most recently, Alabama Public Television featured the Shiloh community and the restoration project in a one-hour documentary titled A church, a school, a cemetery. To learn more about the history of the Shiloh community and the work of the Shiloh Community Restoration Foundation, visit their Web site at www.shilohcommfound.com.
Distance Education Task Force Appointed

The Provost’s Office has appointed a university task force to identify and review distance education processes and practices at Auburn University and other institutions.

Dan Bennett, dean of the College of Architecture, Design, and Construction, will chair the task force. Other members include Monica DeTure, Distance Learning and Outreach Technology Office; Randy McDaniel, College of Education; Greg Ruff, Samuel Ginn College of Engineering; Amit Mitra, College of Business; Christa Slaton, College of Liberal Arts; Paul Jungnickel, Harrison School of Pharmacy; Dennis Shannon, College of Agriculture; Linda Glaze, Office of Undergraduate Studies; Drew Clark, Office of Institutional Research and Assessment; Greg McCoy, Student Financial Services; George Flowers, Graduate School; Kathy McClelland, Office of Information Technology; Doyle Bickers, Office of the Registrar; Tracy Donald, Program for Students with Disabilities; Sue Barry, University Senate; and Marcie Smith, Business Office.

The group reviews issues including student enrollment, numbers of students, for-credit classes and non-credit classes, number of degree offerings, fees, instructor compensation, facilities, and administrative location. The task force forwards recommendations to the Provost to enhance Auburn University’s distance education program.

Dean Bennett convened the task force in early May and organized three subcommittees focused on benchmarking distance learning program administration at peer institutions; documenting thoroughly the current practices here at Auburn regarding credit and non-credit distance offerings; and identifying existing internal obstacles and constraints that are faced in the development of distance programming at Auburn. These subcommittees have been working all summer and expect to have reports and recommendations prepared by the end of 2008.

In meeting with the members of the Distance Learning Task Force, Auburn University President Jay Gogue cited the Sloan Consortium report Online Nation: Five Years of Growth in Online Learning (2007) which indicates that approximately 3.5 million students took at least one online course during the fall 2006 term. Gogue pointed out that this number is very close to the 3.6 million students served by all the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges.

In fact, the Sloan Consortium report also states that online enrollments had a 9.7 percent annual growth rate as compared to the overall higher education student population growth rate of 1.5 percent. Also, almost 20 percent of all high school students in the United States took at least one online course in the fall of 2006.

The broad representation from across the university in the task force composition is extremely important to the process, said member Monica DeTure, director of the Office of Distance Learning in University Outreach.

“Everyone on the task force understands the value of this work as we struggle to modify policies so that we balance simplified program/course development and approval with quality control, maintain flexibility for colleges and schools with central support and efficiency, develop new opportunities for truly distant students while also focusing on adding flexible and seamless delivery options for our resident student population.”

ATAC Lean Training helping firm manage growth, meet demands

It has been a challenge growing from 180 employees to some 670 in an 18-month period, but for Sikorsky Aircraft Corp. in Troy, Ala., implementing Lean during this growth surge has helped it to manage the expansion more effectively while significantly shortening the efficiency curve to meet increased customer demands. Facing an increase in both U.S. and international product orders, Sikorsky enlisted Lean implementation assistance from the Auburn Technical Assistance Center in early 2007. That assistance is ongoing, but throughout the past 18-months, Sikorsky has noted significant improvements and cost savings that continue to multiply. For more information on how ATAC can assist you and your organization, please call (334) 844-4659 or (800) 446.0386.
Thomas-Vinson Joins Outreach Information and Program Certification

Joyce Thomas-Vinson joined the staff of Outreach Information and Program Certification as a program administrator focusing on service learning and student engagement. Her appointment began July 1. Thomas-Vinson received a bachelor’s degree in English from the University of Alabama. Prior to this appointment, she was the support services coordinator for Project Uplift, a mentoring program for at-risk youth, housed in the Auburn University Department of Psychology.

Community courses available through the Outreach Program Office

The Outreach Program Office at Auburn University offers a variety of community courses for east Alabama residents. Course areas include languages, arts, music, youth programs, pleasant diversions, special events/current issues, recreational sports, fitness, hobbies/crafts, business/professional development, computers, and preparatory courses.

Classes are taught on Auburn’s campus or in the Auburn-Opelika community by instructors from the university and the community. The program is fortunate that so many talented people want to share their talents and skills. Many ideas for new courses come from the instructors. OPO works with them to turn their ideas for classes into a community course offering.

Auburn University is able to make many of its facilities available to the local community through this program. As just one example, a variety of water aerobics classes are taught in the world-class James Martin Aquatics Center on the main campus through the Community Courses Program. A brochure is published to advertise the 50-60 classes offered each quarter. If you did not receive a brochure, would like additional information about the courses, or to register, visit www.auburn.edu/cconline.

Burdg appointed senior examiner for Alabama Quality Award

Henry Burdg, director of the Auburn Technical Assistance Center at Auburn University, has been appointed senior examiner for the 2008 Alabama Quality Award. Modeled after the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the Alabama Quality Award recognizes and honors organizations whose past or recent innovations in production, service or management have resulted in increased productivity and quality. As senior examiner, Burdg will lead quality teams in the review and site visits of organizations seeking the award. Categories are in the areas of manufacturing, service, small business, education, health care and nonprofit.

Research fellow and outreach associate join Draughon Center

The Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities has announced the addition of two new staff members, Barbara Baker and Maiben Beard.

Baker joined the center as a research fellow and editor for Pebble Hill Books. She received a bachelor’s degree from the University of Pittsburgh and a master’s degree from Auburn University before completing a doctorate in English from Auburn in 1999. She was most recently an associate professor in the Department of English at Tuskegee University. This past January, she organized a symposium sponsored by the center on author Albert Murray. She will also coordinate Life of the Mind, a College of Liberal Arts signature event designed to emphasize the importance of the humanities in the academic career of Auburn students.

Beard, a native of Lafayette, Ala., is the center’s new outreach associate. She received a bachelor’s degree in art history from Emory University and comes to Auburn from her position as manager of The Fire House Gallery, a nonprofit art gallery in Louisville, Ga. She will help
coordinate the center’s outreach programming offerings, including the fourth annual Alabama Book Festival on April 18, 2009, at Old Alabama Town in Montgomery. For more information on the center, call 844-4946 or e-mail cah@auburn.edu.

Bonnie Stauffer retires

Bonnie Bennett Stauffer retired from her position as the Elderhostel coordinator for Auburn University Sept. 1 after more than a decade of service.

Stauffer completed her undergraduate degree at the University of New Mexico, where she was named to the Athletic Hall of Fame for gymnastics. After completing her undergraduate studies, Stauffer earned a doctorate in physical education from Colorado State University.

Stauffer was an instructor and coach at the University of Western Ontario in Canada. While there, she worked with the Canadian Olympic Wrestling Team as a motivational coach. After her experiences in Canada, Stauffer became the first female selected as a full faculty member at the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. She remained at the USMA until her retirement in 1996.

When Stauffer left West Point, she moved to Fairhope, Alabama, where she first became connected with Elderhostel. She hosted several Elderhostel programs that were coordinated by the University of South Alabama. A year later she joined the Outreach Program Office at Auburn University and became the Elderhostel coordinator.

Under Stauffer’s guidance, Elderhostel enjoyed phenomenal growth. She initiated programming at many off-campus sites, including the Space Center in Huntsville, the Shakespeare Festival in Montgomery, the Talladega Motor Speedway, the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, and at Callaway Gardens in Pine Mountain, Georgia.

In what is essentially a hospitality business where many things can potentially irritate clients, a remarkable 99.5 percent of participants in programs coordinated by Stauffer reported being fully satisfied. Those submitting evaluations praised her meticulous planning as the hallmark of her programs, the energy she brought to each one, the concern she showed for each participant, and the sense of fun she evoked.

Bonnie Stauffer is one-of-a-kind person, and she will be sorely missed.

Encyclopedia of Alabama now available

The new online Encyclopedia of Alabama is now available for those who are curious about Alabama. The encyclopedia, which was developed through a partnership of Auburn University and the Alabama Humanities Foundation, provides information about Alabama’s history, culture, and natural environment.

The site, www.EncyclopediaofAlabama.org, is available for free. Currently it has more than 500 articles that are enhanced with photos, links to related information, and in some cases even video. New articles are added each week.

Visit the Encyclopedia of Alabama and read about the Flock family from Fort Payne that helped popularize NASCAR, the Wright Brothers flying school in Montgomery, the coon dog cemetery in Colbert County, the legend of Railroad Bill, games of the Southeastern Indians, the large serpentine sea creature Basilosaurus cetoides, imported fire ants, and more. Whether planning a weekend trip, helping with a homework assignment, or researching a family story, the Encyclopedia of Alabama offers information anyone can use.
Academic Success Action Program
Bridging Gap

The College of Architecture, Design, and Construction’s first Academic Success Action Program, or ASAP, students are pictured with Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for university outreach (right), and Carla Jackson Bell, CADC director of multicultural affairs (center). The ASAP program is designed to bridge the gap between high school and college by providing guidance and mentoring to high school students interested in architecture, design, or construction fields. Beginning in the ninth grade, students spend two weeks each summer on the AU campus taking math, physics, and AutoCAD classes, and participating in an architecture, design, or construction camp.

At the spring meeting of the Women’s Leadership Conference, April 8, 2008, Jackie DiPofi, director of the Small Business Development Center in the College of Business, spoke on the “Nuts and Bolts of Financial Management” to Auburn University students.
IMPACT is a student-operated organization that gives Auburn University students an opportunity to volunteer by acting as a clearinghouse that links Auburn’s students and campus organizations to needs in the community. IMPACT stands for Individuals Moving People and Community Together. The mission of IMPACT is to serve the Auburn community by being a resource for students who wish to volunteer, promoting volunteerism on Auburn’s campus and strengthening ties between the campus and the community.

IMPACT is a noncommittal, community service organization whose main goal is to give those interested an opportunity to volunteer in a variety of different ways in the Auburn community. IMPACT currently serves at 10 project sites in the Auburn-Opelika area that includes elementary schools, retirement homes, the Humane Society, and Storybook Farms. In the last academic year, IMPACT had 3,184 volunteers totaling 6,432 hours of service to the community.

IMPACT is excited about the opportunity to continue their efforts in this upcoming year and having the opportunity to leave their mark on the community. With 31 different volunteer times available during the week, students are given the opportunity to work around their schedules and select a time that is good for them. For more information, please contact the IMPACT office at (334) 844-4275 or go to www.auburn.edu/impact.
Progress. That sums up our summer here in University Outreach, and for Auburn University as an engaged institution.

In May, we held our second Outreach Scholarship Symposium with university faculty participating from every college and school on campus. Our keynote speaker was Art Dunning, the University of Georgia’s dynamic vice president for Public Service and Outreach, and a national authority on engagement in higher education. Dr. Dunning stresses that engagement in community partnerships can inform and enrich faculty research as well as enhance the learning experience for students. But, he notes, you have to develop an institutional strategy to take advantage of the value engagement holds.

Through June, July, and August, University Outreach participated in a number of planning and development efforts designed to create and implement a number of engagement initiatives at Auburn. Teams comprised of faculty, outreach directors, and campus administrators participated in two major national institutes on engagement—the Universities of Minnesota and North Carolina-Chapel Hill’s Community Engaged Scholarship Faculty Development Charrette and Northeastern University’s Summer Institute on Experiential Education. During these programs, the teams produced a number of strategic recommendations for enhancing and expanding Auburn University’s efforts in both faculty engagement and student participation in engaged learning experiences. Many of these recommendations are already being implemented as improvements to our existing faculty development initiatives; other ideas, such as a proposed engaged scholar program, are under active development for implementation in the new fiscal year.

Contacts, resources, and information gathered in the institutes are proving very valuable as we participate in a number of university committees working to implement phases of the Auburn strategic plan, such as its goals for student engagement and service learning. In responding to another key element of the university’s strategic objectives, University Outreach sponsored a campus forum devoted to development of continuing professional education and on-site training, led by nationally-recognized expert on non-credit programming, Ralph Elliott of Clemson University. These efforts allow us to approach our strategic opportunities with best practices and national perspective, plus a lot of hard work among our dedicated outreach staff and faculty colleagues.

Finally, I’m very pleased to recognize Professor Chris Rodger as this year’s recipient of the Auburn University Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach. He is the very model of scholarly engagement. A consummate teacher and researcher recognized both here and abroad for his scholarship in mathematics, Dr. Rodger has put his expertise to work in making a difference in Alabama’s rural school systems through some very innovative and effective outreach. He is a great addition to our growing corps of faculty outreach scholars.

You, too, can engage in Auburn’s outreach movement. I know I can speak for Dr. Rodger when I say join us in making a difference!

War Eagle,

ROYRICKERS COOK
ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT
FOR UNIVERSITY OUTREACH
AUBURN UNIVERSITY
Nurturing Lifelong Learning Organizations: Discover the Possibilities

On July 31 and August 1, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Auburn University, or OLLI at Auburn, hosted the inaugural southeast regional conference for leaders and administrators of institutes for learning in retirement.

OLLI at Auburn, along with co-sponsors OLLI at the University of Alabama and OLLI at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, welcomed almost 100 participants from 11 groups from Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana, to the two-day meeting designed to share best practices, programming ideas, and marketing successes, and to encourage collaboration and cooperation.

David Blazevich, senior program officer of the Osher Foundation, was a featured speaker at the opening session, sharing the stage with Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach at Auburn University. Blazevich commended OLLI at Auburn for the initiative shown in organizing the first regional meeting for Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes in the country and acknowledged “the remarkable commitment of the institute’s volunteers who we are confident will continue to lead the program to ever greater heights.” The Osher Foundation announced that OLLI at Auburn has been awarded the second year of $100,000 funding.

The meeting was held at The Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center, and participants were welcomed to the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art for a lecture by Dennis Harper, curator, on the museum’s collection, and a reception.

OLLI at Auburn Wins ACHE South Award

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Auburn University, or OLLI at Auburn, was recently recognized with the Distinguished Program Award for a Non-Credit Program by the Association for Continuing Higher Education South.

This award is given each year to one outstanding non-credit program and was presented at the association’s annual meeting and conference held in April. OLLI at Auburn was given this honor for its record of excellence for more than 17 years.

“For years we’ve considered this to be one of Auburn’s best community initiatives,” said Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for Auburn University Outreach. “With this recognition, we can say with great pride that OLLI at Auburn is one of the finest such programs in the nation.”

Founded in the spring of 1990 as the Auburn University Academy for Lifelong Learners and administered through the Outreach Program Office, OLLI at Auburn has grown to more than 400 members. As a peer-led member organization, the program offers as many as 35 non-credit classes each quarter and is open to all interested people. Members enjoy a variety of additional benefits on the Auburn University campus including library privileges.

For more information, contact Mary Quinn Burkhart, Outreach Program Office, at 334-844-3102, or visit www.olliauburn.org.