The Auburn Spirit
... of Service

“I believe in the human touch, which cultivates sympathy with my fellow men and mutual helpfulness and brings happiness for all.”

-excerpt from the Auburn Creed by George Petrie
ON THE COVER
Service engagement is close to the heart of the Auburn Spirit and now is a key strategy in the university strategic plan.

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Royrickers Cook, PhD
Assistant Vice President for University Outreach

Publication team:
Janie Echols-Brown, graphic design and publication manager
Ralph S. Foster, Director of Outreach Information
Karen Hunley, writer, editor
Kevin Leden, editor
Joyce Thomas-Vinson, writer, editor
Teresa Whitman-McCall, writer, editor

Contributors and sources:
Becky Barlow, School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences
Leary Bell, University Outreach
James Bradford, College of Sciences and Mathematics
Barry Burkhardt, College of Liberal Arts
Mary Burkhardt, OLLI/OPO
Sam Burney, OPO
Bill Capps, Surplus Property
Jamey Creamer, College of Agriculture
Cheryl Cobb, College of Engineering
Jackie DiPofi, SBDC, College of Business
Mitch Emmons, ATAC, College of Business
Maria Ferrell, CGS
Amanda Gamble, Project Uplift
Teresa Gore, School of Nursing
Melanie Hall, OPO
Troy Johnson, College of Education
Dina Kanellos, College of Business
Leslie Keeler, DLOT
Tim King, IMPACT
Kathy Kyle, School of Pharmacy
Lucy LaMar, Office of Communications and Marketing
Jim Langcuster, ACES
Tara Lanier, College of Veterinary Medicine
Lisa Marshall, Office of Communications and Marketing
Janet McCoy, Extension
Tim Meeks, College of Sciences and Mathematics
Carol Newell, College of Architecture
Mark Smith, School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences
Amelia Stelhouwer, ECDI
Angie Stephens, School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences
Joe Summers, ECDI
Don-Terry Yeat, CGS
Carol Whatley, Extension
Katie Wilder, Office of Communications and Marketing

Additional photography:
AU Photographic Services
Ashley Pastor, College of Liberal Arts

Submit news items and story ideas to Teresa Whitman-McCall, Office of Communications and Marketing, (334) 844-7521, whitml@auburn.edu. For more information regarding outreach, contact Ralph S. Foster, Office of Outreach Information and Program Certification, (334) 844-4730, foster@auburn.edu or visit www.auburn.edu/outreach.

Auburn University
Office of the Vice President for University Outreach
213 Samford Hall
Auburn, Alabama 36849
(334) 844-5700

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Initiatives in Auburn University’s recently completed strategic plan to enhance academic quality and reputation are under way. For this year, Auburn is concentrating on 35 of the 58 tactics in six strategic priority areas, and the first status report to the Board of Trustees in November summarized progress to date. Among the highlights reported:

The writing requirement on ACT/SAT college entrance exams for entering freshmen will be implemented this year, and a writing center will be operational by this fall to help colleges and schools implement new standards for improving the quality of student writing across the curriculum and within their disciplines.

Faculty and academic administrators are developing a new model for the Honors College. A successful Honors College is a critical catalyst to increasing institutional quality and a key draw for top performing students.

Providing students more international education is a challenge Auburn is determined to meet. While the university is expanding programs and incentives to get more students involved in Study Abroad, many students can’t participate due to financial or other reasons. Administrators and faculty are working together to find ways to help these students increase international knowledge that prepares them for a global society.

Each school and college at Auburn now has at least one Study Abroad program, and the number of students in the Auburn Abroad faculty-led and exchange programs increased from 469 two years ago to 565 last year, with an additional 137 students approved to study at international universities for Auburn credit. So, the total number of Auburn Abroad students reached 702 last year. Twenty new Auburn faculty-led programs have been added for 2008-09, bringing the total number of programs to 49, and the goal is to move toward a 20 percent participation rate for all programs abroad.

The university should make rapid progress this year in establishing learning communities where students with similar academic interests are grouped to support their long-term academic development. The Village residential community is being built to facilitate that model, and more opportunities to encourage involvement in service learning, another widely cited element of academic growth, are under way.

The campus community has shown a great deal of initiative in developing and implementing a workable strategic plan, and periodic review and adjustments to meet changing conditions will help ensure continued participation and success.

War Eagle,

Jay Gogue
President
AUBURN UNIVERSITY

JAY GOUGE
PRESIDENT
AUBURN UNIVERSITY
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The implementation of Auburn’s strategic plan is in full swing across campus, and University Outreach is no exception. In response to the strategic plan, we have five major initiatives underway, which include every unit in the division and the engagement of faculty members from every school and college. We are also working with our outreach colleagues at the Auburn Montgomery campus as well.

As outlined in its Priority 3, the strategic plan aims to “expand the impact of the university’s extension and outreach activities, better serving our communities and the state.” This is a charge we take very seriously, not just in planning our responsiveness to the priority, but because of the great opportunities represented here for the university.

A primary goal of the plan calls for strengthening continuing education at Auburn by expanding options for professional conferences, institutes, contract training, and certificate-based programming. Although non-credit continuing professional education has been a mainstay of University Outreach and many of the outreach units in the schools and colleges, we are exploring new opportunities. To that end, we have launched an aggressive campaign of program development, much of which is centered in our Outreach Program Office, but also involving our other units and faculty partners. A major leadership academy is in the planning phase, and executive training agreements are being finalized with several major organizations in the region. Additionally, our Center for Governmental Services will be hosting a Governmental and Best Practices Conference in New Orleans, La., on April 27-28, 2009.

The strategic plan also directs us to expand distance education offerings and online programs. Our office of Distance Learning and Outreach Technology is working to develop new courses and certificate programs for a number of academic departments across the university. A primary goal here is to create new distance-based degrees to make a quality Auburn education even more accessible to students everywhere. The office is also designing innovative non-credit training programs, such as a medical Spanish course for hospitals.

We will increase involvement in community development and K-12 assistance. Working with our colleagues in the College of Education and other academic disciplines, University Outreach is in the process of identifying school districts with limited resources with which to partner. Through these partnerships we will seek to establish comprehensive curriculum enhancement, infrastructure assistance, and leadership development options, addressing the needs of the school as a whole. Our goal is to launch comprehensive service partnerships with at least two schools this year, with others added in the years to come. Auburn already has a great record with K-12 initiatives, such as Team Math, programs of the Truman Pierce Institute and others.

The strategic plan prompts us to expand service to state government. A survey of Alabama’s government establishment to identify needs for new programs and ways to improve existing services is underway. I am very pleased to be working with our colleagues at Auburn Montgomery on this initiative. Katherine Jackson, vice chancellor for University Outreach on the Montgomery campus, and I met last fall and agreed to jointly conduct the survey utilizing the government service staffs on both campuses. The resulting survey will guide both our campuses in helping promote excellence in our state, county, and local government institutions.

Lastly, a very ambitious strategic charge is expanding service learning opportunities for our students to enhance and enrich their collegiate experience. We have embarked on a great collaboration with a number of university and community partners to fulfill this strategic charge as well. More about this initiative is featured in this issue’s cover story. While we have long stressed faculty engagement in the outreach mission of the university, students certainly have a role in our great land-grant tradition of service. Together, we can all make a difference!

War Eagle,

ROYRICKERS COOK
ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT
FOR UNIVERSITY OUTREACH
AUBURN UNIVERSITY
Serving ... Learning ... 
Making a Difference
Auburn’s mission of outreach is founded in the land-grant heritage of the university, but its driving force is service engagement. It’s a value as close to the heart of the institution as is the fabled “Auburn Spirit.” Service to others is so central to the university’s core values that George Petrie included it the Auburn Creed. Today, the entire Auburn family, from faculty, students, and even alumni, is engaged in a wide variety of service activities across the state and spanning the globe.

In 1943, Petrie penned the Auburn Creed, which is considered the first and best expression of the timeless values of the university and the true spirit of the Auburn family. Petrie’s creed emphasized hard work, education, citizenship, and personal responsibility. He also included service, stating, “I believe in the human touch, which cultivates sympathy with my fellow men and mutual helpfulness and brings happiness for all.”

Petrie included “mutual helpfulness” in his statement, which mirrors today’s discussions on engagement in the academy. For the last decade, commissions sponsored by the Kellogg and Carnegie foundations have stressed that simply extending programs and services beyond the campus is not enough. There has to be engagement—a mutual, consensual, and reciprocal interaction between university and community—for outreach to generate its greatest benefit. Petrie’s connection of service to engagement is still relevant today.

“Clearly a spirit of service inspires the engagement process and greatly enhances the outreach that is produced,” said Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach.

Petrie’s creed linking elements of service, engagement and good citizenship also relates to service-learning. The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse states “Service-learning combines service objectives with learning objectives with the intent that the activity changes both the recipient and the provider of the service.”

As an academic strategy, service engagement is promoted by several authorities in the academy, such as the Carnegie Foundation and Campus Compact, among others. A significant body of literature supports student engagement because it encourages students’ commitment to education and promotes socialization and diversity. “Service-learning is an important and useful approach for providing a rigorous and relevant learning experience to prepare students to reach their full potential in our state, nation, and global community,” noted Paulette Dilworth, assistant vice president for Access and Community Initiatives.

The Auburn family endorses service engagement as well. In a 2005 survey of university faculty, 93 percent said they engaged in outreach activities, and 31 percent devoted more than five hours per week to outreach. A recent National Survey of Student Engagement conducted at Auburn revealed 79 percent of students either have or expect to participate in some community service or volunteer activity. In his creed, Petrie proclaimed “And because Auburn men and women believe in these things, I believe in Auburn and love it.” Petrie would have valued the commitment.

Service is often a prominent feature of campus and alumni life. For example, the fall 2008 edition of Auburn Magazine carried a cover story on Millard Fuller. The Auburn alumnus founded Habitat for Humanity International, one of the best known volunteer-based community service organizations in the world. Fuller, who passed away in February 2009, also established the Fuller Center for Housing, which provides support for communities by building and repairing homes for the impoverished.

When Auburn celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2006, service was highlighted in a ceremonial reading of the Auburn Creed. Kendal Smith, an Auburn student majoring in architecture at the time, was selected to read the “human touch” passage because of her personal devotion to service. A special creed Web site listed her many extracurricular activities, which included Smith’s service as a project coordinator and outreach director for the Boykin Center, a community center in the city of Auburn. As a student peer mentor, Kendal encouraged others to volunteer.
Indeed, service engagement is integral to Auburn. The university hosts many outreach programs, curriculum-based service projects, and community initiatives that provide enriching experiences for faculty, students, and citizens alike.

The Rural Studio
—a “shelter for the soul.”

In 1991, Samuel Mockbee left a full-time architectural practice to pursue his commitment to service through a teaching position at Auburn University’s School of Architecture. There, Mockbee teamed with long-time friend and fellow faculty member D. K. Ruth to found the Rural Studio. Students live, learn, and work in rural Hale County, where the studio is located. Participants apply their education to design and build solutions which spring from their involvement in the community. Students gain knowledge and compassion for those socially and economically disadvantaged. Renowned internationally in the media and recognized with frequent honors, the Rural Studio and its students’ greatest accomplishment is that they are making a difference through service.

The impact of IMPACT

IMPACT stands for “Individuals Moving People and Community Together.” The student-operated organization promotes student volunteerism in a variety of ways in the Auburn community. IMPACT currently serves at 10 project sites in the Auburn-Opelika area, that including elementary schools, retirement homes, the humane society, and Storybook Farms. Strengthening the ties between campus and community, IMPACT provides thousands of hours of service to area projects each year.

Uplifting children’s lives
—Project Uplift

One of the longest-standing service projects on campus, Project Uplift is a joint effort of the Auburn Department of Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts and the Lee County Youth Development Center. Major support also comes from the cities of Opelika and Auburn, and the Lee County United Way. Project Uplift’s main goal is to help local at-risk children develop constructive, happy lives so that the delinquency rate in the county will decrease. Research shows that the great majority of children served by the program were saved from entering the juvenile court system while they were involved with Project Uplift. Project Uplift offers volunteer services to Lee County children at no cost to their families. Since beginning in July 1973, more than 5,500 volunteers and children have participated in the program. It now serves about 845 people.

The Shiloh Restoration
—an engaging collaboration

Nestled in nearby Notasulga, the Shiloh community has a powerful story. Several Auburn University units, including Access and Community Initiatives, horticulture, architecture, University Outreach, Tuskegee University, and local citizens, have joined together to tell that story. Shiloh is one of the oldest “Rosenwald” communities, so designated because it was the site of one of several schools established for African-Americans by Tuskegee Institute founder Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears and Roebuck. Listed as an Alabama Historical Site, the school, church and cemetery are also included in the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s list of endangered historic sites. Working through a foundation created to conduct the restoration, the Auburn collaboration is not only preserving the site and its history but creating a resource for the community. After completion, the building will house a community education center, a technology and cultural study center, and a museum.

A global spirit of service
—Auburn University War on Hunger

In 2004, Auburn University was the first academic institution to partner with the United Nations’ World Food Programme in launching an international student-led campaign to fight world hunger. Drawing on its renowned expertise in food and nutrition instruction, research, and outreach, plus a long-standing relationship with the UN, the College of Human Sciences organized the initiative, which Auburn students quickly embraced campus-wide. The initiative expanded to a coalition
of more than 70 universities united in the fight against hunger and malnutrition. Students participate in a variety of academic programs, fundraising, food drives, and other activities designed to raise awareness on hunger.

Broadening the scope of service—Liberal Arts’ Civic Engagement initiative

Last year, the College of Liberal Arts launched an effort to incorporate civic engagement and service-learning experiences throughout its academic programs. Forming a civic engagement committee with representatives from each of the college’s seven academic departments and the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities, the college is expanding its outreach commitment by fostering service experiences for faculty and students. The committee conducted a civic engagement summer academy program, which focused on collaborative teaching, service-learning course development, and building scholarship from outreach efforts. The college also established an Engaged Scholars program, naming five faculty to three-year appointments focused on strengthening student and faculty engagement in the community and beyond. The initiative held its first Civic Engagement Symposium in February, highlighting projects developed by faculty who participated in the summer academy. The symposium also included presentations by community partners and students reflecting on their class service projects.

The way forward…

University Outreach, too, has made student engagement a key priority. “Traditionally, the land-grant mission of outreach has focused primarily on faculty engagement,” said Royrickers Cook. “But we believe Auburn students have a role in the outreach mission, too.” Indeed, the outreach division has long supported student-service initiatives across campus and included service internships in its own programs, such as economic development initiatives in west Alabama. “Outreach is committed to developing innovative programs for students and their faculty mentors to engage together in service activities,” noted Cook.

Two years ago, Cook charged the Office of Outreach Information and Program Certification with seeking ways to expand University Outreach’s student-service initiatives. The office, working with the Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, Undergraduate Studies, Liberal Art’s Civic Engagement Committee, and others, amassed considerable research on the subject. They also conducted site visits to other universities and participated in an elite national institute on service-learning hosted by Northeastern University. To manage the growth in activity, the office established a staff position to coordinate new student engagement initiatives and community partnerships.

When the university’s new strategic plan was adopted last year, service-learning was included as a key element for improving students’ academic success. The objective called for development of comprehensive student engagement across the curriculum and identification of potential service projects off campus and across the state. Last fall, the provost’s office organized a task force to address the strategic goal of expanding student engagement.

The task force has produced an ambitious collaboration between University Outreach and Access and Community Initiatives. Working under the provost’s office and in conjunction the Extension System and other task force partners, the Outreach/Access team is launching a comprehensive effort to advance student engagement at Auburn. “The task force provided a strong foundation of work, and we will draw on the experience of many additional stakeholders in developing this initiative,” noted Ralph Foster, director of Outreach Information and Program Certification. The effort will focus on supporting course and project development and establishing an interactive network of community service options, which will include projects for students organized by county extension offices.

The goal is to help faculty and students meet their service and learning objectives through engagement with the community. “Successful service-learning experiences are more likely to occur when the service is immersed meaningfully in ongoing learning and is a natural dimension of the curriculum that is also submerged in the community,” said Paulette Dilworth, assistant vice president for Access and Community Initiatives in the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs.

“There are lots of service-learning and engagement models out there, but there’s only one Auburn,” said Foster. “We have to seek what works in our context and utilize the wealth of resources and interest that is already here to do great service.” A significant advantage is the Auburn spirit and the value of service reflected in the Auburn creed. Auburn men and women truly do “believe in the human touch.” Indeed, Dr. Petrie would have loved it.
As winners of an international video contest sponsored by the United Nations’ World Food Programme, three Auburn University students traveled to Ethiopia last fall to witness hunger firsthand and film their experiences. While there, Emma Thompson, Meri Kate Purgason, and Collin Butler visited the WFP’s largest food assistance operation currently targeting an estimated 9.6 million hungry people reeling from a lethal combination of drought and high food prices. The trio edged out fierce competition, including a professional filmmaker, to win the first-ever video contest on hunger titled HungerBytes, which attracted more than half a million views from people all over the world.

“We feel deeply moved and honored,” said Purgason of winning the contest. “I believe the war on hunger is one that can be fought and won – and that gives me a lot of hope.”

To the unsettling sound of a sharply ticking clock, Thompson’s, Purgason’s, and Butler’s video, aptly titled “Time is Running Out,” features a sequence of photos of children in groups – some slowly being grayed out of the picture. The underlying message hinges on the reality that a child dies of hunger every six seconds in the world today.

The video can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_fpRmpafwo. YouTube, the leading video-sharing Web site, hosted the competition.

More than 70 video entries streamed in from around the world from both professional and amateur producers for the HungerBytes competition and were judged by a panel of leaders in film, web, and humanitarian aid. The judges narrowed the list down to five finalist videos, which were on view for two months of voting on the YouTube Web site. During this period, the Auburn students’ one-minute video garnered the most votes and was declared the winner.

In 2003, WFP partnered with Auburn to spearhead Universities Fighting World Hunger, a student-driven initiative to raise awareness of the plight of hunger. The coalition, which pairs students’ advocacy efforts with academic activities, has now grown to include more than 70 universities in North America working to eliminate world hunger.
Leah Robinson’s most effective tools in positively influencing the lives of the Auburn Day Care Centers’ preschoolers may be her smile and effusive personality that encourages the children to match her own seemingly inexhaustible energy level.

“I’m a kid myself, so it’s pretty easy to relate to them,” said Robinson, who joined Auburn University’s Department of Kinesiology faculty in 2007.

Robinson’s enthusiasm for fostering healthy lifestyle habits in young children may only be rivaled by the children’s willingness to participate in any activity she leads. When Robinson recently visited the Moton Center to lead its preschoolers in their weekly exercise program, Ethel White, director of the Auburn Day Care Centers, couldn’t help but marvel at the activity stirred up by Robinson’s presence.

“We don’t have any children sitting down,” White said. “We don’t have any children who are unhappy or who are bored.”

Robinson hopes high energy translates into a decrease in the number of unhealthy children. She derives immense satisfaction from seeing a room full of 3- to 5-year-olds in a running, jumping frenzy, because a consistent routine of such activities will shape healthier lifestyles in adulthood. While the Department of Kinesiology’s partnership with the Auburn Day Care Centers positively affects preschoolers at the local level, Robinson’s investigation of physical and motor competence among at-risk children could have statewide and national implications.

The National Association for Kinesiology and Physical Education in Higher Education recently named Robinson as the winner of its 2009 Hally Beth Poindexter Young Scholar Award. She received her award and presented her research on “Perceived Physical Competence and Actual Motor Competence in Children Who Are At-Risk” at the 2009 NAKPEHE Conference held in January. The Hally Beth Poindexter Young Scholar is selected through a blind review by leaders in the association and presented to one higher-education professional in his or her first five years of work at the university level. The award is named after Hally Beth Poindexter, professor emeriti and former chair of the Department of Kinesiology at Rice University, who boasts more than 50 years of professional service.

Robinson said receiving such a prestigious award will inspire her to continue exploring the workings of the human body and seeking answers to some of the health issues plaguing pediatric populations.

“All of my research is dealing with populations who are in need or are at risk,” she said. “I really want to help those who are underserved, who need the work, and the assistance and the support. That’s something that drives me to [work] with the kids at the Moton Center and other day care centers. They [the children] look forward to seeing me, and they’re actually learning from me being there.”

Robinson credits her Auburn colleagues, including Mary Rudisill and Mark Fischman, for providing her with valuable mentorship. Of course, it’s not uncommon for Robinson to inspire more senior faculty members. Rudisill, a Wayne T. Smith distinguished professor and head of Auburn’s Department of Kinesiology, said Robinson’s acclaim as a scholar stems from her blend of energy and authenticity. Rudisill said Robinson is sincere in her desire to improve the lives of Alabama’s children by encouraging them to be more active and educating their parents about risk factors for cardiovascular disease and other serious health issues.

“I think she’s so effective because she’s so genuine,” Rudisill said. “She genuinely cares about the children she’s working with and she really wants to help advance them and help them meet their full potential. What’s really driving Leah is [that] she wants to bring about positive change.”

White has already seen that change taking place in the Auburn Day Care Centers’ classrooms and playgrounds, where Robinson and her colleagues have devoted so much time and energy to strengthening the physical and cognitive skills of local children.

“She has developed a special bond with our teachers and our families,” White said. “She has become an integral part of our program by reaching out to families in times of need and reaching out to children.”
In late 2008, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System updated and fine-tuned a time-honored blueprint to address Alabamians’ critical needs following the recent economic downturn.

Thriving in Challenging Times, a statewide educational effort launched Nov. 6, provides Alabamians with much of the information they need to weather tough economic times.

“Extension is, and always has been, exceptionally well equipped to provide citizens with the practical knowledge and skills they need to cope with their day-to-day challenges during difficult economic times,” says Gaines Smith, director of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

This practical knowledge includes information about shopping on a limited budget, managing and overcoming debt, saving on energy costs, and much more. Extension is also reaching the state’s row-crop and livestock producers, small-scale forestland owners, and other groups. The organization’s hands-on, grassroots approach helps people learn how to apply best practices for their specific operations, which can be the key to saving their livelihoods.

Extension personnel throughout the state are involved in the effort, identifying ways to address specific needs. Extension’s Web site, www.aces.edu, has also added a Thriving in Challenging Times blog to provide frequently updated information dealing with a wide array of issues.

Still, in many ways, the new Thriving in Challenging Times effort is business as usual.

Only three years after Cooperative Extension was formally established, Extension educators rallied to help Americans overcome the many challenges associated with the nation’s involvement in World War I. Extension farm agents helped producers deal with the acute problems associated with farm labor shortages, while home agents encouraged homemakers to “can all you can” and to plant war gardens.

Extension educators worked to provide the same sort of practical knowledge to meet basic needs during other critical periods in American history, such as the Great Depression, World War II, the 1970s recession and energy crises, and the farm crisis of the 1980s.

“Extension is on the job as always,” Smith adds. “The Thriving in Challenging Times effort is Extension doing what we have always done, using research-based knowledge to help people develop practical solutions to meet the challenges in their lives.”
Auburn to Welcome Thousands of High School Students for Summer Experience 2009

Auburn University is busily preparing to host more than 10,000 high school students during the 2009 summer camp season. Camps are a wonderful way for “future Tigers” to experience the Auburn campus environment. Campers live in the dorms, eat in the dining halls, and use Auburn University facilities for academic or athletic training. During camps, participants meet and make friends with other campers from throughout the country, interact with Auburn students, and learn from current Auburn faculty, staff, and coaches.

For those interested in athletic camps, there are a variety of choices, including baseball, basketball, cheerleading, dance, equestrian, football, golf, gymnastics, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, and volleyball. For students seeking academic enrichment, the offerings include architecture, building construction, design, engineering, journalism, Summer YES, world affairs, and yearbook. Band, band-front, musical theatre, and civil air patrol are some of the exciting extracurricular opportunities.

Those looking for an experience to share with a grandchild this summer should consider the Auburn University Intergenerational Elderhostel programs. These are five-night, residential programs at Callaway Gardens, where circus classes taught by members of the Florida State University Flying High Circus are one of the highlights.

Each summer, many youngsters experience campus life through participation in Auburn University Summer Experience. For more information, visit the website or contact the Auburn University Outreach Program Office by email at opo@auburn.edu or by phone at (334) 844-5100. Fees and registration deadlines vary by camp. Information about Auburn summer camps and links to various camp Web sites are available at www.auburn.edu/summercamps.
The third annual Outreach Scholarship Symposium will be held April 22, focusing on faculty engagement and dynamic outreach-project development. Daniel Papp, president of Kennesaw State University, is scheduled to be keynote speaker for the program.

“We’re excited about this year’s program,” said Leary Bell, director of faculty engagement and program development in the office of University Outreach at Auburn. “We’re particularly honored to have an innovative leader of the caliber of Dr. Papp to speak to our faculty.” Papp will speak about the role of civic engagement at the research university.

Papp became the third president of Kennesaw State University on July 1, 2006. Before being named president by the Board of Regents, Papp served as senior vice chancellor for academics and fiscal affairs of the University System of Georgia, beginning in 2000. As senior vice chancellor, Papp was responsible for system-wide academic, faculty, and student issues and concerns; business and financial affairs; academic and business information-technology systems; and strategic planning affecting all of the university system’s 35 institutions.

Before becoming senior vice chancellor, Papp directed educational programs for Yamacraw, Georgia’s initiative to become the global leader in broadband technologies and components. Papp served as interim president of Southern Polytechnic State University from 1997 to 1998 and as executive assistant to the president at Georgia Tech from 1994 to 1997. An international affairs expert, Papp was the founding director of Georgia Tech’s Sam Nunn School of International Affairs from 1990 to 1993 and director of the Georgia Tech School of Social Sciences from 1980 to 1990. He joined Georgia Tech’s faculty in 1973 as an assistant professor of international affairs.

“Dr. Papp’s strategic initiatives focus on advancing technological application,” noted Bell. “His vision is one of using innovation to drive engagement, both at home and on a global level.”

In addition to Papp’s presentation, the symposium will feature workshops on documenting outreach scholarship for tenure and promotion, and development of extramural funding to support sustainable engagement.

Concurrent sessions will highlight progress throughout the last year of projects funded by outreach scholarship grants.

Bell noted that previous symposia have received so much favorable feedback that this year’s program has been expanded from a half day to a full day. “How outreach scholarship can be supported and recognized for tenure and promotion is of great interest for faculty; these expanded sessions will allow participants more opportunities to learn and network with our mentor presenters.”

The program also will feature a special outreach scholar’s lecture by Chris Rodger, the recipient of the 2008 Auburn University Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach. Rodger is Scharnagel Professor of Mathematical Sciences in the College of Sciences and Mathematics. Announcement of this year’s faculty outreach scholarship grants will be made during the symposium luncheon.
The Department of Psychology Provides Extensive Outreach Opportunities

The Department of Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts has an extensive outreach component across three graduate programs and within the undergraduate program.

In the undergraduate program, the department is the administrative unit for Project Uplift which is a volunteer organization where at-risk children are matched with trained volunteers who serve as mentors. Project Uplift is funded by Lee County Youth Development Center, but by being housed in the Psychology Department, it has access to the rich resource of student volunteers. The program is directed by Chris Nunn and has been in place for 35 years. Statistics show that timely interventions by caring volunteers can make a tremendous difference in guiding troubled children toward better choices and better lives. The volunteers themselves also find their involvement to be a rewarding and enriching experience.

The program typically enrolls several hundred children at one time, and currently there are approximately 200 volunteers. More than 500 volunteers are trained per academic year; 98 percent of them are Auburn University students, primarily undergraduates. This enormously successful program brings not only credit to the department and college, but also an enormous social gift to at-risk children.

The Department of Psychology sponsors many undergraduate volunteer and service activities such as rape crisis counselors. These counselors are on call and meet victims at East Alabama Medical Center to provide immediate crisis counseling and also provide follow-up as victims negotiate the forensic context of their victimization. Through the department’s experiential learning course, some students are able to earn course credit. Many students also have the opportunity to work at the telephone crisis center.

Currently, the department has a contract to provide clinical services to the Head Start program. Graduate students perform assessments and develop intervention programs for Head Start children. Many undergraduate students also perform behavioral observations. This rich professional opportunity to work with Head Start children is often valuable in their decisions to continue their careers in a child clinical or educational context.

Undergraduates are also involved in research or clinical work. Several students work with Elizabeth Brestan, associate professor, in her parent/child interaction therapy laboratory. She trains students in coding and observation and to help with other aspects of her research program. Students are placed in other research programs where they are involved in research services. The program at the Mount Meigs Juvenile Detention Center often has at least one or two undergraduates who work in a controlled correctional environment helping Barry Burkhart, professor, and his contract through the Division of Youth Services.

At the graduate level, the department depends on extension and service contracts as a primary training context for students. Through the contract with the Division of Youth Services of the state of Alabama, graduate students provide clinical services, and Burkhart serves as a consultant to develop a long-range plan to provide appropriate services to juvenile sex offenders. In that role, he has been asked to help develop, implement, and manage an innovative, state-of-the-art treatment program that is now serving as a national model.

The Psychological Services Center provides a general purpose psychological clinic for the Auburn and Opelika communities and the surrounding areas. The center provides assessment, treatment, and consultation services using faculty-supervised graduate student clinicians. The clinic has been in place more than a quarter of a century and is now well recognized and regarded in the community as a valuable resource for psychological services. In addition to serving as a general multi-purpose psychological clinic, the Psychological Services Center also provides many innovative services. For example, in the Health Behavioral Assessment Clinic, substance abuse evaluations have been provided to university students and people referred by local courts.

Through the school consultation services, clinical psychology graduate students and faculty talk with local schools about behavioral classroom management practices and the creation of productive learning environments. The Department of Psychology has contracts with Lee County Development Center, the College of Veterinary Medicine at Auburn University,
the School of Pharmacy at Auburn University, the Child Advocacy Center of Lee County, and the Family Medicine Residency Training Program in Montgomery, Ala., to provide clinical services which create clinical training opportunities for graduate students.

The master’s program in Applied Behavior Analysis in Developmental Disabilities involves extensive outreach activities through its practicum component. Graduate students are assigned to human services sites in the area for not less than 20 hours each week (per student) providing behavior analysis services to diverse populations of individuals with developmental disabilities in the context of a formal practicum training curriculum. Finally, the practicum component of the ABA/DD program also involves a number of undergraduate students each term who participate through various courses in training and delivery of services.

Since 1997, students in the James Harrison School of Pharmacy have been reaching out to the community and gaining valuable real-world pharmaceutical experience at the same time. First- through third-year students participate in the Health and Medication Monitoring Services program as part of their curriculum, offering free services to the community.

These services include blood pressure and blood-sugar checks between doctor visits, help with filling pill boxes, assistance in understanding and following medication schedules, and advice about any concerns participants may have about their health condition or medications. Student pharmacists visit participants at least once a month to administer these services, maybe more depending on the person’s need and desire for assistance. All information is strictly confidential, since students conform to HIPAA regulations.

To participate, participants should be at least 18, have a condition that requires at least two medications, and commit to participating for at least one academic year. And, of course, they must be comfortable inviting a student pharmacist in their home and discussing their health condition and medications.

Each student involved in the Health and Medication Monitoring Services program is on a team of up to 17 other students and two to three faculty mentors, at least one of which is a participating clinician. For more information about the Health and Medication Monitoring Services program, contact Kathy Kyle at (334) 844-8345 or kylekat@auburn.edu.
The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Auburn is well into the second year of Osher Foundation funding, and is growing and thriving. Its precursor, the Auburn University Academy of Lifelong Learners, was formed in 1990. While the organization is nearing its 20th anniversary, it remains dynamic.

More than 500 residents enjoy OLLI membership, with new members welcomed each term. OLLI’s non-credit courses and programs continue to expand. Members may chose from Shakespeare, yoga, memoir writing, climate change, art, comparative religion, foreign language, and many others. Members attend social gatherings, at least one per term, and enjoy a variety of other extracurricular activities. OLLI members traveled together to New Orleans in December, and they spent four days visiting museums and historic homes, as well as enjoying the food and music that’s part of the city’s culture. The group also headed to Atlanta to view the Terra Cotta Warrior exhibit at the High Museum of Art and then went to the Civic Center to see “Tutankhamum: The Golden King,” and “The Great Pharaohs.”

OLLI continues to add ways members can be a part of the larger university community. Members have library privileges and the option to audit Auburn University courses. They can serve as subjects in a variety of research projects, from consumer education, virtual reality, and electronic voting to energy conservation and health and fitness.

OLLI at Auburn is committed to spreading the word about the importance—and fun—of lifelong learning. Members often speak to local civic organizations and to Auburn classes about OLLI, older adult learning, and the importance of keeping our brains active.

OLLI is sponsoring a southern regional conference for administrators and members of institutes for learning in retirement in July in partnership with fellow OLLI organizations at the University of Alabama’s main campus and the University of Alabama, Huntsville. Participants from ten states are invited and will learn about marketing, membership development, teaching techniques, the creative use of technology, and best practices in lifelong learning.

OLLI follows the Auburn traditions of education, research, and outreach to traditional and non-traditional audiences.
Forestlands play a key role in the economic stability of many rural economies in Alabama. Much of rural Alabama’s economy is based on production of timber and wood fiber. As markets, forest ownership patterns, and owner objectives change throughout time, landowners dependent upon forest-based income are compelled to seek a broader array of land management strategies to stabilize/increase net revenue streams. Flexibility and diversification must now be considerations in forest-management strategies to maximize or stabilize income by optimizing mixes of traditional and new opportunities. For example, timber production is very compatible with wildlife habitat, although many questions remain regarding how to best optimize timber and wildlife production. Additional revenue options such as pine straw harvests, fee-based hunting and fishing, conservation easements, ecotourism, and the sale of environmental services (e.g. water quality protection and carbon sequestration) are emerging as potential markets. However, specific information on forest- and land-management strategies that optimize mixtures of these traditional and new income options is lacking.

Despite the wealth of forest resources in Alabama, few areas exist where landowners can learn firsthand how to best manage their properties to optimize natural resource-based income through simultaneous integration of multiple revenue-generating practices. In 2008, the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station established the Natural Resources Education Center (formerly the Lower Coastal Plain Substation) in Wilcox County, Ala., to research and demonstrate integrated timber, wildlife, tourism, and other natural resource management options so that revenue may be maximized from a broader array of strategies.

The Natural Resource Education Center will serve as a focal point for Alabama residents to learn about the wonders of nature and how to properly manage and conserve their valuable resources. One of the goals of the NREC will be to research, test, and demonstrate varied approaches to integrated natural resource management, such as the benefits and costs of managing forestland for multiple uses, primarily timber and wildlife production. The NREC will also serve a focal point for outreach and extension programming related to holistic natural resource management, transferring this valuable information to private landowners and natural resource professionals.

Taking a lead role in the development of the forestry and wildlife demonstration areas are Alabama Cooperative Extension specialist Becky Barlow (forestry) and Mark Smith (wildlife) from the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences at Auburn University. They have developed an array of innovative forest and wildlife management practices that will be showcased at the NREC. Some of the demonstration sites will feature biological and economic effects of different thinning regimes on timber volume and wildlife habitat, management of mid-story hardwoods in pine plantations using prescribed fire and herbicide applications, agroforestry, and establishment and management of longleaf pine and native warm-season grasses.

Although only in the early stages of development, the NREC will be a shining example of sound, science-based management and conservation of natural resources for the benefit of all Alabamians.
AU School of Nursing Promotes Health Among Rural Alabama Volunteers

Auburn University’s School of Nursing faculty recently received a grant for a program that gives back to rural east Alabama citizens who volunteer their time and energy to help others. “Making Rural Health Connections: Caring for Alabama’s Volunteer Citizen Servants” addresses the health of these volunteers with the idea that it will create a “ripple effect” that will allow these citizens to continue their good work.

With the help of community service organizations and faith-based organizations, the faculty plans to facilitate these volunteers’ access to the important health and self-care information through bulletin boards providing information using culturally tailored messaging to meet the volunteers’ need for health promotion. The information was selected according to the study Healthy People 2010: Ten Leading Health Indicators. Constance Smith Hendricks, professor in the School of Nursing, led the investigation for the project, along with Libba McMillan, associate professor, and Teresa Gore, assistant clinical professor and doctor of nursing practice student.

Tailored messaging uses a holistic self-care health promotion design to focus the information delivery. A PIECE Model helps ensure that a holistic selection of information will be appropriate for the African American populations in rural east Alabama. The PIECE Model stands for five types of health: physical, intellectual, environmental, cultural, and emotional. Information is delivered by placing health information stations in a community meeting facility, providing volunteers culturally sensitive and relevant, evidence-based health information.

As part of the pilot project, each month features a different topic:

- October: “Love Should Not Hurt: Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence Awareness”
- November: “If You Have a Little Sugar, You May Have Diabetes”
- December: “Got to Hand It To You: Hand-Washing”
- January: “Do You See What I See: Glaucoma Awareness”
- February: “‘Heartly’ a Day Goes By: Heart Health and Hypertension”
- March: “Your Gut Reaction: Colorectal Health”
- April: “Do You Like What You See in the Mirror? Self-Esteem Awareness”

The goal of the project was to recruit 12 agencies to partner in the project. Six of the agencies should be community-based organizations, and six should be faith-based. As of January 2009, 11 agencies have become partners in the program:

**Community service organizations**
- The Modern Free and Accepted Masons of the World-Alabama Council Masons:
  - Gibraltar Lodge #173, Opelika
  - St. John Lodge #584, Montgomery
  - King Hiram Lodge #038, Tuskegee
- Order of the Eastern Stars:
  - Bethannia Chapter #133, Opelika
  - Bright Beginning Chapter #803, Montgomery
  - Sisters of Promise Chapter #442, Tuskegee

**Faith-based organizations**
- Alabama State Missionary Baptist Convention Inc.
  - Greater Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, Tuskegee
  - Greater Saint Mark Missionary Baptist Church, Tuskegee
- Northeast District State Convention
  - Greater Peace Missionary Baptist Church, Opelika
  - White Street Missionary Baptist Church, Auburn
- Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Lafayette

Monthly evaluations have been positive and the project has been shown to be effective. Overall, in the six-month implementation, the project has made a health-promotion connection with 10,000 people living in rural east Alabama. For more information about the program, contact Constance Hendricks at 334-844-6767.
BEST Robotics – Developing the Workforce of the Future

Despite the cold breeze whipping across the Auburn University campus on a Saturday afternoon in December, the atmosphere in Beard Eaves Memorial Coliseum was smoking with the energy of 3,500 middle and high school students participating in the 2008 South’s BEST Robotics Competition.

Boosting Engineering Science and Technology, or BEST, has been described as a basketball game, chess match, and science fair all rolled into one high-energy competition with cheerleaders, pep bands, mascots, and a thousand cheering fans mixed in. At the center of all this activity is an educational program that builds interest in math and science, with the goal of developing the workforce for the future.

In September, teams from 218 middle and high schools from Florida to Massachusetts received their kits of standardized parts and were given the details of this year’s game – Just Plane Crazy – that challenged them to assemble aircraft in a simulated manufacturing plant using Lean Manufacturing and Just-in-Time Inventory strategies.

These teams had six weeks to design and build a robot for head-to-head competition at one of eleven local hubs. A second portion of the competition tested the team’s ability to market their creations using presentations, notebooks, displays, and T-shirt designs. The top six teams from each of these competitions advanced to South’s BEST Robotics Championship.

“This is impressive, very impressive,” said Mark Whitlock, CEO of the Central Education Center in Newnan, Ga. Whitlock, a retired banker, leads a coalition of business and industry leaders, local governments, and schools that is working to ensure that Georgia schools are meeting the needs of today’s students.

“In the future, businesses will have a global customer base, fewer layers of management, and will be more automated,” said Whitlock. “The BEST competition, which mirrors a real-word product launch, gives students a taste of the skills they are going to need to be a success in this new world.”

And while BEST is certainly a lot of fun, the students also seem to know and appreciate that what they are doing matters.

“BEST is more interactive than a classroom and makes science come alive,” said Chris Morgan, a student from Haddam-Killingworth High School in Higganum, Conn.

Fellow team member Tyus Buckley chimed in, “There’s more trial and error here. Not necessarily just right or wrong. Sometimes there is a better right or a not as much wrong. The project gave me a much better understanding of the creative process.”

Reid Harris, a member of the Decatur Austin Robotics Coalition from Decatur, Ala., has been involved in BEST for four years.

“I’d heard BEST was a close to a real-world business experience that I could get while I was still in school … so I joined,” said Harris. “I’m interested in engineering, and while I enjoyed that part of the competition, I’ve also seen how the math, science, English and business I was taking in school all came together when solving a problem. I’ve learned that without teamwork, planning, and time management good ideas don’t become reality.”

According to George Blanks, executive director of BEST Inc., one of the most powerful aspects of BEST is the pairing of teams with mentors who are real-world engineers. “Most students have some idea of what doctors and firemen do. That has not necessarily been the case for engineers. BEST helps bust through the stereotype of the nerdy engineer. Students are often surprised to find
that engineers are fun people who are very creative, love their work, and earn a very good living.”

Teachers like Debi Huffman, an aerospace educator from Fernbank Science Center in Dekalb County, Ga., are the heart of BEST. She has been involved with the program for five years and has taken her team to South’s BEST three of those years.

“A lot of my kids are in advanced placement studies, so they have some pretty hard classes that sometimes aren’t a lot of fun,” said Huffman. “BEST makes learning more exciting because they get to apply what they are learning in the classroom. That feedback is important.”

And if the crowd at the competition was any indication, BEST is also a family affair. Katie Faught has enjoyed watching the students on her son’s Homewood Middle School team work through the design process. “It is amazing to see young minds problem-solving and team-building at this level. It’s like getting the football over the goal line all day long. Plus, the kids get to tear something apart and put it back together without getting in trouble.”

That hands-on experience is what brings students back for more. This was the first year on the Davison High School team for Michigan students Thomas Burger and MacKenzie Clark. But both plan to be back next year for more.

“I’ve been taking engineering classes,” said MacKenzie. “I was able to use everything I’ve learned during this competition … and it was an awesome feeling.”

Burger joined the team to work on the CAD drawings but then moved onto the construction side and had the opportunity to see what the drawings were actually used for. “After that I was moved to the presentation team, where I used everything, and I mean everything, that I used in my speech and English classes. I also got to coach others and realized that I could teach others. I liked it.”

Mary Lou Ewald, BEST co-director, explains that Auburn’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering and College of Sciences and Mathematics recognize the importance of engaging students early on in programs that address critical problem-solving skills to seed our future workforce with scientists and engineers.

“I’ve been involved in K-12 outreach activities for many years. The volunteers that manned this competition this weekend—from industry and education—are here because BEST works.”

The set for this year’s event was designed by students from Auburn’s College of Architecture, Design and Construction. Alabama Boosting Engineering, Science and Technology, or BEST, is co-sponsored by the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering and College of Sciences and Mathematics at Auburn.

**JUST FOR GIRLS**

At a Friday luncheon, sponsored by the Society of Women Engineers, Janne Ackerman, BEST director and director of Airborne Processors with Raytheon, talked to the girls-only packed house about her career and the importance of continuing to take math and science courses throughout high school.

“Whether you know it, you are at a critical point in your education,” said Ackerman. “Even if you don’t think you enjoy science and math, work through it. A little effort now will keep your options for the future wide open.”

Jan Davis, retired NASA astronaut and CEO of Jacobs Engineering, talked about her non-traditional road into the astronaut corps and the importance of listening to your heart.

“There are three things you can do that can help you to be successful. The first is to find your passion and follow it. Don’t put limits on yourself or let others do it for you. What worked for them may not be right for you. Finally, embrace and learn from your mistakes. When down, get up and ask what can I do better next time to meet my goal. It took me a lot of work and three tries to become an astronaut. It was worth every minute of effort,” said Davis.
ECDI Hosts Community Leadership Conference

The Economic and Community Development Institute hosted the Alabama Community Leadership Network Conference last fall with attendance by 150 local leaders from communities throughout Alabama.

The Alabama Community Leadership Network is a group of organizations and individuals committed to building, supporting, and enhancing community leadership programs via education, training, and information sharing. The ACLN seeks to equip local leaders with necessary leadership skills to transform their communities. Arturo S. Menefee, ECDI leadership development specialist, serves as the state coordinator for the ACLN and organized the conference.

U.S. Rep. Artur Davis and Troy University Chancellor Jack Hawkins both served as keynote speakers at the conference. Other speakers included Stephen Black of the University of Alabama Initiative for Ethics and Social Responsibility, Barbara Larson of Leadership Alabama, and James Maloney, Jr. of the National Community Leadership Network.

In his address, Davis said that true community leaders possess the willingness, ability, and enthusiasm to step outside of their comfort zones and make a difference. He told participants that individuals at the grassroots level would take ownership of local issues and assist in the development of their communities. The congressman noted that these individuals would primarily be non-elected officials who believe that their future is more vibrant than their past and present. “These people are the true leaders who are willing to take the time and energy necessary and make the commitment to push their communities forward,” said Davis.

Hawkins also shared several insights about leadership, noting that he agreed with Thomas Jefferson’s identification of integrity as the most cherished quality of a leader. Hawkins emphasized the value of a shared vision and strong understanding of the global economy. “Change is a part of the future. The global economy has injected change into our lives in ways that we have never known,” said Hawkins. “We realize in Alabama that we are a part of a much larger economy than our own. It is vital that we understand the importance of networking with others.”

“Strong communities are full of engaged leaders,” said Dr. Joe A. Sumners, Director of ECDI. “In communities, quantity of leadership is just as important as quality of leadership. In our work throughout the Alabama, ECDI has found that engaging more citizens in leadership truly does build better communities.”

Conference participants received a copy of ECDI’s new community leadership development curriculum, Engaged Leaders: Better Communities. The training manual and accompanying CD were compiled by Menefee and are available through ECDI.

According to Menefee, “leadership development is a small investment in local leaders that can make all the difference in the success of a community.” He also stressed the ACLN’s value to Alabama, noting, “I am thankful for the wonderful members of the ACLN, and ECDI is proud to provide leadership to this network.”

More information about the Alabama Community Leadership Network and other leadership events and opportunities is available through ECDI’s Web site at www.auburn.edu/ecdi.
Sumners Selected for Leadership Positions

Joe A. Sumners, director of the Economic and Community Development Institute, continues to provide strong leadership to state and regional community and economic development organizations. Sumners was recently elected president of the Alabama Communities of Excellence Board of Directors, chair-elect of the Southern Rural Development Center Technical and Operational Advisory Committee, and community development representative to the Southern Region Program Leadership Committee for the Cooperative Extension System.

Alabama Communities of Excellence is a coalition of partners from state agencies, universities, and private sector corporations working together to provide Alabama communities with the development programs and tools needed to ensure their long-term success. Sumners is currently serving his second-consecutive term as ACE president and chairman of the Board of Directors. He was instrumental in the founding of ACE and has been a board member since the program’s inception in 2003.

The Southern Rural Development Center is one of four regional centers coordinating rural development research and extension education programs cooperatively with land-grant institutions regionally and nationally. SRDC, which serves 13 states, seeks to strengthen the capacity of the region’s 29 land-grant institutions to address critical contemporary development issues impacting the well-being of people and communities in the rural South. The SRDC Technical and Operational Advisory Committee advises the center’s staff in the development of priority goals and strategies. Sumners will serve as chair-elect until November 2009, when he will begin his three-year term as chairman.

The Southern Region Program Leadership Committee works toward multi-state solutions to the South’s emerging issues and needs. Sumners’ term as community development representative extends through 2011.

Sumners also serves as a technical advisor to Ala. Gov. Bob Riley’s Black Belt Action Commission and Alabama Rural Action Commission. He is a member of “Rural Alabama’s Committee of 100,” an advisory council to The Center for Rural Alabama. He also serves as executive director of the I-85 Corridor Alliance.

ECDI Publication Helps Alabama Communities Meet Economic Challenges

As the national economy plunges deeper into recession, many of Alabama’s local community and economic developers are being asked to do more with less money. The Economic and Community Development Institute has developed a new publication and online toolkits to help its stakeholders meet this challenge.

The Alabama Economic Development Resource Directory profiles over 600 resources that contribute to the state’s community and economic development. According to Joe A. Sumners, director of ECDI, “The purpose of this publication is to identify these entities and describe their unique roles in supporting Alabama’s state, local, and regional economies. This comprehensive guide can be used to locate anyone and everyone associated with economic development in Alabama.”

Amelia Hall Stehouwer, ECDI research and communications specialist, directed this project. “Alabama is blessed with a team of dedicated professionals who have committed themselves and their organizations to make the state a better place to live and work. Each entity included in this directory is part of this process,” said Stehouwer. “Faced with dwindling tax revenues, state and local leaders must partner with citizens and other jurisdictions to leverage limited resources. We hope this directory serves as a catalyst for increased collaboration and partnership.”

The interactive Alabama Economic Development Resource Directory is available on the ECDI Web site at http://www.auburn.edu/ecdi. The directory is regularly updated to better reflect Alabama’s dynamic economic development community and environment. Hard copies of the directory are also available through ECDI. For more information, call 334-844-4704.
focus on job training

Companies Using TWI to Capitalize on the Benefits of Lean

Sustaining a continuous improvement initiative is arguably the most difficult undertaking in a Lean Enterprise. By resurrecting a training method developed to sustain the United States’ industrial might during World War II, Auburn Technical Assistance Center (ATAC) is showing companies that going back to the basics is exactly the catalyst needed to maintain continuous improvement and maximize their investment in Lean.

Training Within Industry (TWI) is a three-component program that is the ideal process for training people within an industry who are responsible for training others in job skills, monitoring and effectively managing continuous improvement initiatives, and doing so with consistent and proven results. **Job Instruction Training (JI)** trains supervisors how to instruct employees so they can quickly remember to do a job correctly, safely, and conscientiously. **Job Methods Training (JM)** trains supervisors how to improve job methods in order to produce greater quantities of quality products in less time by making the best use of the manpower, machines, and the materials available to them. **Job Relations Training (JR)** trains supervisors how to lead people so that problems are prevented and gives them an analytical method to effectively resolve problems that do arise.

“TWI is an American-developed process that was extremely effective in keeping the United States’ industrial base strong and productive during World War II,” says ATAC’s Hank Czarnecki. “But with the U.S. emerging as a victor in both combat and industrial power, interest in TWI as a component in maintaining America’s industrial superiority soon faded. Post-war Japan quickly seized the potential of TWI and used it to launch and sustain its post World War II industrial prosperity. TWI essentially is the foundation of what we know today as Lean.”

Czarnecki, along with ATAC Instructors David Hicks and Dave Devore currently are the only TWI certified instructors affiliated with the Alabama Technology Network. They are working with a number of companies who are former and current Lean clients to transfer TWI into those firms’ continuous improvement system.

One of those companies is American Technologies Inc. (AmTech) in Alexander City, Ala.

“We looked at TWI right after ATAC began telling us about it in late 2007,” said AmTech Lean Facilitator Cohen Vickers. “We became particularly interested in the Job Instruction and Job Relations components. Once we tried it, we quickly saw how TWI can help us in not only conducting our training more quickly and efficiently, but we also saw how it tremendously boosts quality, aids in standardizing our manufacturing process and the transfer of job skills knowledge, as well as increase employee morale.”

AmTech since has conducted a string of TWI sessions on different production areas involving every employee in a supervisory or leadership position as well as a number of newly hired employees.

“AmTech manufactures wiring harnesses for products ranging from busses, to medical devices and equipment, to aerospace,” said AmTech President Roger Hendrick. “We are considered to be a small company, but we have hundreds of job tasks that people have to be trained to do. Probably our top problem has been how do we train new people faster and better? TWI has proven to be the best format we have ever tried for this function.

“TWI methods have enabled us to train job skills that used to take multiple days to convey into single-day increments,” Hendrick adds. “And because employees are learning through a standard and more thorough process, they are contributing faster and learning new jobs is less stressful. That feeling of contributing coupled with a less stressful learning environment has reduced turnover and improved employee morale.”

TWI teaches supervisors how to break down jobs into key steps, describe those steps concisely and consistently, and to develop the ability to continuously analyze those tasks for improvement. Supervisors are taught how to effectively instruct those tasks using both verbal and demonstration instruction methods and describing not only how to do the task, but also, the key reasons for and the critical importance of each step.

“TWI incorporates quality into the training and job conducting process,” said AmTech Quality Manager Wayne Kolmetz. “There sometimes has been friction between the Production and Quality groups in companies. TWI defines the process; shows what
happens if the key steps are not followed correctly; and gives individual ownership. That old friction between areas is eliminated and different departments begin truly functioning as a team. Our challenge has always been to get information to our employees in a format that is easy to understand. TWI is more clear and easier to follow than any training method we have previously used.”

Moreover, TWI teaches employees in leadership roles how to more effectively maintain good relationships among employees by providing constructive feedback, giving credit where credit is due, informing employees in advance about pending changes that will affect their jobs, and in essence, foster a work environment conducive to success.

TWI is not as widely remembered in the Southeast, but nationally, manufacturers are finding that basic methodologies that worked so well more than 60 years ago are providing companies already immersed in the implementation of Lean and continuous improvement with a proven way to promote, create and sustain standardized work; define and develop consistent work procedures; and to do so through a system based on identifying and accurately reproducing the key steps in a job process to foster: rapid training; consistent results; immediate efficiency in job performance; improved employee morale; increased productivity; and reduced waste and rework.

**TWI - The Missing Link to Kaizen (Continuous Improvement)**

TWI formed the fundamental tenants of kaizen – the Japanese term used to describe a continuous improvement initiative in a Lean implementation. Yet when firms try to apply Lean concepts without first mastering the original TWI skills, they find that something is missing. That “something” is the most fundamental precept of the kaizen process – empowering workers to apply the tools of Lean to improve their jobs consistently and continuously in a positive work environment.

**Who Needs TWI Training?**

TWI consists of three standardized programs covering essential skills needed by all supervisors and team leaders, regardless of their industry. TWI is an essential component in the preparatory and performance building training for any employee who has the responsibility for:

- Teaching another person a job or method
- Improving a job or method
- Dealing with other employees
Sometime between elementary school and college, statistics reinforce the reality that female students lose interest in science and mathematics due to lack of confidence in the subject material and peer group support (Hilton and Lee, 1988). During the 2004-2005 academic year, an examination of bachelor’s degrees awarded at four public Alabama universities revealed that only 19 percent of graduates in the fields of physical sciences and mathematics were women.

Auburn University College of Sciences and Mathematics student Sallie Martin wants to do something about that.

“Both of my parents are scientists so I grew up thinking science was cool. That kind of exposure gave me the upper hand when I came to Auburn,” the Texas native said. “I’d love to provide that enthusiasm for a young girl who might not have had that growing up.”

Martin, a senior majoring in zoology with a minor in entomology, is a walking testament to the success of COSAM outreach programs. Martin decided to come to Auburn and study sciences and mathematics after attending a summer Youth Experiences in Science camp following her eighth-grade year.

YES camps, sponsored by COSAM, are offered throughout the year as either one-, three- or five-day camps for elementary and junior high students. While Martin enjoys mentoring all age groups of girls, she is particularly drawn to the middle-school sector.

“I like middle school because they haven’t lost that innocence of learning, but they’re independent enough to grasp the bigger concepts,” Martin says. “In looking back, I don’t remember a particular name or face as to someone who inspired me, but I remember always thinking science is cool. If I can do that for one person, that’s what I’d like to do.”

Martin, who is a student worker in the COSAM Outreach Department, is also involved in the Association for Women and Science. Founded in 2005, the Auburn chapter of AWIS is the first and only chapter in Alabama (see sidebar).

Martin’s vision for the outreach of science and mathematics to young women is multi-directional—either from the top-down or the bottom-up.

“You can either create programs (like AWIS) to get university students involved now to show these young ladies a female counselor or professor, and build enthusiasm that way. Or you can inspire these young ladies to build up that enthusiasm so that when they enter college, they are anxious to mentor young women and encourage them in science and mathematics,” Martin said as a suggestion to reverse declining statistics of female participation in science and mathematics in Alabama and beyond.

“These programs work,” Martin says. “I’m the poster child for that.”

Across Alabama

COSAM Camp Supports Girls’ Interest in Math and Science

Sometime between elementary school and college, statistics reinforce the reality that female students lose interest in science and mathematics due to lack of confidence in the subject material and peer group support (Hilton and Lee, 1988). During the 2004-2005 academic year, an examination of bachelor’s degrees awarded at four public Alabama universities revealed that only 19 percent of graduates in the fields of physical sciences and mathematics were women.

Auburn University College of Sciences and Mathematics student Sallie Martin wants to do something about that.

“Both of my parents are scientists so I grew up thinking science was cool. That kind of exposure gave me the upper hand when I came to Auburn,” the Texas native said. “I’d love to provide that enthusiasm for a young girl who might not have had that growing up.”

Martin, a senior majoring in zoology with a minor in entomology, is a walking testament to the success of COSAM outreach programs. Martin decided to come to Auburn and study sciences and mathematics after attending a summer Youth Experiences in Science camp following her eighth-grade year.

YES camps, sponsored by COSAM, are offered throughout the year as either one-, three- or five-day camps for elementary and junior high students. While Martin enjoys mentoring all age groups of girls, she is particularly drawn to the middle-school sector.

“I like middle school because they haven’t lost that innocence of learning, but they’re independent enough to grasp the bigger concepts,” Martin says. “In looking back, I don’t remember a particular name or face as to someone who inspired me, but I remember always thinking science is cool. If I can do that for one person, that’s what I’d like to do.”

Martin, who is a student worker in the COSAM Outreach Department, is also involved in the Association for Women and Science. Founded in 2005, the Auburn chapter of AWIS is the first and only chapter in Alabama (see sidebar).

Martin’s vision for the outreach of science and mathematics to young women is multi-directional—either from the top-down or the bottom-up.

“You can either create programs (like AWIS) to get university students involved now to show these young ladies a female counselor or professor, and build enthusiasm that way. Or you can inspire these young ladies to build up that enthusiasm so that when they enter college, they are anxious to mentor young women and encourage them in science and mathematics,” Martin said as a suggestion to reverse declining statistics of female participation in science and mathematics in Alabama and beyond.

“These programs work,” Martin says. “I’m the poster child for that.”

In November 2005, a group of female students in the Auburn University College of Science and Mathematics formed the group Association for Women in Science (AWIS) to support equal opportunities for and equal participation of women in scientific fields. Along with sponsoring a middle-school science outreach program called Leading Auburn in Developing Interest in Experimental Science, AWIS participates in the National Eating Disorders Week by sponsoring a speaker and collecting “skinny jeans” to promote healthy body image.

COSAM graduate student Erin Edmondson (biomedical science, ’08) is a founding member of the organization and was named Outstanding Organization Member 2007-2008.

“I started off wanting to just do something on the side, but ended up as the service director,” Edmondson said, adding she served in that position during her undergraduate time at Auburn. The Kansas native believes the most important aspect of the group is to provide female faces to young children to increase the number of women in science.

AWIS includes some 100 COSAM women that hold after-school programs for middle- and high-school girls in Auburn City Schools with the number of participants ranging anywhere from 10 to 50. One of the more popular experiments includes making ice cream with rock salt, but Edmondson said the all-time favorite is Anne Gordon, assistant professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, and her liquid nitrogen show. The chemistry and biochemistry professor, who is the faculty adviser of AWIS, demonstrates the physical properties of such things as ice cream and water when exposed to liquid nitrogen.

“We tell the kids that liquid nitrogen was used in old-timey movies to provide a smoke effect. That’s why in the old movies you always see the smoke in waves because someone is standing off-camera blowing it in,” Edmondson said. “The kids go crazy.”

Edmondson works in the COSAM Outreach Department while continuing her involvement with the organization she helped found. “The best part about AWIS is that it’s run by college women who are committed to showing young female students that it can be cool to like science. AWIS exists because we want to see these girls follow their dreams.”
Jason Johnson, DVM, DACT, is a resident in food-animal theriogenology (reproduction) in Auburn University’s College of Veterinary Medicine. He received his bachelor’s degree in 2003 and worked in a private practice in Tennessee before returning to Auburn to pursue a master’s in 2006.

In December, Johnson, along with veterinary student Jill Westerholm, a member of the class of 2010, traveled to a remote area of Kenya to assist with herd-animal health. This was not his first outreach trip. With the help of veterinary mission programs, such as Christian Veterinary Fellowship, he has traveled to Honduras and Venezuela, taking students on each trip.

“One of the most common threads that unites the poor in developing countries is their utter dependence on livestock,” said Johnson. “All the students come back changed and with a global perspective.”

In Kenya, Johnson partnered with indigenous veterinarians to help make protein sources healthier by providing vaccinations and dewormings, and providing education in the areas of herd health and animal husbandry.

The Maasai in Kenya are semi-nomadic people and are strongly patriarchal in nature. Their lifestyle centers on the cattle, sheep, and goats, which constitute their primary source of food and wealth. Many Maasai believe “all cows are gifts from God, and all cows are theirs,” said Johnson.

Villages are enclosed in a circular fence made of thorned shrubs and trees. At night, cows, goats, and other livestock are kept safe in an enclosure in the center.

Because of Johnson’s credentials as a veterinarian, he helped gain access to the Maasai for the physicians who travel with him. “The Maasai
deliberately stated, ‘You medical doctors can’t look at our wives, our people, unless you address the needs of our livestock.’ It’s their identity – the most important thing in their culture,” Johnson added.

While there, Johnson hired five Kenyan veterinarians to help his team for a week. Funding and supplies for mission trips come from gifts made by churches, family members, friends, team members, and veterinary drug companies. Veterinarians and veterinary students incur their own expenses, and a trip such as the one to Africa can cost approximately $3,000 to $4,000.

Johnson sees the benefit in international outreach, and it is the long-term goal of expanding such outreach that drives him. His work helps to increase the survivability of protein sources globally, empower indigenous peoples with knowledge, and reduce the spread of animal diseases.

Veterinary students have the opportunity to see foreign animal diseases firsthand on these trips. “They get to witness these diseases in a real-life setting, something that most students only come across in lectures or textbooks in their academic career,” Dr. Johnson said.

With public awareness of foreign animal and zoonotic diseases (those affecting both humans and animals) increasing and the ever-looming danger of bioterrorism, food-animal veterinarians carry even more responsibility to be the first responders for potential recognition of disease. A veterinarian with this real-world type of practical exposure will have more experience in identifying a foreign animal disease to halt the spread of the disease in our food system.

While in Africa, Johnson met with members of the faculty of veterinary medicine at the University of Nairobi. Since its inception, the department has produced more than 1,700 veterinarians. Now, with contacts and inroads in place, Johnson plans to return to Africa this spring or summer with some of these students, and he hopes to create more partnerships with students at the University of Nairobi and others.

“It is my hope that these partnerships benefit all parties involved by identifying and meeting needs in the community served, providing cross-cultural awareness for American and African students, exchanging educational information, and developing global perspectives for everyone,” Johnson said.

He also plans to take a veterinary student group to Peru and employ this model to supply outreach and education to poor communities with sheep and alpacas.

Bio-Truck Takes Cross-Country Tour to Promote Alternative Fuels

On Sept. 29, 2008, a bright-green 1991 Dodge Dakota V8, headed out from Charleston, S.C., its Auburn University car flags flapping in the wind. Behind the wheel was truck owner Wayne Keith from just north of Birmingham. Carla Shoemaker, an Auburn agronomy and soils research associate, was riding shotgun. A long, long journey lay ahead.

In an all-out, nationwide effort to promote bioenergy and sustainable alternatives to petroleum, they were traveling to California and back in a pickup they had dubbed the “Bio-Truck.” Why the name? Because the Dakota was running on a gas produced by feeding wood, crop residue, broiler litter, and other materials into a gasifier Keith had designed, built, and mounted behind the cab.

For the entire tour—officially the Auburn Coast-to-Coast Renewable Energy Tour—a vehicle carrying a five-person support crew and pulling a supply-laden trailer followed in the Bio-Truck’s wake. Among the vehicle’s passengers was Auburn energy crops and bioenergy Professor David Bransby, nationally recognized for his bioenergy research that spans three decades. A strong, long-time advocate of sustainable alternative energy, he wouldn’t have missed this trip for the world.

Along the tour’s cross-country-and-back route—a route that included an 800-mile road race from Berkeley, Calif., to Las Vegas for vehicles powered by non-petroleum means—the truck was an attention-grabber. Seventeen local television news crews covered and aired segments about the Bio-Truck and its “green team.” Bio-Truck stories ran in newspapers from Charleston to San Francisco, including two in The New York Times. And furthermore, Bransby said, the tour generated so much interest that media inquiries and articles about the Bio-Truck’s expedition and, more important, about bioenergy, continue still.


Funding from Auburn and a dozen corporate and other sponsors made the tour possible.
We recognize them, study them, and long to visit them—iconic structures such as the Great Pyramids, Notre Dame, and the Colosseum. They remain modern-day marvels even though many were built during centuries or millenniums past. And while much is known about the structures themselves, what exactly do we know about who built them and how they were constructed?

These were the questions that Linda Ruth’s Deconstructing Construction class sought to answer. Made up of 17 senior-level undergraduate building science students and one graduate student, the class centered around a whirlwind study-abroad trip this summer to western Europe and Egypt to visit 17 construction marvels. But Ruth’s students weren’t just casual observers. Their mission was to study each structure in depth and collectively produce a textbook about the history of construction.

The project emerged when Ruth, an associate professor in the College of Architecture, Design and Construction’s McWhorter School of Building Science, was searching for a textbook to use in her History and Introduction to Construction class. “I realized that there was no textbook that focused on how architecturally significant buildings were constructed. Everything was about the architectural history of it; why it looked the way it did, what the architects were trying to express through the design,” Ruth said. “It really frustrated me.”

As an architect, Ruth said she appreciated studying architectural history and learning about famous architects like Frank Lloyd Wright and Antonio Gaudi. But she realized that because of a lack of information and resources available, building science students could not study construction history in the same way. “I’d ask my construction students who the famous builders were, and we didn’t know. We didn’t know who built those gothic cathedrals or who the people were that built the great pyramids,” she said. “It seemed sad to me that my students didn’t have those heroes to look back on.”

Their mission was to study each structure in depth and collectively produce a textbook about the history of construction.

From this problem, the idea for the textbook was born. Ruth will use the book to teach incoming freshman building science students about the history of construction as well as architectural history through the framework of construction.
To take the book from idea to reality, Ruth recruited Ross Heck, professor of graphic design with the college’s Department of Industrial Design, to collaborate and lead the book’s design efforts. She also engaged two of her fellow building science professors in the project. Professor Michael Hein and Associate Professor Paul Holley provided assistance to the students throughout the project in regard to the analysis of the buildings’ structures and project management, respectively.

Ruth then chose the students who participated in the study abroad opportunity through a rigorous selection process. Each student had to interview and display excellent writing and research skills in addition to meeting other criteria before being admitted to the Deconstructing Construction class. Once chosen, the group had a weeklong “Structures Boot Camp” before departing for nearly two months to Europe.

Each student was assigned a different structure and, subsequently, a book chapter. The students were responsible for researching their individual structures and becoming experts on how each was built. Ruth’s students also had to understand and explain the design and construction of their respective structures using modern technology and formats. As the class arrived at a particular structure, the student in charge would tell his or her classmates about the construction marvel and its significance in construction history.

The 17 structures chosen for the textbook are representative of different types of architecture or periods in time. For example, the Parthenon represents Greek architecture, and the Eiffel Tower is from the Industrial Revolution. Other structures were chosen because of what they represent for builders; the Tower of Pisa, for example, represents an instance when bad things happen to good builders.

**Auburn CADC Named Partner School for Prominent Design Journal**

A prominent design journal has recognized the Auburn University College of Architecture, Design and Construction, naming the college as one of its partner schools. Places: Forum of Design for the Public Realm recently expanded its group of six partner schools to 10, adding Auburn University to its highly prestigious group, which includes the University of California in Berkeley, MIT, and the Georgia Institute of Technology.

The 10 partner schools each provide a representative to serve on the editorial advisory board for the journal, which features writings from fields in design, the arts, and social sciences. “We are honored to have been asked to join the group of 10 nationally prominent partner universities who provide guidance and support to Places,” said CADC Dean Dan Bennett. “This journal is the premier forum for ‘Design for the Public Realm’ through discussions of multiple voices from a variety of design disciplines. This recognition is further evidence of the expanding reputation of our college and its influence upon design and construction education at a national level.”

Karen Rogers, associate dean for external affairs in the college, will represent Auburn on the board, which is responsible for developing content and overseeing the quality of the journal. The board meets several times a year to plan, review, and update editorial calendars, and to guide the editorial and peer-review processes, working closely with the Board of Directors of the Design History Foundation in long-range and strategic planning for the journal.

“To be asked to serve as one of the partner schools is a great honor for Auburn University,” Rogers said. “It is also an important recognition of the strength of the CADC and its programs.”
The students agreed that the once-in-a-lifetime trip was a transformative experience. “This project has changed me as a builder because I’ve learned that anything is possible. When you think there isn’t the technology available or you think it can’t be done, look at the structures we studied and think [the builders] accomplished these things hundreds of years ago and [the structures] still stand today,” said student Jeff Jantz.

Student Corey Lemming said the experience changed his outlook as a future builder. “For more than 4,500 years builders have been doing the impossible. Builders are the ultimate problem solvers, even if it takes 200 years to build something.” Lemming said. “I think [the experience] has made me a more patient builder. Next time I run into a problem on a construction site I will remember the buildings I visited this summer. The builders did not give up on something just because it seemed impossible; each one of these buildings broke important barriers in the evolution of construction practices.”

Ruth said she hopes her students will continue to draw on their experiences as they become builders themselves. “It was really important for me to show them that the issues that they are going to deal with are the same issues that builders 4,000 years ago were dealing with: how to deal with labor force, how to get materials to the site, how to deal with soil conditions, how to build a good foundation so that those buildings are still standing after 4,000 years,” she said. “The solutions to the problems are different, but the problems are still the same.

Ruth has plans to continue to expand the book. She has three students who will be traveling to England this fall to research and report on Stonehenge, the Millennium Dome, and 30 St. Mary Axe. “I hope what all the students take with them is an appreciation for the heritage of the construction industry,” she said.
AU Outreach News

Auburn Technical Assistance Center employees win Lean Certification honors

Three staff members of the Auburn Technical Assistance Center in the College of Business have achieved the prestigious Lean Bronze Certification for manufacturing expertise from the Society of Manufacturing Engineers. Lean Specialist Dave Devore attained Bronze Certified Lean Manufacturing status and Lean Specialist Rick Battye and Senior Outreach Associate Mitch Emmons each attained Bronze Knowledge Certification. Devore also is a certified Training Within Industry instructor and has experience in law enforcement and the military. Battye has more than 15 years of national and international experience in manufacturing with a background in the automotive and power industries. Emmons is a project administrator and manages ATAC’s regional marketing and sales, promotion, publicity, and communications efforts. He previously directed communications activities for Auburn University’s Research Division.

TEAM-Math Welcomes Six Educators into Teacher Leader Academy

Six east Alabama teachers will have the opportunity to improve mathematics education at their schools after being accepted in January to the TEAM-Math (Transforming East Alabama Mathematics) Teacher Leader Academy. Established through a $600,000 National Science Foundation grant, the academy is designed to give teachers the tools to continually advance their math instruction and allows them to pass on these tools to other teachers.

The new east Alabama fellows are Catherine Culleton of Southside Middle School, Debra Davis-Harris of Millbrook Junior High School, Nanee Garcia of Auburn High School, Lisa Lishak of Loachapoka High School, Christie Nestor of Lafayette High School, and Denise Peppers of Sanford Middle School. In conjunction with attending a two-week summer institute and one-week follow-up summer institute, the teachers will receive an annual stipend of $10,000 for three years as well as tuition reimbursement to help them complete advanced degrees in math education.

Keeler Joins Distance Learning and Outreach Technology Staff

Leslie Keeler was hired as an instructional designer in the Distance Learning and Outreach Technology Office in July 2008. Keeler brings more than 15 years of professional experience in the areas of distance education, online teaching, technical writing, instructional design, and program development. She holds a bachelor of science in nursing from the University of Wisconsin, a master of business administration from the University of Texas at Austin, and doctor of philosophy in education from Colorado State University.

Amy Smith Recipient of Catherine Payne Award

Amy Smith of the Outreach Program Office was awarded the 2008 Catherine Payne Award. This award, established in memory of long-time OPO staff member Catherine Payne, is presented to a staff member who exemplifies outstanding customer service.

Smith earned a bachelor of arts degree in history from Auburn University in 2005. After graduating, she began working at Auburn and has been in the Outreach Program Office since spring 2007. Smith serves as the registrar for all OPO programs.
AT&T Foundation gift to support Truman Pierce Institute Program

The Truman Pierce Institute, part of the Auburn University College of Education, will use a $400,000 gift from the AT&T Foundation for an initiative to help reduce the dropout rate in Alabama high schools and, ultimately, help boost the state’s economy. The institute will introduce the initiative, “Building Individual Capacity for Success,” at Opelika High School, Dadeville High School, Bullock County High School, Loachapoka High School, and a Hale County high school. Through the program, 50 at-risk students from these schools will receive services such as mentoring, leadership training, and service learning throughout their high school career. The initiative is in response to a study by the Southern Educational Foundation, which found that Alabama's high school dropout rate increased to 39 percent in 2006-07. According to the SEF, this statistic contributes to the state ranking 42nd in the nation in per capita income.

Butler Named Senior Fellow by Auburn University Center for Governmental Services

The Center for Governmental Services, a unit within University Outreach, has named John Sibley Butler as its 2008-09 senior fellow. The CGS Fellows program recognizes experienced practitioners, academicians, and researchers for their significant contributions to excellence in government.

Requirements for senior fellow status include extensive experience, prominence, and recognized contributions in public affairs. Butler is a professor and administrator at the University of Texas at Austin. He holds The Gale Chair in Entrepreneurship and Small Business in the Graduate School of Business and the Herb Kelleher Chair in Entrepreneurship. He is the director of the Herb Kelleher Center for Entrepreneurship and the director of the Institute for Innovation and Creativity.

“Center for Governmental Services senior fellows utilize their expertise to engage in research while increasing funding opportunities that will improve the quality of public policy for the state of Alabama,” said CGS Director Don-Terry Veal. “As a primary component of the senior fellow recognition, Butler will assist with and provide guidance to CGS within the areas of public-private partnerships; alliances between universities, governments and the private sector; and issues of providing ‘added value’ in working with and within the public sector.”

Butler received his undergraduate education from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge and his PhD from Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. His research is in the areas of organizational behavior and entrepreneurship/new ventures/immigrant and minority entrepreneurship. For the last seven summers, Butler has occupied the distinguished visiting professor position at Aoyama Gakuin University in Tokyo, Japan, where he lectures on new venture start-ups and general entrepreneurship.

As senior fellow, Butler will also support the efforts of the 2009 Governmental Excellence and Best Practices Conference on Governmental Transparency being provided by CGS. The conference will be held in New Orleans, La., in spring 2009. Additionally, Butler will contribute to the organization and development of the Global Transparency Alliance on Governments.

Auburn’s Center for Governmental Services Hosts Conference

The Center for Governmental Services at Auburn University, in partnership with The IC² Institute at the University of Texas at Austin, and The Public Manager, is proud to host the 2009 Governmental Excellence and Best Practices conference. The conference will address issues associated with governmental transparency and increasing public trust in governments. The 2009 conference will be held April 27-28, 2009, in the Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans, La. The Governmental Excellence and Best Practices conference was first held in Montgomery, Ala., in May 2003, and serves as the prototype for this year’s national conference. The most recently held conference, Advancing Excellence and Public Trust in Government was held in Washington D.C., at the National Press Club, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Public Trust and The Washington Center.

These conferences successfully bring together professionals from all levels of government, academics, and professionals representing the private sector to discuss and collaborate on best governmental practices. Individuals have the opportunity to discuss and work together on practical issues facing governmental entities, as well as issues confronting organizations engaged in business with governments.

Previous conferences have successfully addressed targeted issues and provided a springboard for the growth and development of agencies, cities, counties, and other governmental entities represented.

This year’s conference will bring together state, municipal, and county officials; fiscal and economic officers; academics; private sector administrators;
and other experts to discuss and collaborate on the best governmental practices. Discussions will center on the development of criteria designed to evaluate governmental transparency in municipal, county, and state levels in the areas of finance, human resources, strategic planning, and technology.

The Public Manager is a quarterly journal published by The Bureaucrat Inc., a not-for-profit organization chartered and devoted to furthering knowledge and best practice at all levels of government.

Outreach Program Office Expands Staff

John Freeze was named the associate director of the Outreach Program Office in September 2008. Prior to this appointment, he worked as a software trainer at Texas A&M University and as the program manager for the Center for Cybercrime Investigation Training at the University of Tennessee. Freeze holds a bachelor’s degree from Sam Houston State University and a master’s degree from Texas A&M University.

Gina Murray joined the Outreach Program Office in fall 2008 as a program developer. Murray earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology and a master’s in studio art. Before coming to Auburn, she worked in similar positions at private and public universities in Washington State. Murray is a strong advocate for lifelong learning and enjoys working with students.

Mark Wall was named the summer camp coordinator in the Outreach Program Office. His focus is client camps and other professional development programs. Wall received a bachelor of arts in psychology from Auburn University in 2007.

Dipofi Completes Training Program

Jackie DiPofi, PhD, Director of the Small Business Development Center in the College of Business, has satisfactorily completed the Foreclosure Basics program offered by the NeighborWorks Center for Homeownership Education and Counseling. “Due to the current state of the economy and because the home is often used as collateral for a small business loan,” said DiPofi, “I felt it important to participate in this program to understand what SBDC clients may be facing. The class emphasized that loss mitigation, instead of foreclosure, may be an option.”

John Heilman Retires

John G. Heilman, Auburn University’s provost and vice president for academic affairs, retired in December 2008 after a 35-year career at the university.

Heilman holds a bachelor’s degree in English and French from Lafayette College, and master’s and PhD degrees in political science. He joined Auburn in 1973 and served 19 years as a full-time faculty member in political science and public policy, nine years as associate dean and dean of the College of Liberal Arts, four years as senior presidential assistant and adviser, and three years as provost. His scholarly interests include policy and program evaluation and public-private partnerships.

Heilman’s leadership of the University Outreach Strategic Planning Committee in 1995 to 1996 set the stage for the development of a recognized definition of outreach in the faculty handbook and guidelines for recognition of engaged scholarship in tenure and promotion considerations.

Heilman chaired more than 23 meetings of faculty and outreach administrators. These meetings produced recommendations for distance education, organization of outreach, rewards and assessment, relationships with Auburn Montgomery, and administrative structure.

“Our goal is to support excellence in outreach,” said Heilman. He saw outreach as “a thriving partnership between faculty, staff, and students…and the people and communities of Alabama and beyond.” Indeed, this vision of outreach as a process of civic engagement anticipated much of the national discussion on outreach scholarship in the academy today.

The report’s recommendation of a new definition for outreach and suggested guidelines for recognizing it in scholarship became the subject of a second committee on outreach assessment, chaired by Wayne Flynt, and an ad hoc University Senate committee, which prepared the definition of “outreach” for the faculty handbook.

Heilman continued to be a thoughtful and supportive agent for outreach throughout his appointments in the “Outreach …is at the heart of Auburn’s land-grant tradition,” he wrote. “It is a distinguishing, and perhaps the distinctive, mission of Auburn University.”

Madsen Reaches Out to Community Colleges through Distance Learning

With more than nine teaching awards and multiple Academy Awards, Nels Madsen, associate dean for assessment and special projects in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, is an inspirational faculty leader at Auburn University.
His latest teaching project involves Wallace Community College in Dothan, Ala. The Department of Distance Learning and Outreach Technology, along with Madsen and his colleague Daniel Marghitu, a professor in mechanical engineering, are providing an online, undergraduate statics course. Based on this partnership, DLOT is planning to extend undergraduate engineering courses to other community colleges across the state and perhaps broaden the availability of courses in other disciplines from Auburn University.

Madsen considers distant learning courses offered at community colleges an opportunity for potential students to determine if they have the skills, abilities, and attitudes to succeed in engineering before taking classes at Auburn.

Madsen is using a variety of technologies to conduct the class. However, Madsen said, “the challenge is to make sure the students’ main focus is the course content, not the technologies.”

Madsen has been pleased with the partnership between Auburn engineering and University Outreach. “I would highly recommend other Auburn faculty consider working with Auburn’s DLOT on similar projects,” he said.

To learn more about distance learning programs, visit www.auburn.edu/outreach/dl/.

Leary Bell Named Director of Faculty Engagement and Program Development

The Office of the Vice President for University Outreach at Auburn University announced the appointment of C. Leary Bell, PhD, as director of faculty engagement and program development. Bell will be responsible for promoting faculty engagement in scholarly outreach activities and development of university-wide outreach programs and partnerships.

Bell earned his master’s and doctorate degrees in mathematics at Auburn before joining the faculty of Columbus State University. While at CSU, Bell earned tenure and rose to the rank of professor, eventually chairing the departments of mathematics and computer science. His interests in scholarly engagement led to his involvement in various university outreach projects, and his appointment as executive director of CSU’s regional educational services and continuing education programs. During these appointments, Bell oversaw the development of several new degree programs, professional institutes, and corporate partnerships. Bell later served as vice president of external affairs at Armstrong Atlantic State University in the University of Georgia System, and he served as associate chancellor of community outreach at the University of South Carolina at Beaufort.

“As Auburn implements its new strategic objectives for outreach in faculty engagement and continuing education, Leary Bell’s extensive experience in academically based program development and community engagement will be a great asset,” said Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach. “We’re pleased Dr. Bell has joined the University Outreach team.”

As director of faculty engagement and program development, Bell will work with department heads, faculty, and institute and center directors in the development and delivery of new programs for external audiences. He will oversee the competitive Outreach Scholarship Grants Program, the annual Outreach Scholarship Symposium, and other initiatives promoting faculty engagement and outreach. He will also coordinate University Outreach’s K-12 initiatives.

Semester-Long Series to Feature Life and Works of Darwin

Auburn University hosted a series of special events this semester in connection with the 200th birthday of Charles Darwin and the 150th anniversary of his publication, The Origin of Species by Natural Selection.

The series is co-sponsored by the College of Sciences and Mathematics, the College of Liberal Arts, and the outreach committee of the Department of Biological Sciences.

“The goal was to present Darwin’s ideas in an accurate and non-proselytizing way,” said Jim Bradley, Auburn’s W. Kelly Mosley Professor of Science and Humanities.

In January, Natalie Angier, best-selling author and Pulitzer Prize winning science columnist for the New York Times, gave a lecture on “Science Fun for Everyone,” as part of the Littleton-Franklin Lecture Series. Throughout spring semester, a number of lectures were presented by Auburn University professors from a biological, historical, and psychological point of view. The Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities also presented an interdisciplinary panel on evolution.

For more information and a full schedule of Auburn’s Darwin Celebration go to http://www.auburn.edu/outreach/news/charles_darwin_commemorative_celebration0809.pdf.
Graduate ATC Program Helps Everyone from Tailbacks to Tuba Players

For students in the College of Education’s graduate Athletic Training Program, Saturdays in the fall begin over breakfast with intensive discussions of dislocated knees and broken bones. The certified athletic trainers participating in the two-year, research-based programs bring the X-rays and MRI results they’ve accumulated while working the sidelines the night before at local high school football games. Bob McAlindon and Win Lyle, physicians at East Alabama Orthopedic and Sports Medicine, bring questions and advice for the students to digest over breakfast.

The session, known as the “Bumps and Bruises” clinic, provides something far more nourishing than biscuits and bagels.

“Going out for your first time to be a head athletic trainer can be a little overwhelming,” said JoEllen Sefton, ATC program director and an assistant professor in the Department of Kinesiology. “But going out with this type of support behind you, if you have an administrative problem or if you have an injury that you don’t understand, there’s always somebody to ask.”

The year-old Athletic Training Program, which is on track to meet accreditation standards, offers a mix of learning from research and clinical settings. Graduate students attend classes and work on projects in an effort to earn a master’s degree in exercise science with an athletic training specialization, but much of their learning takes place on the sidelines of football stadiums or inside gymnasiums. The Kenny Howard Athletic Training Fellowship Program, a nonprofit venture of Auburn University, East Alabama Medical Center, and RehabWorks, enables the students to apply their skills in service of local high school students. Students in the program, named after Kenny Howard, former Auburn head athletic trainer, provide on-site care for high school athletes at Reeltown, Beauregard, Beulah, Notasulga, Loachapoka, Dadeville, Russell County, and Booker T. Washington in Tuskegee. On a given Friday night, they will mend the injuries of everyone from tailbacks to tuba players.

“They’re professionals,” said Chad Abrams, program director of sports outreach at RehabWorks and clinical coordinator for the Kenny Howard Fellowship. “They’ve done everything that is required of them to hold athletic training certification. The beauty of what we do is we provide them with two years of on-the-job experience that they’re not going to get anywhere else. They are, in a sense, totally responsible for the sports medicine program at the area high school we place them in. They’re there for the whole school and community. If we have a band member with a dislocated kneecap, we don’t mind helping out there.”

The varied experiences benefit the students who, in addition to taping up the ankles and treating the concussions of teenage athletes, also provide care at university intramural sports events and clinical assessments at the Department of Kinesiology’s TigerFit program. Sefton said that between answering parents’ questions and treating athletes and cheerleaders alike, the graduate students have contact with 8,000-10,000 people per year.

“Typically, their research ideas come from what they see in the field,” Sefton said. Meanwhile, local athletes are well served by the students’ professional care on and off the field.

For more information on the graduate Athletic Training Program or the Kenny Howard Athletic Training Fellowship Program, log on to education.auburn.edu/kine or khowardfellow.org.
Auburn Surplus Program Helps Alabama Schools, Agencies

When a new building was completed at Meek High School in Winston County, Ala., little money was left for furniture, technology, or equipment needed for the teachers and students. State budget allocations were stretched as far as possible, and it seemed there was no answer. One trip to Auburn, however, changed everything.

Every year, Meek High and hundreds of other public schools and state agencies benefit from Auburn’s surplus property program which donates material no longer in use by the university’s academic units. From a plan developed by University Outreach, the College of Education, and the Surplus Property office, the Board of Trustees approved the program in 2001 to transfer surplus property to public institutions at no cost. The surplus items become available as they are replaced due to regular maintenance cycles or as a result of technological upgrades. Since 2001, Auburn has distributed thousands of still useful items to its public partners across the state.

Meek’s principal Danny Stallings says that Auburn’s generosity changed the look and function of his school’s classrooms. “I don’t know what we would have done if the program wasn’t in place,” says Stallings. “The school’s state-supported ACCESS lab is equipped with matching computer desks, and a junior high lab is being equipped with Auburn’s help.” In addition to furniture, classrooms have received projectors and computers. The school even acquired a piano for special events and a public address system for graduation.

John Prophitt, technology coordinator for Tallapoosa County Schools, came to pick up some computers but left with servers, hard drives, and monitors as well. By receiving servers from the program, the school was able to qualify for a $50,000 technology grant – a real gain for Tallapoosa students. Beyond the school’s acquisitions, Auburn technological donations brought aid to Hurricane Katrina victims seeking refuge in the county. “We worked with the local Red Cross to establish a center out on the old Hwy 280 for Katrina victims,” said Prophitt, who helped setup the relief station and after the crisis, retained the equipment for the high school computer lab.

Crisis assistance is a special feature of Auburn’s surplus program. Surplus Property manager Bill Capps routinely sends notices to each of the Alabama Board of Education’s eight districts on a rotating basis as equipment becomes available. However, Capps regularly monitors the news and his network of contacts in the educational community for word of emergencies, making personal phone calls to schools and public entities in distress because of an unexpected crisis, such as fire, storms and flooding.

Schools are not the only beneficiaries from the Auburn surplus program. Chaplin Stephen Smith of Staton Correctional Facility in Elmore, Ala., uses the service. “The equipment picked up from surplus helps us because we don’t get a lot of donations for the prison,” said Smith. In the last eight years, Smith has made several acquisitions for his residential program that focuses on educating and preparing inmates for re-entry to society.

Michael Baker and John Prophitt of the Tallapoosa County Schools examine hard drives from a server at Auburn’s Surplus Property office.