Auburn saw several changes in March in cabinet-level and athletic positions, including the departure of the university’s head coaches for the men’s and women’s basketball programs.

David Housel announced March 16 that he will step down as director of intercollegiate athletics next January, and interim President Ed Richardson March 17 named Debbie Shaw as interim vice president for Alumni Affairs.

Shaw, an AU staff member and administrator since 1983, replaces Betty DeMent, who had worked in Alumni Affairs since 1990 and had been a vice president since 1995. “Auburn is grateful to Mrs. DeMent for her service to the alumni,” Richardson said.

Shaw, who holds a doctorate in education from AU, will serve as interim vice president during the search for someone to fill the position permanently.

“I look forward to working with the Alumni Board in the search for a new vice president for Alumni Affairs,” Richardson said. “I am optimistic that we will be able to identify a strong candidate who will work for the betterment of both Auburn University and its dedicated alumni.

Housel, who joined the Athletic Department in 1970 and has been athletics director since 1994, announced plans to retire in early 2006. After stepping down from the senior administrative post, he will spend a year assisting the department’s and the university’s fund-raising efforts.

Richardson named Hal Baird athletic assistant to the president. In his new role, Baird will oversee day-to-day operations of the Athletic Department. He handled similar responsibilities as senior associate athletic director, a position he has held since November 2000.

“I am pleased that David’s service to the university as athletic director and his unquestioned dedication to Auburn will continue to benefit the university for the remainder of this year,” the AU president said. “His selflessness and loyalty are clearly reflected in his four decades of service to Auburn. I am positive that David will be of great assistance during our fund-raising campaign and know that he will serve well in that capacity until his retirement.”

A 1969 graduate of Auburn and 1968-69 Auburn Plainsman editor, Housel spent one year as news editor of the now-defunct Huntsville News and returned to Auburn as a member of the Athletic Department Ticket Office staff in 1970. Except for a few years as a journalism instructor, Housel has spent most of his career with the Athletic Department. He was promoted from sports information director to athletic director in 1994.

In another Athletic Department change, Richardson announced on March 18 that Cliff Ellis had been relieved of his duties as men’s head basketball coach. Ellis was 186-125 in 10 years at Auburn, and was 73-87 in SEC games. Richardson said he appreciated Ellis’ contributions to the men’s basketball program but had concluded that the program needed a change in direction. On April 8, Richardson named Jeff Lebo AU’s new head coach for men’s basketball. Lebo, who spent the last two seasons as the head coach at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, becomes the 19th coach in Auburn basketball history.

On March 25, Joe Ciampi, the winningest coach in Auburn basketball history, announced his retirement after 25 years at the helm of the women’s program. In his 25 seasons with Auburn, Ciampi amassed a record of 568-203.
Message from the President

Dear Auburn Friends and Supporters,

Headlines, stories and editorials about Auburn University in recent months have led some to “logically” assume negative outcomes in terms of alumni giving, overall donations and student recruitment. I even found myself wondering at one point whether the subsequent prophecies of gloom and doom might prove true. Happily, since becoming interim president at Auburn January 20, I have discovered quite the opposite.

There is no question that Auburn’s image took a beating in the one-two punch of an untimely football coach search followed by the unexpected imposition of a one-year probation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Yet somehow, our publics have allowed “logic” in its most positive, intelligent form to prevail. Based on current numbers, our constituents continue to believe that Auburn has what logically matters most: quality instruction, strong academic reputation, and excellent outreach and research, none of which have been called into question throughout recent events. In my view, these mission critical areas are stronger than ever.

Key current indicators attest that my confidence and optimism is shared by alumni, current and prospective students and faculty. Consider:

Well-qualified students are rushing to beat the early deadline for admission for fall semester 2004. In fact, our enrollment applications are up by nearly 1,000 over this same time last year. Moreover, the quality of those students is increasing, as evidenced in higher test scores on the ACT and SAT, continuing an upward trend of several years. This increase seems to show that parents and students in Alabama and across the nation know that probation has nothing to do with Auburn’s academic standing, and that they are optimistic of its resolution, as am I.

In spite of those who have publicly stated (apparently without checking the facts) that Auburn’s fundraising efforts have been hurt, contributions have actually increased. Not only are fiscal year 2003-04 donations in both alumni giving and overall endowment up, but calendar year contributions through December 2003 are also up 34 percent. More remarkably, there is a $3 million increase in giving during the first quarter of 2004—representing the period from October 2003 to January 2004 when controversy surrounding Auburn was at its peak.

While tough times are expected ahead, Auburn has not only retained faculty, but also invested in its faculty, with salary increases over the past few years given in an effort to bring salaries closer to regional averages, and to attract and retain outstanding faculty. Despite reports to the contrary, faculty numbers have steadily (if conservatively due to budget constraints) increased for the past decade. Faculty are not only staying here, they are continuing to teach and do research that benefits the citizens of this state.

As a career educator, these facts confirm my belief that our publics truly do understand what’s really important in higher education.

It is our obligation to affirm the publics’ faith in us, and one way Auburn is doing so is with a new Presidential Scholarship program that represents a $2 million investment in 400 Alabama students by 2007. This represents a substantial commitment by the Auburn Board of Trustees. The program will bestow 100 scholarships valued at $5,000 each, with 100 more added each year for three more years. Included among the recipients are students from all 19 state-identified Academic Priority Schools for 2003. This should serve to stimulate both hope and higher student achievement in our public schools. All levels of K-12, post-secondary and higher education must work together for the best interests of Alabama.

While much remains to be done, I am optimistic about the increases in our key barometers of institutional prosperity—recruitment of top students, overall giving and faculty retention. The upswing in all three areas confirms what I have long suspected: where there is smoke, there is not always fire, but sometimes merely an obscured view. As the smoke brought on by assumptions and distractions clears, we see that the preeminent academic institution in our state—ranked in the top 50 of public universities in the nation for more than a decade stands undaunted in its commitment to educate our state’s best and brightest.

Sincerely,

Ed Richardson
Auburn University is one of only three institutions sharing in an unprecedented $12 million grant from the Vodafone-US Foundation as part of an effort to advance education in wireless engineering technology. In recognition of its quality programs in wireless engineering, AU’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering has received $3 million of the foundation’s first multi-million dollar competitive grant program.

The grant for scholarships, fellowships and facilities is intended to enhance the pool of highly qualified students in AU’s internationally acclaimed wireless engineering program.

The other universities selected by the foundation were the University of California at Berkeley and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

“The competition for this award was very tough,” says AU engineering Dean Larry Benefield. “It included 14 of the nation’s top 25 engineering schools. To be one of the three programs selected is testament to the strength of our wireless efforts.”

The foundation’s program, which funds the Auburn scholarships over a five-year period, provides tuition and full support for undergraduate scholarships and graduate fellowships in wireless engineering.

“It is a unique scholarship program that we’ve developed,” says June Sugiyama, Vodafone-US Foundation director. “It not only helps students and universities but it also represents an important opportunity for us to enhance the advancement of wireless technology.”

The grant also supports curriculum and research development in wireless engineering and provides for a pool of funds for interscholastic seminars, webcasts and symposiums.

After an extensive study of the top U.S. engineering schools, the foundation’s selection of universities was based on:

- Strong degree programs in wireless engineering;
- Outstanding facilities;
- Ability to develop advanced wireless engineering labs;
- Motivation to collaborate with other participating universities;
- Ability to leverage foundation’s program with additional funds.

The college began enrolling students in the wireless program in fall 2002 as Auburn University became first in the nation to offer a bachelor’s degree in wireless engineering.

For more information go to http://www.ocm.auburn.edu/news_releases/vodafone.html

### School of Architecture Ranks No. 1 in South

DesignIntelligence has ranked Auburn University’s School of Architecture as the No. 1 school in the southern region for preparing its graduates for the professional field.

In addition, the school was ranked No. 10 in value nationally. The Interior Architecture program was ranked ninth nationally, up from a ranking of 13th last year.

It was the fifth annual ranking of U.S. architecture and design schools by DesignIntelligence.

AU’s School of Architecture was rated ahead of such regional schools as North Carolina State University, the University of Tennessee, Virginia Tech, Georgia Tech, Tulane and the University of Florida.

“The significance of these rankings is that they are determined by responses from a large number of professional practices from around the country,” said Bruce Lindsey, head of the School of Architecture.

“Responses to the question, ‘Which NAAB accredited programs in the last five years produced graduates most prepared for professional practice?’ show the significant impact our alumni are making in professional practice.”

For its survey, DesignIntelligence sent questionnaires to 1,108 architectural firms in July and August 2003.

According to DesignIntelligence, “the surveys were targeted to those individuals in each firm that have direct experience with the hiring and performance of graduates.”

Rankings were based on perceptions of which graduates were best prepared for real-world practice.

DesignIntelligence is the Design Futures Council’s monthly report and the repository of articles, original research, and industry news. The annual rankings are compiled in conjunction with Counsel House Research.
Princeton Review Ranks AU Among 77 Best Values

Auburn University is ranked among the nation’s 77 “best value” undergraduate colleges and universities, according to the new publication America’s Best Value Colleges.

The publication by The Princeton Review, a New York-based education services company, chose Auburn as one of 77 schools it recommends to parents and students.

The book is a guide to colleges with outstanding academics, low-to-moderate tuition and fees and generous financial aid. It includes public and private colleges and universities in 35 states and the District of Columbia.

Auburn was also deemed “one of the best” universities in the Southeast.

“Our choice of the 77 colleges is based on data concerning academics, college costs and financial aid,” the publication said. “The data includes both statistics we collect from college administrators and the opinions-collected through our student survey of more than 100,000 current college students at the best colleges in America.

“We take all this data and stir it up in an algorithm based on the idea that bang for your buck means excellent academics, great financial aid and low tuition. It means value. The 77 Best Value Colleges had the best scores according to that algorithm.”

The Princeton Review selected the schools based on its analysis of data the company obtained from administrators at more than 500 colleges and surveys of students attending them.

“We identified over 30 factors by which we rated the colleges in three categories: academics, tuition and tuition GPA; the sticker price minus average amount students receive in gift aid scholarships and grants,” said Robert Franek, assistant vice president-admission services for The Princeton Review. “The 77 schools we chose for this book may not be the least costly colleges in America, but they are all great education deals. We highly recommend them to students and parents seeking the best academic bang for their buck.”

The top 10 “Best Value” institutions were the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Amherst College, City University of New York’s Brooklyn College, Rice University, Bates College, Grinnell College, Southwestern University, University of Texas at Austin, Lake Forest College and Claremont McKenna College.

The Princeton Review is known for its test preparation courses, admission and education services and books. It has conducted the survey since 1992, when it first published its annual Best Colleges.

AU Marching Band Takes First Place

The Auburn University Marching Band has been named the 2004 winner of the Sudler Inter-collegiate Marching Band Trophy, the nation’s highest and most coveted award for college and university marching bands.

The award was announced Dec. 18 at the Mid-West International Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago. It will be presented Sept. 25, 2004, at halftime of the Auburn-Citadel football game and in conjunction with the 2004 Auburn Alumni Band Reunion.

Officers of the John Philip Sousa Foundation will be in Auburn to make the presentation.

The Sudler Trophy is the only national collegiate award given by The Sousa Foundation to a university band that has a proven record of “excellence” for its marching band program.

The purpose of the Sudler Trophy “is to identify and recognize collegiate marching bands of particular excellence that have made outstanding contributions to the American way of life.”

Administered by the John Philip Sousa Foundation, the Sudler Trophy is “awarded annually to a college or university marching band which has demonstrated the highest of musical standards and innovative marching routines and ideas, and which has made important contributions to the advancement of the performance standards of college marching bands over a number of years.” The award is considered to be the “Heisman Trophy” for marching bands.

Two AU Students Named to All-USA Academic Team

Two Auburn University students have been named honorable mention on USA Today’s All-USA College Academic Team. Joshua Clanton, a senior from Alexander City, and Leslie McCall, a senior from Birmingham, were selected to the prestigious team from 600 nominees nationwide. Clanton is majoring in electrical engineering, while McCall is enrolled as a physics major and in the pre-medical certificate curriculum. To read more about their accomplishments, click to www.ocm.auburn.edu/news_releases/usatoday.html
Auburn University interim President Ed Richardson has announced a new Freshman Presidential Scholarship program—one of the largest award programs in AU history—exclusively for deserving Alabama students.

Ultimately, $2 million will be awarded to 400 students in the four-year program, beginning with 100 students in the 2004-2005 academic year.

Richardson made the announcement Feb. 17 at Wetumpka High School, one of the Alabama State Department of Education’s 19 academic priority schools—all of which can benefit from the program.

Interim State Superintendent of Education Joe Morton was also in attendance.

Each year, the program will provide 100 students $5,000 per year for up to four years. Students from the 19 academic priority schools (as identified for 2002-03) will receive 30 of the awards each year, with the remainder awarded to students from Auburn’s top Alabama feeder schools.

“The competition for the best prepared Alabama students is increasing, and with national college tuition rising, Auburn is committed to easing their investment in education,” said Richardson. “By the time this program is four years old, it will represent a $2 million investment in our most deserving young men and women, and a solid investment in the future of our state.”

Wes Williams, AU’s vice president for Student Affairs, added, “Auburn is committed to attracting the best students from Alabama and solidifying its position as Alabama’s school of choice. This scholarship program is just the next step in that direction.”

All students who attend the designated high schools and who meet the minimum criteria for the scholarships will be considered. Once at Auburn, recipients will be required to maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average to remain eligible.

“We expect this to evolve into a very competitive program,” said John Fletcher, AU’s assistant vice president for enrollment management. “In the review process, we will not only be looking at academics and entrance exam scores, but also at what co-curricular experience students have participated in, from leadership to community service to work experience.”

For more details about the Freshman Presidential Scholarship Program and a list of schools, go to www.auburn.edu/scholarships/presidential/.

Kent Smith Named New AU Dean of Students

Kent J. Smith Jr. has been named dean of students at Auburn University following a national search, says Wes Williams, AU associate provost and vice president for student affairs.

Smith comes to AU from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, where he was director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

He previously held administrative and faculty positions at Colorado State University, Cleveland State University and Southern University.

“I know Dr. Smith is going to be a great leader, mentor and advocate for our students and provide guidance and direction for a broad range of student development-oriented departments,” said Williams.

Smith will oversee Greek life, the Foy Student Union, judicial affairs, the University Program Council, International Student life, Eagle Eye, WEGL, student organizations and student development programs.

Smith said his impressions of Auburn are very positive.

“I’ve been on a lot of campuses and have heard of the ‘Auburn Spirit,’ but to see it first hand is wonderful,” he said. “The Auburn Spirit is real, and it is amazing.”

To read more go to www.ocm.auburn.edu/news_releases/smith.html.

Online Auburn Commons Updates To Begin in May

AU alumni and friends can now get monthly updates of news on the Plains. Beginning in May, Auburn Commons will come to readers electronically eight months a year. This will be in addition to the printed issues mailed in January, April, July and October. To ensure you receive Auburn Commons, all readers are urged to submit any changes in information (i.e. postal address, e-mail address or name change) by contacting aurecords@auburn.edu, or calling AU Records at 334/844-2944 or writing to: Alumni Center, AU Records, 317 S. College St., Auburn, AL 36849.
Richardson to Propose New Policies to AU Trustees

In his first State of the University Address to the University Senate on April 7, interim AU President Ed Richardson said he would propose new policies to the Board of Trustees on May 7 to meet accreditation guidelines of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Richardson said he will recommend a clearer policy regarding potential conflicts of interests by AU Board members and will ask the board to create an audit committee to review financial dealings among trustees. Those changes are necessary, he said, to meet the accrediting agency’s concerns about potential conflicts of interest and voting independence of board members.

If SACS approves an extension, the university will report the board’s May 7 actions in a response outlining steps AU is taking to get SACS to lift the probation of accreditation that the agency imposed in December. An extension of the SACS deadline for a response from April 22 to May 14 could enable AU to present the actions as accomplished rather than proposed, Richardson said.

The remaining major concerns listed by SACS in December relate to athletics, an area in which Richardson said he is spending about 30 percent of his time. He said he expects to alleviate over the next few weeks the accrediting agency’s concerns about trustee involvement in athletics and demonstrate that the president is in control of that area of governance.

Richardson said board members have been very supportive of his efforts to meet SACS criteria. “I have been greatly encouraged by the trustees’ acceptance of the role of the president,” he said.

“With the right atmosphere, I see very positive movement.”

The May 7 board meeting is also important, Richardson said, because it will mark the start of a discussion of issues that must be resolved to ensure the long-term financial health of the university. Setting the stage for that discussion, the University Senate endorsed proposed revisions to the AU vision and mission statements; the revisions could go to the board at the May session.

The proposed changes in the vision and mission statements would place “comprehensive” with “land-grant” in defining the university and would place grad-

Policies, continued on page 6

Stadler Chosen ACE Fellow

Holly A. Stadler, professor and head of Auburn University’s Department of Counseling and Counseling Psychology, has been named an American Council on Education Fellow for 2004-05.

ACE selected 35 Fellows, nominated by the presidents and chancellors of their institutions, for 2004-05. Stadler said she will spend two semesters next year at a host school yet to be named.

“I’ve asked to be placed at one of three university systems,” Stadler said. “I would prefer the University of North Carolina System, the University of Maryland System or the University of Georgia System.”

Stadler said her areas of focus would be how policy becomes practice within a large university system, working with governing boards and committees and strategic planning.

Founded in 1918, ACE is the nation’s largest higher education association, representing more than 1,600 college and university presidents and more than 200 related associations.

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Founded in 1918, ACE is the nation’s largest higher education association, representing more than 1,600 college and university presidents and more than 200 related associations.
AU's College of Liberal Arts has introduced a minor in Africana studies.

The minor, which is available to students in several colleges and schools, became fully operational in fall 2004.

The minor is a set of courses that examines the dispersal of African peoples across the Western Hemisphere and their influences on the history, literature, culture, political development and social behaviors in the Americas.

Students may complete the minor by passing five courses from more than 30 offerings in English, history, geography, political science, sociology and rural sociology.

“Africana studies is designed to help students broaden their education beyond the traditional bounds of their specific majors and their own local or regional experience,” said Greg Kowalski, interim associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

“Students who minor in this field should gain an edge in their careers, and they will have a broader educational experience to help them succeed in a diverse world.”

The minor could prove valuable to students majoring in pre-law, business, pre-medicine or communication fields or any of the social sciences, he said. “An Africana minor could give students an edge in consideration by law, medical or graduate schools. It should prove especially helpful to graduates who seek jobs in international businesses or corporations, but even small, local businesses often have international connections through retailers and customers.”

Kowalski said the most successful Africana studies programs on other campuses have proved popular with students of all races.

“Most students arrive at college with limited exposure to the world outside of their community or local area,” he noted.

“Those who leave college with a broader understanding of other cultures are richer for the experience and are more likely to succeed in today’s world.”

Policies

(Continued from page 6)

uate and professional programs on an equal level with undergraduate programs in describing both vision and mission.

Richardson said he would ask the board to continue the discussion of Auburn’s operations on June 11 and at three future meetings. Over the next several months, he said, the university must set priorities for its commitments and develop strategies to meet the financial challenges of the next three to five years.

Some priorities set five years ago by a special commission, of which Richardson was co-chair, and adopted by the Board of Trustees will probably remain in place, Richardson said. Those include commitments to make faculty salaries more competitive with the regional average for peer institution and to adequately fund campus maintenance.

One reason for establishing priorities over the next two months, he said, is to enable the university to define its priorities to legislators in the summer and fall instead making its first presentation in January, as in the past.

He noted that the financial situation for 2005 is better than first projected. Rather than facing a 5 percent cut in appropriations, education may receive level funding or a small increase next year.

Contributions from alumni and other Auburn supporters are also doing well, Richardson said. “The campaign to substantially increase our endowment is ahead of schedule, and I believe we will reach the established goal,” he said. “This is a critical effort to establishing a secure financial future.”

Richardson, who has said he expects to serve approximately two years as interim president, urged the faculty leaders to work with him to lay the foundation for the success of the next president.

“If I am to be successful in establishing a pattern of behavior that will be conducive to the attraction and selection of a permanent president, more will have to put Auburn first,” Richardson said. “This will not be easy or overnight. Putting Auburn first will be mutually beneficial and enable all of us to succeed in our professional endeavors.”

Reed Wins UCEA Award

Cynthia Reed, director of the Auburn University College of Education’s Truman Pierce Institute and an associate professor in the Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Technology, has won the University Council for Educational Administration’s Jack A. Culbertson Award. It is one of the top awards in the field of educational administration.

Reed was recognized for “significant contributions by a junior professor to the advancement of educational administration” during the organization’s annual national convention in Portland, Ore. She is the first faculty member from AU to receive the award throughout its 22-year history.

The UCEA is an association of higher education institutions committed to advancing the preparation and practice of educational leaders for the benefit of schools and children. The Jack A. Culbertson Award was established in 1982 in honor of UCEA’s first full-time executive director, who retired in 1981 after serving 22 years in this position.

Reed was nominated for her “work in impacting leadership and leadership development, the building of individual and community capacity through her involvement with the West Alabama Learning Coalition, and her work on evaluation and assessment related to this effort.”

“I was honored and humbled to receive this award. Our work in West Alabama continually challenges me to re-conceptualize what it means to be a leader,” said Reed. “We must find ways to re-connect schools and communities, to serve as boundary spanners, to fully embrace our democratic responsibilities and to actively model what it means to be an engaged citizen.”

The coalition, founded in 1997, focuses on creating leadership teams to address local and regional needs.
Online Digital Library Includes AU Treasures

Auburn University Libraries is as close as your internet connection. The Digital Library includes digitized images, text and other resources and should provide permanent, remote access to items from the Auburn collection that were either only available within one of the library facilities or from the Special Collections and Archives Department.

The AU Digital Library is part of a statewide initiative called “The Cornerstone Project: Building the Foundation for Sharing Unique Treasures” and is funded, in part, by a major Institute of Museum and Library Services National Leadership Grant for the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries. This grant funds digitization projects in libraries and archives throughout the state including Auburn University. Funds from the grant have been matched by funds from the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Auburn University, The University of Alabama, and the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries. The purpose of the Cornerstone project and the Auburn Digital Library is to make historical treasures from Alabama’s archives, libraries, museums, and other repositories electronically accessible to Alabama residents and scholars around the world.

The AU Digital Library includes several collections from the University Archives and other places on campus. For example, the Alabama Postcards collection includes digitized images of approximately 300 historic postcards depicting places of interest from around Alabama. Most of the postcards date between the 1920s and 1940s. Another collection in the Digital Library is “Auburn: The Loveliest Village Photograph Collection” which includes images and captions from the book, Auburn: A Pictorial History of the Loveliest Village by Mickey Logue and Jack Simms. Patrons can access the Digital Library from a link on the AU Libraries’ Homepage (www.lib.auburn.edu) or directly at http://diglib.auburn.edu/.