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How Auburn Stacks Up

Sources of need-based financial aid to AU undergraduates, fall semester 2006

Horse sense
While one horse grazes in a pasture at the AU College of Veterinary Medicine, its companion on the left expresses its opinion of having their meal interrupted by photographer Melissa Humble of Communications and Marketing.

Two faculty members receive Fulbright Scholar grants

Two Auburn faculty members have been awarded Fulbright Scholar grants for international academic pursuits through spring semester by the U.S. Department of State.

This semester, Tarik Orgen, a professor of architecture in the AU College of Architecture, Design and Construction, will lecture on interior architecture to graduate students at Turkey’s Istanbul Technical University.

Orgen, an AU faculty member since 1981, will be at the Turkish institution from February to June.

www.ocm.auburn.edu/au_report/aureport.html

AU to celebrate legacy of Martin Luther King Jr.

The AU community will commemorate the legacy of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. with a series of events and programs from Jan. 13-23.

The activities share the theme of “Believe in the Dream: One Auburn — One Community.”

One of the first events is a lecture by David Carter, associate professor of history in AU’s College of Liberal Arts. Carter will discuss President Lyndon Johnson and the Civil Rights movement at 3 p.m. Jan. 14 in the Special Collections and Archives Department of Draughon Library.

In addition writing essays and articles on grassroots Civil Rights movements in North Carolina and Mississippi and on noted activists Andrew Young and Julian Bond, Carter is the author of a forthcoming study from the University of North Carolina Press examining shifting relationships between the presidency of Lyndon Johnson and the Civil Rights movement in the three years following passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. Carter’s presentation is sponsored by AU Libraries and the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities.

The activities will conclude with a symposium See Martin Luther King events, page 2

Subhash Chandra Sinha, a professor of mechanical engineering in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, is teaching and conducting research this academic year at the University of Mauritius. Sinha, an AU faculty member since 1987, has been in Mauritius since September and will return in July.

Also, AU is hosting a visiting Fulbright Scholar until February. Hilda Nyati of the University of Science and Technology, Bulawayo, in Zimbabwe conducted research in the College of Agriculture’s Department of Poultry Science during fall semester.
Students get option of purchasing chapters instead of whole textbook

Students in an award-winning professor’s biology course at Auburn took part in an experiment last semester — not a biology experiment, but one aimed at reducing the cost of textbooks, which frequently cost $100 or more for each book.

After using a hardcover biology text for most of the semester in Associate Professor Rob Lishak’s Biology 1010 class, the students turned to a second textbook for the final few weeks. In the past, students have either had to buy the textbook for approximately $100, a used version for half to two-thirds that amount or its electronic version for approximately $65.

For the fall 2007 semester, educational support company Cengage Learning and the Department of Biological Sciences at Auburn University in the College of Sciences and Mathematics gave students in Lishak’s class the option of ordering only the chapters they needed instead of buying the whole book, “Working with the Earth: Environmental Science” by G. Tyler Miller.

The class covered about a third of the material in the Miller book.

“The electronic chapters sell for 33 cents, but in an introductory offer at AU, Cengage chose to offer 30 of the class chapters for free to the class. Three local bookstores — AU, Anders and Big Blue — also participated in the project, according to Cengage representatives.”

“We’re not tracking the numbers in the core curriculum class, Lishak said he observed mixed results, with some students embracing iChapters and others bringing a textbook to class. In a show of hands, the majority said they used the hard-bound text rather than an electronic version.

“Levelhead received a Leischuck Award in 2006 as one of AU’s best teachers, said today’s students embrace computer technology for many aspects of their lives but remain ambivalent about electronic textbooks. “Some really like it, but a lot of them are just not ready to give up printed books. A lot of students like textbooks for highlighting or reading in bed or on a park bench; it is just not the same with a computer.”

Proponents who agreed with Lishak’s observation was nursing student Mary Hood. “I don’t enjoy reading on a computer screen,” she said.

“There’s something about holding the text in my hand and being able to dog-ear pages, underline or highlight words that makes my comprehension of the text much better.”

Another student, psychology major Sunita Hall, chose to use printed versions because she said the “high-quality hard-bound copy at times. "Being on the computer, I am tempted to surf the Web,” she explained.

Two students who chose electronic chapters saw advantages to the electronic version in addition to the cost savings. “I used iChapters because I could save the book to my flash drive and carry that with me instead of carrying around a book,” said Artis Eason, a business major.

“I am an out-of-state student and usually have to fly home, and it was nice to be able to only take my laptop home and still get all the reading assignments done,” said Marguerite DeWitt, a pre-engineering student from Maryland. “I made my campus bag a lot lighter.”

Cengage executive Jungen Pauquet said the company was looking for institutions and specific courses that provide a good fit when it introduced the iChapters. “Auburn is a great fit because of the school’s reputation as an educational innovator,” he added. “We introduced digital offerings to a class where they discuss sustainability. With iChapters, they are not wasting paper.”

While iChapters are a new option, Pauquet said electronic books have been gaining a rapid share of the textbook market and digital files now account for about half the company’s textbook sales.

Rusty Weldon of the AU Bookstore described electronic books as an emerging market, and the sale of individual chapters could have special appeal to students who have to use two or more books in a class.

“While we received a small number of requests to introduce electronic tests at the start of the semester, some students will cut down on cost and the bulk in their bookbag by purchasing one or more electronic books at the same time. Instead of walking out with five books, they may walk out with three books and computer access codes for two others, he said.”

Although tech-savvy students can bypass bookstores to purchase electronic books or chapters online, Weldon said many prefer to purchase them through the bookstore. “They are buying paper texts for some of their classes, and they want to be sure they are getting the right books in the electronic versions,” Weldon said.

The AU bookstore on the bookstore for information about what book to select and in what format,” he added. “The mix of hard copies and e-books may change over time but we have a responsibility to meet the students’ needs, and that is not going to change.”
Forestry and Wildlife Sciences receives two million-dollar gifts

The AU School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences recently received gifts of approximately $1 million each in memory of two Auburn alumni who were leaders in Alabama’s forestry industry.

The Auburn University Foundation received 248 acres of timberland valued at $1.26 million on behalf of the school from the estate of Clinton McClure. The gift will benefit the Clinton McClure Fund for Excellence in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences which sustains an annual fellowship in McClure’s name. The fund provides enhancement funds for faculty, graduate students or undergraduate students.

Meanwhile, the Solon and Martha Dixon Foundation contributed $950,000 to Forestry and Wildlife Sciences to help fund additional dormitories at the Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center.

The dormitories house students attending summer practicum programs and continuing education programs that AU sponsors at the center. The foundation’s most recent gift will help fund five cottages housing eight persons each, almost doubling the existing capacity.

The Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center was built through an initial gift in 1978 of 5,300 acres of land and $500,000 from the foundation, the school’s leading contributor, and has been used as a learning facility for incoming professional forestry students. Martha Dixon has continued to provide funds for maintenance and expansion of the center.

Solon Dixon was a 1928 graduate of Alabama Polytechnic Institute and taught at API until the Great Depression. He received his honorary doctorate in 1979.

In the estate gift, McClure donated the land to the AU School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences with the stipulation the school maintain and manage the land in perpetuity, using a sustainable forestry approach, with the purpose of earning income from the long-term management of its timber rather than from proceeds from the sale of the land.

McClure graduated with a bachelor’s degree in general business from Alabama Polytechnic Institute in 1932. During his career, he worked for W. T. Smith Lumber Company and for a consulting business that had a contract with Alison Lumber Company. He also became a registered forester and a registered land surveyor.

The “It Begins at Auburn” Campaign encompasses all colleges and schools as well as the AU libraries and museums, athletics and Auburn University Montgomery. Endowments for student scholarships, faculty, programs and unrestricted dollars make up 58 percent of the campaign’s goal.

Liu named associate dean in Agriculture

Zhanjiang “John” Liu, Alumni professor in Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures in AU’s College of Agriculture, has been named associate dean of research for the college and assistant director of the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, effective Jan. 1.

In the new position, Liu, an international authority on genetics of aquatic species, will be responsible for managing the administrative aspects of research for the college and the AAES.

A native of China, Liu holds a Ph.D. in molecular and cellular biology from the University of Minnesota. He joined the Fisheries faculty at Auburn in 1995 as an assistant professor and since has built an internationally renowned program in fish molecular genetics and biotechnology.

Spirit of Excellence

Each month AU recognizes outstanding employee performance by presenting Spirit of Excellence awards to four staff members who have excelled. Recipients for November were, clockwise from left, Kevin King of Pathobiology, Roger Hill of the Roof Shop in Facilities, Sylvia Bishop of the Registrar’s Office and Andrea Muir of Lab Animal Health.

AU faculty, staff get support for weight-loss campaign

Did you make a New Year’s resolution again this year to lose weight? Perhaps a team effort can help you succeed where solo efforts have failed in the past.

AU is seeking volunteers to participate in a statewide weight-loss program, “Scale Back Alabama,” in which teams of four individuals commit to lose one pound per week for 10 weeks.

Statewide, teams in which all four members reach that goal will be entered in a drawing for one of 20 prizes of $250 each and a grand prize of $1,000 per team member.

Prize winners will be announced on April 1 in Montgomery.

The first step in the weight-loss program is a weigh-in this week at one of three campus sites: Student Recreational Building, School of Pharmacy and Auburn Medical Center. Individual weights will be kept confidential.

For information on the campus campaign and how to participate, contact Jenny Swaim at 844-7131. Information on the statewide program is available on the Web at www.scalebackalabama.com.