Week’s events to commemorate life, legacy of civil rights leader

Auburn University will be closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Monday, Jan. 21, and events commemorating the late civil rights hero’s life and accomplishments will be conducted on campus that day and throughout the week.

An Auburn Serves Volunteer Fair at the Student Center on Thursday, Jan. 17, from 10 a.m.-noon will precede the week’s activities. Sponsored by University Outreach, the program will provide information about opportunities for community involvement for students, faculty and staff. For additional information, contact Joyce Thomas-Vinson at 844-5117.

On Monday, Jan. 21, Shirley Sherrod, a leading figure in a recent civil rights struggle, will be the keynote speaker at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Annual Scholarship Breakfast at The Hotel at Auburn University.

Sherrod is the author of “Courage to Hope: How I Stood up to the Politics of Fear,” which recounts her struggles against racial and economic injustice from childhood through the Civil Rights Era and following decades into the early days of the Obama Administration. She became nationally prominent in 2010, when political anarchists edited her taped remarks against economic discrimination in agriculture policy to reverse their meaning and falsely label her as a racist.

During the brief time it took for the subterfuge to be revealed, Sherrod was forced out of her post in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. When the full tape came to light, she refused to return to the agency, choosing to work outside the government as a nationally recognized advocate for economically disadvantaged persons of all races.

The scholarship breakfast is sponsored by the National Forum for Black Administrators of East Alabama, Auburn’s Office of the Vice President for University Outreach and Access and Community Initiatives in the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs. For ticket availability, call 844-5042.

Also that Monday, volunteers within the Auburn community and the university will participate in a day of community service. For information and to register, call 844-5042.

See King Week activities, Page 2

Planners seek more input on Toomer’s Corner concepts

For the first time in Auburn’s history, a formal Landscape Master Plan is being developed as part of the 2012 Comprehensive Campus Master Plan Update. The Landscape Master Plan includes campus roadways, parking and all open spaces, including the northeast corner of Samford Park at Toomer’s Corner – and the corner’s two historic, poisoned oaks.

As part of the overall design program, Auburn University’s Office of Campus Planning and Space Management and Nelson Byrd Woltz/jB+a Landscape Architects of Charlottesville, Va., are developing potential design concepts for enhancing Toomer’s Corner if the oaks must be removed.

“We don’t know the fate of the oaks at this time, Facilities Management is planning now for the revitalization of this important area of campus,” said Dan King, assistant vice president for facilities management.

“We want to be inclusive throughout this process and are seeking input from the entire Auburn Family.”

Public workshops in October and November provided ideas and input for the project. To date, a series of four preliminary concepts have been developed with varying degrees of complexity. All concepts feature the following: at least two large trees, although not planted in the same positions as the existing oaks; removal of the existing low brick wall and nearby evergreen shrubs and southern magnolias; additional shaded seating; and retention of the existing gates, either in their current or new locations.

The “Circle and Center” concept does not feature any dramatic changes to the existing landscape. The gates remain at their current location, with three oak trees positioned near a circular seating area. A pathway runs from the area directly to Samford Hall.

The “Olmsted Arc Path” concept features intermediate changes to the existing landscape and adapts the Olmsted Brothers 1927 carriage way to Samford Hall. The design of this concept encourages pedestrians who enter Samford Park from Toomer’s Corner to do so through the existing gates, thereby honoring the history of the gates. A park-like setting lies beyond the gates and features an open grove of shade trees along a pathway into Samford Park that is lined with benches or seat walls.

The “Arcs and Radials” concept features a subtle expansion to the Toomer’s Corner area and intermediate changes to the existing landscape. The gates are moved back into Samford Park and a hardscape plaza is created at the corner. A tree flanks each end of the gate and multiple pathways connect the gateway to the interior of Samford Park. The plaza features an arc of seating and numerous smaller ornamental trees. Metal gateway arches over College Street and Magnolia Avenue would reinforce the visual connection of the Toomer’s Corner intersection to the plaza.

The “Samford Diagonal” concept is the most dramatic departure from the existing landscape. The existing gates are moved back considerably toward Samford Hall. A hardscape plaza lies between the

See Toomer’s Corner concepts, Page 3
Architecture senior wins Gilman Scholarship for study in Turkey

The Institute for International Education has awarded Auburn University senior Don’Neshia Clark a Gilman Scholarship to study at Istanbul Technical University in Turkey this spring.

Clark, of Homewood, is a senior in Auburn’s College of Architecture, Design and Construction.

“My goal for studying abroad is to experience and gain a better perspective of the world around us,” Clark said. “Studying in Turkey will provide me the opportunity to expand my knowledge and understanding of the historical context of architecture.”

The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship Program is a nationally competitive scholarship program sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State. The scholarship offers grants for U.S. citizen undergraduate students to pursue academic studies abroad.

The Institute for International Education, which oversees the program, is an independent, not-for-profit organization based in New York and founded in 1919. Its mission is to advance international education and access to education worldwide.

“As a Gilman Scholar, Don’Neshia will have the opportunity to engage in a substantive course of study at Turkey’s leading institute of higher education, all the while immersing herself in the rich history and culture of the region,” said Paul Harris, Auburn associate director for international education and access to education.

Clark is Auburn’s third Gilman Scholar this year, following James Stokes, who was awarded a scholarship to study in Germany, and Joel Geer, Japan.

“Don’Neshia was an excellent candidate and we are all elated that she was awarded this scholarship,” said Deborah Weiss, director of Auburn Abroad, the university’s study abroad program. “We encourage students to apply for this prestigious national scholarship. We work closely with Paul Harris to provide students with the assistance needed during the application process.”

— Charles Martin

New awards recognize major achievements in sustainability

The Auburn University Office of Sustainability has created the Spirit of Sustainability Awards program to recognize the accomplishments of students, faculty, staff and alumni who exemplify the Auburn spirit by promoting sustainability on campus or in the community-at-large.

Nominations will be accepted through January. Individuals or groups are eligible for the awards. Consideration will be given to initiatives in the areas of research, instruction, outreach and operations, and campus and community projects which have taken place within the last two years.

The nomination form is online at www.auburn.edu/projects/sustainability/sustain-web/index.php/sustainability-awards/.

For more information about the Spirit of Sustainability Awards and other sustainability initiatives on campus, contact the Office of Sustainability at sustain@auburn.edu.

King Week activities

Continued from Page 1

On Tuesday, Jan. 22, the Multicultural Center’s Lunch and Learn Series will present a panel discussion on “Issues of Social Justice” at 11:45 a.m. in Student Center 2222. Panel speakers will include Paula Backscheider and Hilary Wyss of the English Department, Mitchell Brown of Political Science and Kelly Kennington of History.

On Wednesday, Jan. 23, the Multicultural Center’s Lunch and Learn Series will feature the film “Anne Braden: Southern Patriot” at 11:45 a.m. in Student Center 2222. The film is the biography of an organizer and journalist who for 60 years participated in significant movements for racial and economic justice in the South.

A Voices of Freedom interfaith concert is scheduled for 7-9 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 24, in the auditorium of The Hotel at Auburn University. The concert features the Auburn University Gospel Choir, White Street Missionary Baptist Church Choir and the Greater Peace Missionary Baptist Church Choir.

The week’s formal activities will conclude on Friday, Jan. 25, from 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m., with a Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration. The event at the Multicultural Center, Student Center 1330, will feature music and reflections on the iconic civil rights leader.

For more information about Martin Luther King Week activities at Auburn, go online to www.auburn.edu/auckingweek.

— Roy Summerford

Brazilian diplomat

President Jay Gogue recently welcomed Hermo do Telles Ribeiro, consul general of Brazil in Atlanta, to Auburn. The Brazilian diplomat was on campus to meet with faculty and students as part of an Auburn initiative to broaden the international exposure of students and increase ties between the university and countries around the world.

Campus Calendar

FRIDAY, JANUARY 11
AUBURN REPORT First edition of spring semester

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15
MEETING University Senate, 3:30 p.m., Broun Hall

MONDAY, JANUARY 21
HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE Martin Luther King Jr. Day, no classes, offices closed for the day

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23
GUEST ARTISTS CONCERT St. Louis Brass Quintet, one of America’s longest standing brass quintets, 7:30 p.m., Goodwin Recital Hall; admission charged

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24
OPENING RECEPTION “Bauhaus twenty-21,” photography exhibition featuring significant examples of the Bauhaus architectural style of the 1920s-30s, a leading influence on 20th century “modern” architecture, 6-8 p.m., Jule Collins Smith Museum

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25
NEXT Auburn Report
Researchers in Auburn’s College of Veterinary Medicine score breakthrough against drug-resistant diseases

Pathobiology Professor Bernhard Kaltenboeck and research associates Erfan Chowdhury and Yihang Li in Auburn University’s College of Veterinary Medicine have developed a vaccine platform to treat intracellular diseases for which antibodies are ineffective.

When someone receives a vaccine, it usually means the person is trying to build up antibodies to ward off a disease. For centuries, the approach has worked to prevent the spread of, or even eliminate, many diseases. However, antibodies are insufficient in preventing many other diseases.

“Some diseases occur primarily inside cells,” said Kaltenboeck. “Perhaps it’s a virus that harbors inside of cells, or small bacteria that infect cells as opposed to the surface of tissue, or a cancer. Antibodies are ineffective in these situations. What’s needed is a cellular immune response that can remove these diseased cells.”

To achieve that goal, Kaltenboeck, Chowdhury and Li detoured from tradition. Typically, large doses of vaccine are given because that means more antibodies are produced. Instead, they drastically lowered the dose – less than one hundredth of one percent as compared to traditional vaccines. This created a response by the body’s immune cells, which is exactly what is needed for intracellular diseases. Such a response can serve as a preventive measure or as a way to treat chronic infections.

Further, the approach uses only short, synthetic protein fragments, or peptides, from the disease target. Current approaches to create a cellular response involve using actual pathogens, in whole or in part, in the vaccine formulation. By creating a fully manmade vaccine, the Auburn platform should prove to be not only safer, but also much less expensive.

The list of diseases that could benefit from the approach includes malaria, tuberculosis, HIV, dengue fever and cancer. Numerous commercially significant animal diseases are also candidates. Significant further development and testing is needed to advance the technology to the market, particularly for so many targets.

“As a public institution, we’re very excited about the potential public benefit implications for this vaccine platform,” said John Weete, assistant vice president for Technology Transfer and Commercialization at Auburn. “When you see the list of diseases that this technology could affect, the potential societal impact becomes self-evident. While we know we’re very early in the process, we’re still very optimistic about what this could do for both global public health and worldwide food production.”

The Office of Technology Transfer has begun marketing the technology to major human and animal health companies. Nonprofit partnerships will also be pursued to seek development pathways for humanitarian targets such as malaria. The projected low cost of the vaccine opens doors for use of the platform against diseases in developing countries.

Due to the relative simplicity of the formulations, multiple start-up companies could also be formed. Two are currently being contemplated: one for a viral infection that affects pigs, and another for the bacterium Chlamydia, Kaltenboeck’s primary research interest. Long associated with being a sexually transmitted disease, Chlamydia has numerous species that produce chronic infections in humans and animals, including cattle.

— Brian Wright

Toomer’s Corner concepts

Continued from Page 1

gates and Toomer’s Corner and features an asymmetric arrangement of three oak trees. A tree-lined walkway with seating leads from the gateway to Samford Hall.

The public may submit comments and feedback on the four preliminary design concepts by participating in an online survey at https://survey.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_dogWPB7I6fARz5b. The deadline for comment is Jan. 18.

After input has been gathered from the Auburn Family, the next step will be to develop two options for further review and discussion. These revised concepts will be shared during two identical workshops on Feb. 27 in Foy 258 from 3-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. For additional information about the oaks or to view previous workshop sessions online, see the university’s home page at www.auburn.edu.

— Gail Riese

Spirit of Excellence

Auburn University Human Resources has announced Spirit of Excellence winners for October and November, recognizing staff members for outstanding service to the university. Winners for October, above at left, are, from left, Kathryn Storey of Civil Engineering, John Spraggins of Alumni Affairs, Clint Bellanger of University Libraries and Mary Hammett of University Libraries. Above at right, winners for November, from left, are Debra Dowdell of University Libraries, Ken Williams of Engineering Graduate Outreach and Linda Bell of Theatre.
Campus News Briefs

Chattaraman awarded ‘Best Reviewer’ by Clothing and Textiles Research Journal

Veena Chattaraman, an associate professor in the Department of Consumer and Design Sciences in the College of Human Sciences, has been named Mentor of the Year by the Student Chapters of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists. His award was announced in December during the ACVP Annual Meeting in Seattle.

Johnson served as advisor to the Auburn Student Chapter of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists speaking to the club about careers in veterinary pathology and how to successfully obtain internships, externships and residencies.

National student veterinary group names Calvin Johnson its Mentor of Year

Calvin Johnson, department head and professor of pathology in the Department of Pathobiology in the College of Veterinary Medicine, has been named Mentor of the Year by the Student Chapters of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists. His award was announced in December during the ACVP Annual Meeting in Seattle.

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Akingbemi invited to join editorial boards for two biomedical research journals

Benson Akingbemi, an associate professor of anatomy in the College of Veterinary Medicine, has been invited to serve on the boards of two biomedical research journals.

“Endocrinology,” the Endocrine Society's oldest journal, is one of the most authoritative biomedical research journals in the world.

Akingbemi began service on the board of “Toxicology Letters” for three years and “Endocrinology” for four years, respectively. Akingbemi’s research focuses on the effects of environmental toxicants on male reproductive tract development and function.

Barth makes presentations on banking at Chicago conference and in Hong Kong

James Barth, Lowder Eminent Scholar in Finance, recently presented the paper “Too Big To Fail: A Little Perspective on a Large Problem” at the 15th annual International Banking Conference at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago.

The conference theme was “The Social Value of the Financial Sector: Too Big to Fail or Just Too Big.”

In addition, Barth was interviewed about his new book, “Guardians of Finance,” on the Financial Review show Money Radio.

Also, Barth made invited presentations in December at the Hong Kong Institute for Monetary Research and the Securities and Futures Commission in Hong Kong. While there, he met with faculty members at the University of Hong Kong and the City University of Hong Kong.

International institute presents lifetime contribution medal to Auburn professor

Vishwani Agrawal, the James J. Danaher professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, has been awarded the 2012 Computer Society Test Technology Technical Council Lifetime Contribution Medal from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

The medal is the highest award IEEE presents in the area of test technology. Agrawal has more than 40 years of industry and higher education experience and has been an Auburn University faculty member since 2003. His research interests include VLSI testing, low-power design of digital logic circuits and computer architecture. Agrawal holds 13 United States patents.