Week of activities to focus on impact of civil rights icon

Auburn University will host a weeklong tribute to Martin Luther King Jr. from Monday, Jan. 16, through Friday, Jan. 20, with the theme “The Time is Always Right to Do What’s Right: One Auburn, One Community.”

Highlights of the week will include a scholarship breakfast, guest speakers, lectures, student performances and community service projects. The public is invited to all events.

The week will begin with a scholarship breakfast on Monday at 7:30 a.m. at The Hotel at Auburn University, which will feature Tuskegee University President Gilbert Rochon as keynote speaker. For tickets, call 501-3084 or 844-5042. Monday’s events will also include the community service project, “A Day On and Not a Day Off.” To register for this project, call 844-5042.

On Tuesday, Georgette Norman, director of the Troy University Rosa Parks Museum, will present a public lecture, “Undoing Racism,” in the Student Center, Room 2222, at 11:45 a.m. as part of the ongoing Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs Lunch and Learn lecture series. Participants are encouraged to bring a lunch.

A program at 1 p.m. Wednesday in the Multicultural Center Reading Room, Student Center, Room 1330, will feature music and reflections on the life of the Rev. King. Participants are asked to bring a favorite quote or personal reflection to share.

A Discover Auburn public lecture will take place in Special Collections and Archives at the Ralph Brown Draughon Library on Thursday at 3 p.m. English Professor Emeritus Bert Hitchcock will discuss “Harriet Beecher Stowe: Devil or Angel.”

Also on Thursday, at 7 p.m., a Voices of Freedom Interfaith Service at The Hotel at Auburn University will feature the University Gospel Choir, God’s House of Prayer Holiness Church Gospel Choir, Greater Peace Baptist Church Gospel Choir and White Street Missionary Baptist Church Gospel Choir.

On Friday, Isabel Wilkerson, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of “The Warmth of Other Suns,” will be keynote speaker for a noon luncheon at The Hotel at Auburn University in connection with the conference “Becoming Alabama: Immigration and Migration in Alabama.”

For online information on conference and luncheon registration, go to www.cla.auburn.edu/cah/becomingalabama.cfm.

This year’s King Week activities are coordinated by Access and Community Initiatives and the Multicultural Center units of the Auburn University Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs.

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

— Carol Nelson

When trees move

Like a modern-day Birnam Wood, trees have been on the move in Auburn over the past week. Through a project overseen by Facilities Management and the campus tree preservation committee, a team of transplant specialists moved eight large oaks and elms from the grounds of the demolished Fisheries Annex to new sites farther south along Wire Road to make room for the new Kinesiology Building. Because of the size of the trees, whose root balls range from 65,000 pounds to 125,000 pounds, Environmental Design, a company specializing in this type of work was brought in to handle the move. For a related story on Auburn tree preservation, see Page 2.

U.S. News places two Auburn colleges on first honor roll for online education

Online graduate programs in Auburn’s College of Education and Samuel Ginn College of Engineering have been named honor roll programs in U.S. News and World Report’s first Top Online Education Program rankings.

Those named to the honor roll ranked in the top third among their peers in four categories; there were no numeric rankings for overall program quality this year.

Online graduate degree program rankings were based on student services and technology, faculty credentials and training, teaching practices and student engagement and admissions selectivity. Programs named to the honor roll placed in the top third of at least three of the four category rankings.

Online graduate programs in the College of Engineering earned a number one ranking in admissions selectivity and a number five ranking in the student services and technology category. The college’s programs were listed as 14th in the faculty credentials and training and teaching practices and student engagement categories.

“Auburn Engineering has been delivering distance graduate degrees for more than 25 years,” said Engineering Dean Larry Benefield. “We have worked hard to ensure that the education our distance students receive mirrors that of our on-campus students. This includes a leading-edge delivery system that enhances the experience for students and professors alike. These
United Way success

Auburn University exceeded the campus goal for the 2011 United Way campaign, with contributions totaling $140,211, approximately $10,000 more than in the previous year. The Office of the Vice President for Research won the overall participation award for the campus campaign, which was conducted during the fall as part of the Lee County United Way Campaign. Campus Campaign Chair Lynne Hammond, left, assistant vice president for human resources and Honorary Chair Anne-Katrin Gramberg, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, display the university’s leadership giving award from United Way, recognizing success as well as leadership in the institutional category.

Forestry, Horticulture scientists

Faculty team completes study, inventory of campus trees

A team of Auburn University scientists has recorded data about every tree on campus, documenting more than 7,300 trees valued at almost $11 million and generating data that could help landscape managers nationwide.

Professor Art Chappelka of the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences said they now know the species, height, diameter, crown width, canopy cover and condition of every tree within the university’s landscape-managed campus.

“This will be a valuable tool for campus planners who can use the information as they develop a landscape master plan,” Chappelka said. “We have mapped the location of every tree in proximity to roads, buildings, power lines and other structures, so we can view the map on our computers anytime. It’s like a blueprint of campus trees.”

The researchers, using an i-Tree Eco inventory protocol developed by the U.S. Forest Service, found that Auburn has 7,345 trees among 139 species on areas maintained by its Landscape Services Division, not including the arboretum. The average height at the time of data collection was 8.5 meters with a diameter of 16.4 centimeters and a crown width of 6.7 meters. The estimated value of the trees is $10.75 million.

The i-Tree Eco consists of gathering data about each tree, recording the locations using GPS mapping and using computer- and Geographic Information System-based methods to analyze the information.

The study, initiated in 2009 by then-graduate student Nicholas Martin in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service, was published in the September 2011 issue of the Arboriculture & Urban Forestry journal. The Auburn researchers collected data from May 2009 to April 2010 and are continually updating the numbers.

The most common tree on campus is crape myrtle at 1,639 trees, followed by willow oak at 596, loblolly pine at 565 and magnolia at 464.

“We believe this study will give valuable information for urban arborists, urban planners and campus planners and anyone who plants trees in urban settings,” Chappelka said. “It could help in carbon sequestration, in determining which types of trees to plant and in helping them know the best crew size needed to manage their trees.”

Investigators on the study, in addition to Martin and Chappelka, were horticulture professor Gary Keever and forestry professor Edward Loewenstein.

“We hope to expand and test more aspects of the i-Tree Eco model,” Chappelka said. “We want to develop formulas that will help arborists easily gather information, such as creating an equation that might use the diameter measurement to get the crown size for specific species.”

The Arbor Day Foundation in 2010 and 2011 designated Auburn University as a Tree Campus USA University.

— Charles Martin

Campus Calendar

MONDAY, JANUARY 16

NATIONAL HOLIDAY No classes, offices closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

KING WEEK ACTIVITY Scholarship Breakfast, keynote speaker Tuskegee University President Gilbert Rochon, 7:30 a.m., The Hotel at Auburn University, call 844-5042 for tickets

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17

KING WEEK ACTIVITY Public lecture, “Undoing Racism,” Georgette Norman, director of Troy University Rosa Parks Museum, 11:45 a.m., Student Center 2222

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18

PUBLIC SCREENING “Miss Representation,” 4 p.m., Langdon Hall, sponsored by The Women’s Leadership Institute and Women’s Studies Program in the College of Liberal Arts

KING WEEK ACTIVITY Reflections on life of Martin Luther King Jr., 1 p.m., Multicultural Center Reading Room, Student Center

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19

KING WEEK ACTIVITY Public lecture, “Harriet Beecher Stowe: Devil or Angel,” Professor Emeritus Bert Hitchcock, 3 p.m., Special Collections, Draughon Library

LECTURE AND RECEPTION Art exhibition “Promises of Freedom,” Remarks by Arthur Primas and Tyler Perry, 6 p.m., Jule Collins Smith Museum

FRIDAY, JANUARY 20

KING WEEK ACTIVITY Luncheon address, Isabel Wilkerson, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of “The Warmth of Other Suns,” noon, The Hotel at Auburn University, see www.cla.auburn.edu/cah/becomingalabama.cfm

MODERNIST FILM PREMIERE “Maltby Sykes: Gentleman Modernist,” 6 p.m., The Hotel at Auburn University

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27
CLA to host symposium examining immigration issues in Alabama from historical, sociological perspectives

The College of Liberal Arts will host a two-day public symposium, “Becoming Alabama: Immigration and Migration in a Deep South State,” Jan. 20-21 at The Hotel at Auburn University.

The symposium will feature scholars and professionals exploring immigration and migration from Spanish exploration through the 1813 Creek War to the present. Isabel Wilkerson and Carmen Agra Deedy headline a roster of presenters who will provide historical context for the people who moved into, out of or within Alabama during the last 200 years.

Wilkerson will give a presentation based on her Pulitzer Prize-winning book, “The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration.” Deedy, an award-winning writer of children’s literature, will share her experiences of growing up Cuban in Decatur, Ga.

Prominent scholars of history and political science from Auburn, as well as other institutions, will speak on topics ranging from Spanish exploration to how Alabama’s immigrant population, including Germans, Koreans, Southeast Asians and Hispanics, has shaped art, politics, education and culture in the state.

“Alabama is a complicated place, and we can learn much by looking at the state through the lens of history and thinking about the future,” said symposium director Mary Helen Brown, who holds the dual titles of associate professor in Auburn’s Department of Communication and Journalism and Breeden Eminent Scholar for the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities at Auburn University.

In conjunction with the conference, a genealogy workshop co-sponsored by OLLI at Auburn will take place Thursday from 1-5 p.m. Presenters will introduce family research and focus on using the census for both African American and Native American genealogies. Separate registration is available for the workshop.

The symposium is a “Becoming Alabama” event. Designed to commemorate major Alabama anniversaries of the Creek War/War of 1812, the Civil War and Emancipation and the Civil Rights era, “Becoming Alabama” is a statewide initiative begun by the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

Encyclopedia of Alabama gets NEH grant

The National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded a $425,000 Challenge Grant to the Encyclopedia of Alabama, a free online resource on Alabama’s history, culture and natural environment.

The Encyclopedia of Alabama was one of 215 humanities projects named in the federal agency’s recent announcement of $21 million in grants nationwide and the only Alabama project selected in its most recent award cycle.

National Endowment for the Humanities Challenge Grants are designed to strengthen the humanities by encouraging non-federal sources of support and helping institutions secure long-term improvements in and support for their humanities programs and resources. The Encyclopedia of Alabama is required to match the grant on a three-to-one basis over the next five years.

The Encyclopedia of Alabama launched in September 2008 and has 1,280 entries related to Alabama’s history, politics, agriculture, arts, folk life, sports and more. New articles are added each month. More than two million visitors from all 50 states and more than 200 countries and territories have accessed the site.

Honor roll

Continued from Page 1

rankings confirm what we know – Auburn has one of the best engineering graduate distance degree programs in the nation.”

Online graduate programs in the College of Education ranked highest in the teaching practices and student engagement category, coming in fifth, and were ranked 12th in the student services and technology and faculty credentials and training categories. The college’s programs were listed 17th in admissions selectivity.

“In looking through the data provided to us by U.S. News and World Report, one item in particular stood out to me. While the honor roll does not rank the institutions, our college did have the fifth-best score in the category of teaching practices and student engagement,” said Betty Lou Whitford, dean of the College of Education.

“We’re quite proud of this since both components are at the core of what we do. We pride ourselves on our ability to prepare our graduates for an ever-changing and increasingly technology-driven world.”

While not being named to the honor roll, Auburn’s College of Business’ online graduate programs earned a high ranking in the admissions selectivity category, coming in at number six.

To be considered for the rankings, online degree programs had to offer at least 80 percent of their course content online. U.S. News established one Honor roll for each online master’s degree program in education, engineering, business and nursing.

— Carol Nelson

Final stage

Work has entered its final stage on Tiger Concourse, which will provide quick access for pedestrians through the center of campus from Magnolia Avenue to Haley Center and the Student Center. The route follows that of the former Tiger Drive.
Center gets $1 million grant for vaccine research

The Scott-Ritchey Research Center at the Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine and Vaxin Inc., a clinical stage vaccine development company, have received a $1 million Michelson Grant award from the Found Animals Foundation to continue development of a vaccine that may provide an alternative to surgical spay and neuter for cats and dogs.

Henry Baker and Nancy Cox of Auburn University and Kent Van Kampen of Vaxin are the lead investigators of the grant project. The Scott-Ritchey Research Center at Auburn is dedicated to research for improving the health of companion animals.

“For a decade, scientists at the Scott-Ritchey Research Center and Vaxin have collaborated in the design and testing of dog and cat contraceptive vaccines,” said Baker. “The goal is to create a vaccine which will induce long-term sterility and block breeding behavior in both male and female dogs and cats after administration of a single dose.”

The Found Animals Foundation estimates that six million to eight million cats and dogs are placed in U.S. shelters each year, and about half are euthanized. While animal sterilization has long been recognized as an integral solution to the problem of overpopulation, standard surgical techniques of spaying and neutering have obstacles such as high costs and the need for trained veterinary surgeons and appropriate facilities. Foundation representatives state that a single-dose, nonsurgical sterilant that could be administered in the field at a reasonable cost would be an ideal solution, and would save lives and end suffering for millions of companion animals throughout the world.

With the Michelson Grant, collaborators at Auburn’s Scott-Ritchey Research Center and Vaxin will pursue the $25 million Michelson Prize offered by the Found Animals Foundation, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit. Comparable to the widely publicized “X Prizes,” which encourage scientists to develop innovative solutions to global challenges, the Found Animals Foundation’s Michelson Prize in Reproductive Biology seeks a low-cost, nonsurgical method to sterilize large populations of cats and dogs to reduce the number of homeless and unwanted animals that are killed each year in shelters.

— Tara Lanier

Target helps Pharmacy outreach in Mobile area

The retailing giant Target has awarded a grant to the Auburn University Harrison School of Pharmacy to support a program developed by Mobile pharmacy students to help the Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy meet the needs of the uninsured residents of Mobile, Baldwin and Escambia counties.

Mobile student pharmacists earned a $6,000 grant from Target for developing a medication therapy management program called “Stepping Up and Reaching Out: MTM Services.”

In the past few years, Auburn’s Harrison School of Pharmacy has partnered with Ozanam to perform community outreach programs designed to provide health-related resources, including MTM services that would not otherwise be available.

Allison Chung, associate clinical professor at the Harrison School of Pharmacy’s Mobile campus, said student pharmacists discovered a need for medication therapy management, or MTM, services after running a health screening fair at the non-profit pharmacy.

Chung said the project is designed to show the impact student pharmacists are having “stepping up” pharmaceutical care to educate patients about medication safety and “reaching out” to uninsured communities to provide optimal care for underserved patients.

— Amy Weaver

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