AU president fills two posts, removes ‘interim’ from title in Alumni Affairs

Auburn began the new year with two new senior administrators in the university administration and with a third gaining a new title.

They are Larry Fillmer, head of AU’s new Institute of Natural Resources; Ralph Zee, acting vice president of research; and Debbie Shaw, former interim vice president and now vice president for alumni affairs.

In late December, AU President Ed Richardson named Fillmer, a former corporate chief executive officer, to the newly created post of executive director for the Institute of Natural Resources, and he named Zee, formerly associate dean for research in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, to head the Office of Research, succeeding Michael Moriarty, who returned full time to a faculty position in the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Richardson, citing Shaw’s success as head of AU Alumni Affairs during her tenure in that role, also removed the “interim” from the title she had held since March 2004.

Information about each appointment is available inside this edition of the AU Report.

Two AU programs ranked in top six in nation

Architecture and industrial design programs at AU are ranked among the top six degree programs nationally in their fields and Industrial Design Professor Tin-Man Lau earned Educator of the Year honors in the current issue of DesignIntelligence magazine.

Also, the Auburn architecture program was rated the second-most admired program in the nation by deans and department chairs. Only Harvard University’s program ranked higher.

The magazine published its eighth annual rankings for architecture, industrial design, landscape architecture and interior design programs across the country. DesignIntelligence ranked the programs on a regional and national basis. The magazine received input from deans, department heads and professional firms in forming its rankings.

The School of Architecture and Department of Industrial Design are in the AU College of Architecture, Design and Construction, which celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2007.

See Architecture, Industrial Design, page 2
March 2004, Shaw played a key role in increasing an outstanding record of finding new and creative said Richardson. “She is an effective manager with second in ecodesign practices and principles, and paredness of recent graduates. The program ranked third best in the country.

“That kind of recognition is rare, and is a significant program to be listed as the second-most admired design fields.

Architectural, Industrial Design

third in academic balance, which includes requirements for math, writing, liberal arts and the sciences. Industrial Design also ranked fifth in research, and fifth in creative activities with business, engineering and other disciplines.

Among other rankings, AU’s interior design undergraduate program was rated seventh nationally in its field.

Regionally, architecture ranked first in the Southeast region for undergraduate programs for the fourth consecutive year. Industrial Design ranked first in the Southeast region in both undergraduate and graduate programs.

The Interior Design program ranked second in the Southeast region, while the graduate program in Landscape Architecture ranked fifth in the Southeast. DesignIntelligence is a monthly journal of the Design Futures Council, an international organization serving professionals in the built-environment and design fields.

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, January 16

MULTIMEDIA EVENT “Remembering Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.” pictures and audio segments recalling the legacy of the greatest hero in America’s Civil Rights Movement. 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Multicultural Center Lounge, Foy Student Union

Wednesday, January 17

PERFORMANCE “My Heart Speaks a Different Language,” multicultural, one-woman performance by poet and playwright Carmen Tafolla. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., ballroom, Foy Student Union

Meetings & Property and Facilities Committee, AU Board of Trustees, 1 p.m., President’s Board Room, Simmons 107

PUBLIC LECTURE “The Significance of African Literature,” Abiola Irele, editor of the Norton Anthology of World Literature, 7:30 p.m., auditorium, Draughon Library; part of AU’s World Literature Lecture Series

Saturday, January 20

VOLUNTEER WORK DAY “The Arboretum’s Native Alliance vs. An Invading Empire of Alien Plants,” 10 a.m.–4 p.m., Arboretum

Sunday, January 21

PERFORMANCE New Orleans Dance Theatre, 2:30 p.m., Tellair Peet Pavilion

PerforMance

Monday, January 22

NEXT AU Report

Tuesday, January 23

MEETING Administrative & Professional Assembly, 2:30 p.m., Foy Union, 213; vote on amendments to A&P Constitution (all administrative and professional staff may attend and vote); see www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/ap/index.html

Raptor Van Southeastern Raptor Center Education Spe- cialists Roy Crowe and Manonie Murphy hold bald eagle Spirit and golden eagle War Eagle VIII, resident birds in front of the center’s new custo- marized van. Purchased with funds donated to AU through the “It Begins at Auburn” campaign, the specially equipped van provides transportation for students, including birds, in the center’s educa- tion programs around the Southeast.

Zee appointed acting vice president to lead Auburn’s research programs

R alph Zee of Auburn’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering has been named AU’s act- ing associate provost and vice president for research at AU. Previously, Zee, a professor of materials engineering, had been associate dean for research in the college since 2011. There he directed the research efforts of eight academic departments and 11 research centers. “Innovative and academic discovery are central to Auburn’s mission and promote the economic and social well-being of Alabama, the Southeast and our nation,” said AU President Ed Richardson. “Dr. Zee is an accomplished research leader, and I look forward to working with him.”

Zee, who came to AU in 1986, holds two master degrees and a Ph.D. in materials science from the University of Wisconsin. Richardson last year elevated alternative energy research to a top university priority and committed $3 million toward the effort in fiscal year 2007. Zee serves as co-chair of Auburn’s alternative energy initiative, which promotes the development and use of renewable energy from natural resources. “He and the alternative fuels committee have made great progress, and we will continue to move Auburn forward on this critical national priority with his leadership and insight,” said Richardson. Zee is filling the position held by Michael Mort- arty, who is returning to the faculty in the College of Veterinary Medicine where he is a professor of physiology and pharmacology.

Mortarby had led Auburn’s research program since arriving from the University of Georgia in 1994. During his tenure as associate provost and vice president for research, he was instrumental in secur- ing more than $3 million in competitive grants for his research on the detection of malignant tumors, a topic on which he has published more than 60 articles and papers. Mortarby held similar research positions at UGA and the University of Nebraska, and has served as a department head, assistant pro- vost and graduate school dean during his career. “I appreciate Dr. Mortarby’s service to Auburn in the research office these past 12 years,” said Richard- son. “Students in the College of Veterinary Medicine will gain from his background and experience.”

Governor names Llanes to commission

G overnor names Llanes to commission

O n Wednesday, Governor Robert Bentley appointed four Auburn University faculty members to the Alabama Commission on Teacher Quality. Llanes joined the AU faculty in September as a professor of education and department head in the college’s De- partment of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Policy. The commission includes more than 70 educators and business representatives and is led by Betty W. Rogers, a former Alabama Teacher of the Year. “Dr. Llanes’ expertise in the development of di- versified pay plans and teacher preparation will be of great value to the commission’s work,” said Tony T. staring, Auburn’s vice president for the Governor’s Commission on Teacher Quality. The commission, which began work in early 2006, advises the governor and the Alabama Expanded of Education about issues related to the improvement of teaching quality. Those issues include the selec- tion and training of teachers and administrators, economic incentives, performance standards and related matters.

In December, the commission presented its first year’s recommendations to the Alabama governor.
Back to class
The Auburn campus returned to normal last week as more than 22,000 students returned for a new semester following the annual holiday break in December. As home to two of AU’s largest colleges and the site of many courses in the university’s core curriculum, Haley Center remains the most heavily used building on campus at the start of 2007.

Former corporate CEO to lead new Natural Resources Institute

A President Ed Richardson has named Larry Fillmer, a former corporate chief executive officer, to the newly created post of executive director for the Institute of Natural Resources.

Fillmer, who has more than 35 years experience in organizational management, served the past two years at AU as a development director for major gifts and corporate relations. Before that, he was president and CEO of the I-85 Corridor Alliance. He previously served 18 years as an executive of Fujitsu, formerly the Amdahl Corporation, a global provider of information technology services, retiring as its president and CEO.

Earlier in his career, Fillmer was an officer in the U.S. Air Force and an executive with AT&T and South Central Bell.

“I am very pleased that Mr. Fillmer has accepted the position of executive director for the Institute of Natural Resources,” said Richardson. “His experience in managing change is extensive and allows us to focus on bringing together the most critical areas connected to agriculture and natural resources to positively impact the university and the state.”

Besides leading the institute, Fillmer will direct two new research centers at Auburn: the Center for Alternative Energy and the Alabama Water Resources Center.

Richardson has committed $3 million to Auburn’s alternative energy initiative, capitalizing on the university’s research expertise in forestry, engineering and agriculture and positioning AU as a national leader in converting natural resources into fuels.

The Alabama Water Resources Center, which also will be established on the AU campus, will serve as the primary organization with responsibility for addressing water issues in Alabama including those related to research, policy and outreach.

“There is indeed a bright future for the broad area of natural resources, and Auburn University has and will continue to contribute to it,” Richardson said.

“I have been greatly encouraged by those working in the natural resources arena,” he said. “Their report will serve as a template for our initial steps. Dean Richard Guthrie, Dr. Gaines Smith and Dean Richard Brinker have been instrumental in this change and will be of great assistance to Mr. Fillmer.”

Richardson added, “I anticipate a comprehensive progress report in April that will confirm the institute’s value. Auburn’s next president will have the opportunity to assess the institute and plan for further improvements.”

Fillmer holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Auburn and a master’s degree in industrial management from the University of Alabama.

U.S. grant will support study of ecosystem in Southeast

A research team in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences has received a $375,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Energy.

The grant will support a study of how changes in climate, atmospheric composition and land use are impacting ecosystems in the Southeast.

In the three-year study, the group led by Forestry Professor Hanqin Tian will use ecosystem modeling, satellite observations, field studies and forest inventory analysis data to investigate how natural and human pressures have altered ecosystem function, structure and services in the region.

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