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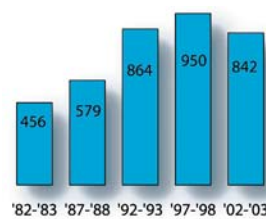
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AU report

For the faculty and staff of Auburn University

Vol. 37 No. 2



Change at the top

In accepting appointment as AU's interim president last week, Ed Richardson promised quick action to lead Auburn off probation by its regional accrediting agency.

Interim president begins term

Edward R. Richardson starts his first week as interim president of AU today with a short list of priorities.

At the top of the list is removal of probation by Auburn's regional accrediting agency.

Richardson's appointment last Tuesday by the AU Board of Trustees followed the resignation four days earlier of William Walker as AU president. Walker had served 15 months as interim president and 19 months as president.

Richardson's appointment at AU became effective following his resignation as state superintendent of education on Thursday. In leaving that post after eight years, he also gave up his ex-officio membership on several boards of trustees, including Auburn's, to assume the AU post.

The change in AU administration came one month after the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools placed Auburn on 12-month probation over compliance issues related to institutional commitment to the accrediting process, the role of the Board of Trustees in university governance and institutional control of athletics.

His main priority for this week and the remainder of this year, Richardson stressed, will be lifting the SACS probation sanction against Auburn.

"I am committed to getting us off probation and making sure we have the policies and procedures in place to make sure we never go back on probation," he said. In addition to addressing governance issues that the accrediting agency cited in placing Auburn on one-year's probation in December, the campus is undergoing its regular 10-year accreditation review this year.

The interim president will also represent the university at an NCAA investigation of AU's basketball program in February. Although not directly linked, the NCAA case fits within the framework of institutional control of athletics, one of the concerns cited by SACS in its December ruling.

"In accepting this offer, I want to say I will be in charge of this university within the established governance system," Richardson told trustees. "I think it's going to take some time to demonstrate that, and I think that's a critical issue to demonstrate to SACS (See *Richardson*, page 2)

Director of Pierce Institute

UCEA honors education professor

Cynthia Reed, director of the Truman Pierce Institute in the AU College of Education, has won the University Council for Educational Administration's Jack A. Culbertson Award.



Reed

Reed is the first faculty member from AU to receive the award, which is one of the top honors for faculty in the field of education administration.

The council recognized Reed, an associate professor in the Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Technology, for significant contributions by a junior professor to the advancement of education administration.

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 council established the Jack A. Culbertson Award in 1982 in honor of UCEA's first full-time executive director.

The organization recognized Reed for her ability to connect teaching, research and outreach with each other. Reed was cited for her work in leadership development, bolstering individual and community involvement with the West Alabama Learning Coal-

ition and implementing effective evaluation and assessment methods.

"I was honored and humbled to receive this award. Our work in West Alabama continually challenges me to reconceptualize what it means to be a leader," said Reed. "I have been blessed with many opportunities throughout my life — and the opportunity to do important work that makes a difference in peoples' lives is truly a blessing."

She added, "We must find ways to reconnect 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 West Alabama Learning Coalition, established in 1997, organizes and assists collaborative leadership teams to help communities and the West Alabama region improve educational quality and opportunities.

"The coalition is built around the concept that schools cannot be separated from their context, nor can communities be separated from their schools. With this concept in mind, the coalition seeks to connect economic and community development with educational improvement," Reed said.

Richardson

(continued from page 1)

and the NCAA that the president is in charge of the administration of this university."

Several board members, including Gov. Bob Riley, who is ex-officio chairman, commended Walker for helping the university achieve financial stability and other accomplishments during difficult economic times. Riley added that he hoped all segments of the university community would follow Walker's parting advice to put aside their differences and join forces to help Auburn succeed.

Richardson holds bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees from Auburn. The former AU-Montgomery faculty member and former Auburn city schools superintendent said he had planned to retire from the Alabama education system in about two years, and the timetable at Auburn would enable him to meet that goal.

"I am not interested in becoming the permanent president of Auburn University," Richardson said. But, in confronting the university's immediate challenges, he added, "I am prepared to lead Auburn."

Richardson said he will look to faculty, alumni and others for help in confronting those challenges. He is scheduled to speak at a called meeting of the University Faculty at 3 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3, at Broun Hall auditorium. Faculty leaders moved the session back a week from Jan. 27 following the change of administration.

Addressing SACS concerns about trustee involvement in administrative matters, Richardson said he

will ensure a clear separation between the policy-making powers of the board and the administrative authority of the president. For example, he said, the president's office will keep the trustees informed of major administrative decisions but will cease producing lengthy reports of many administrative activities for the board.

In discussion leading up to the selection of an interim president, faculty representative Barb Struempfer requested a delay to permit more input from faculty and others. She noted that some faculty would perceive immediate action as lack of commitment by the board for a faculty role in shared governance. She recalled that the board had cited urgency in bypassing the faculty to select an interim president in 2001 and a president in 2003.

Riley, noting that he had not been involved in earlier decisions on selection of a president, said the university could not risk further delay and had the right person on hand to address the SACS challenge and other pressing issues.

The governor promised that the search for a permanent president will involve the faculty and other major AU stakeholders and will be conducted in a manner that will help unite all segments of the university community.

"You have a unique opportunity in your hands today," Riley said. "You can squander it or you can help mold this university into the best university in the Southeast, if not the country."

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, January 27

- Littleton-Franklin Lecture: Bioterrorism expert Richard Preston, "The Demon in the Freezer: The Truth About Smallpox," 3:45 p.m., Dixon Conference Center.
- Arts & Humanities Lecture: Jim Carrier, author of "Traveler's Guide to the Civil Rights Movement," 4 p.m., Pebble Hill.
- AU Theatre: "Freakspiel," 7:30 p.m., Telfair Peet Theatre. Additional performances at same time Wednesday, Jan. 28 through Saturday, Jan. 31, and Feb. 3-7; matinee at 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb 1. Box Office: 844-4154.

Wednesday, January 28

- Gallery Talk: "Technique and Philosophy of Photographer Diane Arbus," Catherine Walsh, curator of exhibitions, 2 p.m., Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art.

Friday, January 30

- Weaver Lecture: "The Lost Dimension in Landscape Ecology," John A. Bissonette, leader of the Utah Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, 3:30 p.m., Dixon Conference Center.

Saturday, January 31

- One-Man Show: "No Show," visiting performer Doug Berky, 2:30 p.m., Peet Theater.

- Next AU Report.

Tuesday, February 3

- Meeting: University Faculty, 3 p.m., Broun Hall auditorium.

Wednesday, February 4

- Multicultural Lecture Series: Jim Gundlach of Sociology discusses voters' response to 2003 Alabama tax referendum, noon, Foy 213. Bring lunch.

Thursday, February 5

- Art Faculty Lecture Series: "Myths and Metaphors: The Art of Leo Twiggs," Marilyn Laufer, 4 p.m., Smith Museum of Fine Art.
- Museum After Hours: Music, art, refreshments and guided tours for members and visitors, 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m., Smith Museum of Fine Art. Admission free for members, \$3 for non-members.

Friday, February 6

- Meeting: Board of Trustees, Time TBA, AU-Montgomery.



AU Report Editor: Roy Summerford. Contributing editors and writers: Bob Lowry and David Granger, AU Communications; Katie Crew, Education; Cheryl Cobb, Engineering; and Mitch Emmons, Research. Photography: Jeff Etheridge and Trice Megginson, Photographic Services; and (Page 4) Alvin Bettcher, AU Hotel and Dixon Conference Center. Director of Communications: Deedie Dowdle. Assistant Vice President for Communications and Marketing: John Hachtel.

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Spirit of Excellence

Each month AU presents Spirit of Excellence awards to four staff members for outstanding performance. Recipients for January are, clockwise from top left, Edgar Stubbs of Housing and Residence Life, Willie Fitzpatrick of Facilities, Susan DeLeon of the President's Office and Vicki Meetze of Athletics.



\$3 million

AU gets grant for wireless engineering

Auburn's Samuel Ginn College of Engineering has received a \$3 million grant from the Vodafone-US Foundation as part of an effort to advance education in wireless engineering technology.

The foundation's five-year grant provides tuition and other financial support for undergraduate scholarships and graduate fellowships in wireless engineering.

AU Engineering Dean Larry Benefield said the grant will enhance the pool of highly qualified students in Auburn's wireless engineering program.

The Ginn College of Engineering is one of three schools to share \$12 million in competitive grants from the Vodafone-US Foundation. The other universities are the University of California at Berkeley and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

"The competition for this award was very tough," said 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."

"It is a unique scholarship program that we've

developed," said 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.

The foundation's selection was based a determination of strong undergraduate and degree programs in wireless engineering, outstanding research facilities, capability to develop advanced wireless engineering labs, motivation to collaborate with the other participating universities and ability to leverage the foundation's program with additional funds.

The Ginn College of Engineering began enrolling students in the wireless program in fall 2002 as Auburn became the first university in the nation to offer a bachelor's degree in wireless engineering.

Fifteen Auburn students have been named Vodafone-US Foundation Scholars for 2004.

Technology transfer office moving off campus

AU Research's Office of Technology Transfer is moving by Feb. 1 from the third floor of Samford Hall to leased office space at 215 East Thach Avenue.

"We will be on the ground floor of the building next door to the Wall Street Deli, only about two blocks from Samford Hall and the main campus," said OTT Director Jan Dowdle Thornton.

"In addition to eliminating the long stair climb that our customers have had to negotiate with our Samford Hall location, we also will reduce the parking deficit."

"We will have additional space, more than 3,000 square feet," Thornton said. "This will enable us to

complete our expansion plans that will focus our operation in three primary areas: commercialization, administration of patents and license agreements and legal affairs and compliance."

AU Vice President for Research Michael Moriarty said the office also will identify and develop broader funding sources for research support. "While there are disciplines that have more opportunities than others to garner research support, the research under way in all disciplines is important to the university," Moriarty said. "By maximizing the earning potential of our intellectual properties, we also are producing a source of support revenues for the breadth of Auburn's research activities."



Final stage

A worker touches up part of the AU Hotel's restaurant, which is in the final stage of expansion. Work is also nearing completion on exterior waterproofing and brick replacement. AU has integrated the hotel and conference center into the academic program of the College of Human Sciences.

Hotel-conference center renovations to be complete in March and April

The AU Hotel and Dixon Conference Center is in the final stage of renovation of its exterior and the hotel's restaurant.

The restaurant renovation, which started in late summer, is on course for completion in mid-March, and the exterior renovation, which began in January 2003, is due for completion by late April, says Alvin Bettcher, the hotel's director of sales and marketing.

"Our customers have been very understanding about inconveniences caused by the changes, and many have said they are looking forward to seeing the final outcome," said Bettcher. "They will soon have that chance, and so will the entire Auburn community. We think people will like what they see and experience here."

Portions of the AU-owned hotel have been draped in scaffolding for a year as crews from Stone Building Co. of Birmingham removed the original brick facing, added new waterproofing underneath and replaced the brick to upgrade the building from commercial to institutional construction standards.

Except for some changes at ground level to accommodate exterior seating for the restaurant, the hotel's exterior will look much the same as before. Inside will be a different matter as the entire first floor of the north wing will be converted into a family-oriented, moderately priced restaurant in Italian décor.

The exterior work began before West Paces Hotel Group of Atlanta signed a contract with the university in March to assume management of the hotel and conference center.

The interior changes are for an academic purpose as well as reflecting the new management team's concept of customer service, Bettcher said.

The new management team launched the restau-

rant renovation as part of a plan to upgrade the hotel's interior to international quality standards for the hospitality industry. In academic partnership with AU's College of Human Sciences, the West Paces team is integrating all aspects of hotel, restaurant and conference center management into the college's instructional program.

Bettcher said the expanded restaurant, along with other aspects of the facility, will introduce students in hotel and restaurant management and related majors to the latest technology, philosophy and management practices in the service industry. "The new restaurant and its kitchen will be a true teaching facility where students learn the best practices from expert chefs, management and staff," he added.

The restaurant's customers, as well as students, will benefit from the changes, he said. "This will be unique to the community, especially in quality of service and foods, yet we are making sure that we are not pricing ourselves out of the local market. Prices will be no more than people in the area are now paying for family dining."

The facility will seat 150 inside and up to 50 on the new terrace, which is also under construction. It will have the atmosphere of an authentic Italian bistro and will include a Starbucks coffee stand next to the terrace.

The restaurant will be named Ariccia, after the hilltop town near Rome that is home to the College of Human Sciences summer program in Italy.

The hotel's restaurant management also operates the Museum Cafe at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art. Bettcher said that restaurant is becoming a destination in itself for area residents and visitors seeking a more upscale and leisurely luncheon service usually available only in larger cities.

AU Marching Band wins Sudler Trophy

The AU Marching Band has been named the 2004 recipient of the Sudler Intercollegiate Marching Band Trophy.



Many collegiate band leaders cite the Sudler Trophy as the top award for college and university marching bands in the nation.

Administered by the John Philip Sousa Foundation of West Lafayette, Ind., the Sudler Trophy is awarded annually to a university marching band that has demonstrated the highest of musical standards and innovative marching routines and ideas, and which has made important contributions to the field.

The award recognizes long-term contributions of a school's marching band and its directors rather than a one-time contest. The AU Marching Band is directed by Professor Johnny Vinson, a member of the Department of Music faculty since 1976.

Officers of the John Philip Sousa Foundation will present the award on Sept. 25 at halftime of the Auburn-Citadel football game and in conjunction with the 2004 Auburn Alumni Band Reunion.

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