Portal art adding visual identity to colleges, schools

In the 151 years since AU’s founding, its colleges and schools have carved out unique memories for their students and alumni.

University officials are seeking to reflect upon that history by placing sculpted panels on pedestrian walkway entry portals, with each scene depicting the history and mission of the nearest AU school or college.

“This is a form of public art that captures the many facets of Auburn,” said Catherine Love of AU’s Office of Campus Planning and Space Management. “The portals will also have terra cotta rosettes copied from those on Samford Hall.”

The entry portals will have two 10-foot-high columns, with each column having four 18-by-24-inch panels, one on each side, showing various aspects of a college and its related professions. As matching columns, they will have the same four panels, but on different sides.

The first two sets of panels, representing the Harrison School of Pharmacy and the College of Sciences and Mathematics, were added last week to columns at Lockaby to lead water resources center

AU President Ed Richardson has announced that Graeme Lockaby, associate dean and professor in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, will lead Auburn’s newly created Water Resources Center.

The center, part of AU’s Institute for Natural Resources, has the mission to improve the management and use of water in Alabama and the Southeast by addressing problems caused by salt water intrusion, contamination, weather, lower water tables and inadequate distribution systems.

“Dr. Lockaby’s professional experience is well-suited to lead Auburn’s work on an issue critical to all Alabamians in the 21st century,” Richardson said. “Under his leadership, Auburn will help landowners and governmental agencies better manage water resources. This will lead to greater economic, environmental and quality of life benefits. The effective use of water will blend nicely with AU’s effort to increase biomass production for alternative fuel generation.”

Lockaby and the AU Water Resources Committee will begin by planning water management programs and hosting a national water management conference in June.
AU wins award for environmental education program in Black Belt

The Environmental Education Association of Alabama has presented its Best Environmental Education Curriculum Award for 2006 to the AU Environmental Institute’s Black Belt Environmental Science and Arts Program. The association presented the award during its recent annual conference at Chauba State Park.

The Black Belt educational program offers environmental science and arts field days to schools in Alabama’s Black Belt counties. The program began in 2001 in Wilcox County and expanded to Macon County in 2006. Field days are being planned for spring 2007 and will include classes from Bullock County for the first time.

Coordinator Kay Stone said the AU program has been a positive experience for everyone involved in it. “We work with a wonderful group of principals and teachers in all the schools in the program. The students love the outdoor classroom environment and hands-on activities.”

The program seeks to enhance classroom curricula for science as well as literary and visual arts while reinforcing math and reading skills. The monetary portion of the award will be used to buy supplies for future field days. For more information about the Black Belt Environmental Science and Arts Program, visit www.auburn.edu/education/blackblt.php.

Upcoming Events

**Art Exhibitions**

**Biggin Gallery** “Drawing on Alabama,” juried exhibition of notable works by Alabama artists, Biggin Gallery, final week

**JULIE COLLINS SMITH MUSEUM** “Alabama Masters: Selections from the collection,” through May 12, 4 p.m., 201 University Hall

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20**

**AU Faculty Seminar** “Virtual Learning Communities: A framework for Engaging Students in Online Classrooms,” noon-1:30 p.m., Fry 208;

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27**

**LITTLETON-FRANKLIN LECTURE** “Race, Genes, Intelligence and Behavior,” medical anthropologist Alondra Yvette Oubre, author of “Race, Genes and Ability: Rethinking Ethnic Differences.” 4 p.m., auditorium, Laboratory Sciences Center

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28**

**PUBLIC LECTURE** “The African American Spiritual: Song Creating Community,” Rosephanye Dunn Powell of Department of Music, 4 p.m., Graubahn Library, part of Discover Auburn Lecture Series

**THURSDAY, MARCH 1**


**FRIDAY, MARCH 2**


Executive Director of Communications & Marketing: Dondie Dovelle

**ReturnType**

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Shelby Center

The skyline on AU’s west side is changing fast as workers apply the last portal to the Shelby Center for Engineering Technology. The center, at the north end of the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, is related to the college’s work in transportation technology, ranging from a new generation of paving materials to the next generation of automobile electronics.

AU marketing efforts in 2006 recognized by national group

The Harrison School of Pharmacy’s annual report won the annual report category. The 24-page comprehensive booklet outlines the school’s mission and vision as well as its departments and programs. The publication is illustrated with photography that features the school’s new education and clinic wing, which opened January 2006.

SIAA presented the Bronze Award to Auburn in the total public relations category for promotion of its Sesquicentennial Celebration. Last year AU celebrated 150 years with several events, including festivities surrounding Founders Day last February. In the total advertising category, AU won the award of merit for efforts to promote Student Ambassadors. The campaign included postcards advertising various student programs; a brochure mailed to students; and several print advertisements.

SIAA's newly advertising awards to specifically recognize the creativity and communication accomplishments of the service industry.

Visiting speaker to discuss race-based theories about differences in IQ scores

A medical writer whose work challenges race- based theories about differences in IQ scores and social behaviors will speak at AU next week as part of the Littleton-Franklin Lecture Series. Alondra Yvette Oubre, author of Race, Genes and Ability: Rethinking Ethnic Differences, will present a public lecture on the same topic at 4 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 27, in the Sciences and Mathematics Auditorium of the Sciences Laboratory Center.

Oubre, who holds a Ph.D. in medical anthropology from the University of California at Berkeley, is a health care consultant and has researched and written extensively on the role of developmental biology in ethnic behavior.

In her lectures and writings, Oubre offers scientific evidence against notions of racial differences in intelligence and ability at birth. She also uses a multidisciplinary approach to analyze the evolution of human cognition.

Play about Gee’s Bend quilters coming to Auburn

The Alabama Shakespeare Festival’s original production of “Gee’s Bend,” a drama with music based on the life of a rural Alabama quilter, will come to AU’s Telfair Peet Theatre at 2:30 p.m. Sunday.

The play, which recently had its world premiere in Montgomery, is on a tour of the state. ASF commissioned Mobile native Elyzabeth Gregory Wilder to write the play as part of the festival’s Southern Writers’ Project. Wilder’s plays have been produced in London and New York, and she recently wrote for the prime-time TV series “Love Monkey.”

Set in the Wilcox county community of Gee’s Bend, the play of the same name follows the lives of Sadie Pettway and her family through three eras: the Great Depression of the 1930s; the Civil Rights era of the 1950s and ‘60s, when the Gee’s Bend Ferry was closed and the community became even more isolated; and the present day.

“This is a unique opportunity to share a professionally produced new play with local audiences about a cherished aspect of our state’s cultural heritage,” said Dan LaRocque, AU Theatre professor and chair.

The performance at AU is part of a statewide tour, following a sold-out run at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival in Montgomery, with stops in Selma, Camden, Fairhope, Gee’s Bend, Marion and Birmingham.

The Auburn performance is free to AU students. Tickets for the public are available through the Opelika Arts Association. For information on ticket prices and availability, call 844-4154 or 749-8105.

This project is assisted through grants from the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

U.S. transportation official to speak at conference

John Bobo, administrator of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Research and Innovative Technology Administration, will address the 50th annual Transportation Engineering Conference Wednesday at the AU Hotel.

Bobo will also tour the National Center for Asphalt Technology and other AU transportation research projects. Gov. Bob Riley is also slated to speak at the conference, which is designed for federal and state highway personnel, contractors, county engineers, vendors, researchers and faculty.

For more information, visit www.engce.auburn.edu or call 844-4370.

Speaker to discuss African American spirituals in South

Rosaphanye Dunn Powell will discuss “The African American Spiritual: Song Creating Community” in a public lecture at 3 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 28, in the Special Collections and Archives Department of Draughon Library.

The African American slave community created songs as tools for worship, communication, community and personal expression. From the perspective of the spiritual as the “heart” of the slave community, Powell will explore the religious, historical and sociological contexts of these songs in the daily life of slaves.

Powell is an associate professor of voice and coordinator of voice studies in the Music Department in the College of Liberal Arts. A researcher, arranger and performer of African American spirituals, she has presented recitals and lectures on the topic around the country. The lecture is part of the spring semester’s “Discover Auburn” series, sponsored by the AU Libraries, the Caroline Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities and the AU Bookstore.

Pharmacy professor receives national honors

Bruce Berger of the Harrison School of Pharmacy has won the 2007 Wiederholt Prize of the American Pharmacists Association. Berger, professor and head of the Department of Pharmacy Care Systems, will receive the award at the association’s annual meeting in Atlanta, on March 18.

The award is for the outstanding research publication in the economic, social and administrative sciences within the pharmacy field. Berger was the lead author of the paper titled “Evaluation of Software-Based Telephone Counseling to Enhance Medication Persistence Among Patients with Multiple Sclerosis,” which was published in the July-August, 2006, issue of the association’s peer reviewed journal. Co-authors were Hui-gang Liang and Karen S. Hudmon.

The paper reported the results of the researchers’ study of efforts to encourage patients with multiple sclerosis to continue taking their medication.