Nine trustee nominations go to Alabama Senate for vote

Gov. Robert Bentley announced nine nominees to the Auburn University Board of Trustees on Monday. The nominations from Auburn’s Trustee Selection Committee go to the Alabama Senate for review and a vote on confirmation.

A timetable for Senate consideration was not available as of Wednesday morning.

Six Board of Trustees members whose terms recently expired or were about to expire were nominated for an additional term, and three new nominees were selected for other seats.

Those selected for first-term appointments were B.T. Roberts of Mobile in Alabama District 1, Jimmy Sanford of Prattville in District 4 and Elizabeth Huntley of Clanton in District 6.

Those nominated for reappointment were Virginia Thompson in District 2, Jimmy Rane in District 3, Bobby Lowder in District 3-Lee County, Sarah Newton in District 7, the Rev. Byron Franklin in District 9 and at-large member Charles McCrary. Thompson previously represented District 3-Lee County but now has a house in Montgomery, and Lowder has moved from Montgomery in District 2 to Auburn.

Bentley thanked the nearly 200 individuals nominated for consideration for the nine positions. “We’re fortunate that so many highly qualified men and women in the Auburn family are eager to serve,” said Bentley, who, as governor, is president of the university’s Board of Trustees.

The selection committee consists of the governor, current Auburn trustees John Blackwell and Raymond Harbert and two voting members of the Auburn Alumni Association Board — Bobby Poundstone, Nancy Fortner and Howard Nelson. Fortner and Nelson alternated as the second Alumni Association representative voting on appointments.

Former presidential press aide to speak at commencement

Robert Gibbs, a longtime adviser and strategist to President Barack Obama and former White House press secretary, will deliver the commencement address to Auburn University graduates at the spring ceremony May 9.

Auburn will award an estimated 3,139 degrees during the 9:30 a.m. ceremony, which will mark the first commencement exercises to take place in Jordan-Hare Stadium since 1968. A live video stream of the event will be available on the university’s website at www.auburn.edu/graduationlive.

Gibbs, an Auburn native and son of former Auburn library faculty members, graduated from North Carolina State University in 1993.

“I couldn’t be happier to give something back by speaking to Auburn’s 2011 graduating class, who enter an exciting world at an exciting time,” said Gibbs. “To me, Auburn University is the heart of the community I was born and raised in and where I will always call home.”

Gibbs has been an adviser and strategist to President Obama from the early days of Obama’s 2004 Senate race to his election to the White House. Most recently, Gibbs has served as the president’s press secretary, presiding over daily press briefings at the White House.

Gibbs joined Obama’s 2004 U.S. Senate campaign as communications director in mid-April 2004 and held the same title at the onset of the 2008 presidential campaign until becoming senior strategist for communications during the general election. During the four years of intense campaigning and close contact, Gibbs became an integral part of President Obama’s team.

Gibbs advised President Obama on politics, strategy and messaging. According to The New York Times, he spent more time with the president than any other adviser. Gibbs held the role as the press secretary of the Obama administration from January 2009 until stepping down this past February.

Engineering senior receives coveted fellowship from NSF

Patrick Smyth, a senior in mechanical engineering in Auburn’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, has been awarded a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship.

The fellowship provides three years of support at $30,000 annually and an additional $10,500 cost of education allowance. The fellowship program seeks to promote the vitality and diversity of the scientific and engineering communities in the United States.

Smyth is a member of the University Honors College with a 4.0 grade point average. His undergraduate research is a joint venture between the Department of Mechanical Engineering and the College of Veterinary Medicine. As a competitive undergraduate

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Architecture dean in Philadelphia named head of college at Auburn

Vini Nathan, dean of the School of Architecture at Philadelphia University, has been named dean of Auburn University’s College of Architecture, Design and Construction, effective July 1.

“Dr. Nathan’s experience, in the classroom and as a practitioner and administrator, will be a valuable asset not only to the college but also to the entire Auburn University community,” Provost Mary Ellen Mazey said.

At Philadelphia University since 1997, Nathan has been involved in a range of curricular, administrative and strategic initiatives, including recruiting faculty, assisting in accreditation efforts, helping to establish study abroad programs in such countries as Denmark and Australia and developing curricula enhancements, such as an artist-in-residence program and an annual guest speakers series.

Nathan has taught in architecture and interior design programs at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, the University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, Michigan State University, the University of Minnesota and the New York Institute of Technology as well as at Philadelphia University.

Nathan was a practicing architect in New Delhi, India, and more recently worked as an architect for Walker Group/CNI in New York, a full-service architectural design firm. She was part of the team that worked on the Kuala Lumpur City Center design venture with Cesar Pelli, former dean of the School of Architecture at Yale University.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in architecture from Anna University, India, a master’s degree in interior design from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and a Ph.D. in architecture from the University of Michigan.

NSF Fellowship

Continued from Page 1

research fellow, Smyth works in Robert Jackson’s Multiscale Tribology Laboratory as he seeks to characterize and compare the surface roughness profiles of cartilage located within various joints of the equine limb.

The research seeks to expand understanding of the mechanisms controlling the performance of healthy joints in horses and humans.

Outside the classroom and lab, Smyth serves as the Honors College representative to the Committee of 19, a student organization leading the war on hunger both on Auburn’s campus and on a global level.

Smyth will graduate in May and plans to study mechanical engineering with an emphasis in tribology at Georgia Tech in the fall.

- Margaret Ann Killam

Braxton-Lloyd, students receive 2011 Algernon Sydney Sullivan Awards

Two students and faculty member Kimberly Braxton-Lloyd were recognized with Auburn University’s highest honor for humanitarian service April 12 at the annual President’s Luncheon in the Student Center ballroom.

The Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award was presented to seniors Roy Glasgow and Rachel Coffey, and Braxton-Lloyd, assistant dean for health services in the Harrison School of Pharmacy and director of the Auburn University Pharmaceutical Care Center.

The national honor has been presented at Auburn since 1951 as a reminder of the noblest human qualities exemplified by Algernon Sydney Sullivan, a prominent humanitarian and first president of the New York Southern Society, now the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Foundation. Each year, Auburn bestows the honor on one male and one female student from the graduating class, and one non-student.

Glasgow, a philosophy major with a minor in military science, is a cadet in Auburn’s Army ROTC program. He has achieved the title of Battalion Commander, the highest rank a student can earn.

Coffey, a communications disorders major, served as the Alternative Student Breaks Coordinator and received the Laverne Taylor Flanagan Volunteerism Award in 2010 from Panhellenic.

In the fall of 2009, Braxton-Lloyd was influential in the Harrison School of Pharmacy efforts to provide the H1N1 vaccine for free to the entire campus community. The professor was honored by the school’s students in 2001 with the Hargreaves Faculty Mentor of the Year Award.

- Amy Weaver

Campus Calendar

FRIDAY, APRIL 22
DANCE PERFORMANCE “Gotta Dance,” 7:30 p.m., Telfair Peet Theatre; also 7:30 p.m. Saturday

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27
LAST DAY of classes for spring semester

MONDAY, MAY 2
FINALS Monday through Friday

TUESDAY, MAY 3
MEETING University Senate, 3 p.m., Broun Hall Auditorium

FRIDAY, MAY 6
NEXT Auburn Report

MONDAY, MAY 9
COMMENCEMENT 9:30 a.m., Jordan-Hare Stadium
Board approves proration fee for students in 2012 academic year to help offset cuts in appropriations

Auburn students this fall will share part of the financial impact of the recent 15 percent proration and other recent cuts in the state’s education budget. The Auburn University Board of Trustees voted on April 15 to add a $200 per semester proration fee along with a 4 percent tuition increase for the 2011-12 academic year.

Executive Vice President Don Large said both the tuition increase and the proration fee were made necessary by a series of cuts to state appropriations, both in annual budgets and further cuts due to proration since the national recession began in late 2007. Although the recession is officially over, Alabama and most other states can find little evidence of a recovery in either economic growth or state revenues. Proration is a mid-year or later cut in appropriations that have already been budgeted for that year and is triggered when state revenues fail to meet projections.

Large noted that in the late 1990s, state appropriations accounted for approximately two-thirds of the university’s annual operating budget, and tuition accounted for most of the remaining third. That mix then began a shift, with state appropriations and tuition each contributing about 45 percent to the operating budget by fiscal 2008, when the recession began to show up in state appropriations. The shift then accelerated in response to the national economic crisis so that by 2011, state appropriations were only 29 percent of the university’s operating budget, and tuition and fees now account for 60 percent of the total.

Large said the tuition increase and proration fee will provide some breathing room for university operations but were not designed to fully offset recent, ongoing state budget cuts. He noted that a tuition increase of more than 40 percent would be necessary if the university were to fully address the approximately $100 million in appropriations lost since 2008 due to the state budget problems. The purpose of a proration fee, Large said, is to allow the board the flexibility to examine the fee annually and phase it out when it is no longer needed.

Undergraduate tuition for 2011-12 was set at $304 per credit hour for Alabama students and $912 for non-resident undergraduates, up from the current $292 and $876, respectively. The rate applies to full-time students for the first 12 hours, after which there is no additional charge. The $200 proration fee is a flat rate for all students except for a limited number of those on full-tuition scholarship.

Phi Beta Kappa celebrates its 10th anniversary on campus

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Auburn University’s chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa Society. Founded in 1776 at the College of William and Mary, Phi Beta Kappa is the oldest honor society in the nation and widely recognized as the most prestigious student academic honor of its type.

After four decades of work by members of both the Auburn faculty and the community who had been initiated at universities around the country, Phi Beta Kappa approved the installation of a chapter at Auburn in 2001.

Phi Beta Kappa recognizes academic excellence in the liberal arts and sciences, focusing on studies in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences, including mathematics. The society’s founding members challenged the non-intellectual emphasis of earlier university student groups and promoted the seeking of higher education fostered by freedom of inquiry and expression — all in the pursuit of wisdom.

Efforts to obtain a chapter at Auburn began in 1962, but the first formal application was sent to the Phi Beta Kappa committee on qualifications in 1970; this would be the first of many denied requests. Before Phi Beta Kappa would grant a chapter for Auburn, the society’s committee on qualifications challenged the university to clarify the role of liberal arts in its curriculum, expand its library, award more academic scholarships and establish a comprehensive honors program.

James E. Foy, dean of students in the 1960s, initiated the efforts to secure Phi Beta Kappa at Auburn. Later, Joyce Rothschild, a professor of English, played an integral role in the successful application process.

“Auburn’s genuine commitment to establishing a broadened curriculum for the liberal arts and sciences was what gave us the inspiration for seeing our mission through,” said Rothschild. “With the establishment of the honors program and the Littleton-Franklin Distinguished Lecturer Series as well as an increase in academic scholarships and improved library holdings and services, we were confident that the national committee on qualifications would consider our university worthy of sheltering a Phi Beta Kappa chapter.”

During the presidency of Harry M. Philpott, Auburn’s president from 1965 to 1980, the university saw an expansion in the arts and humanities that would continue through the next two decades through the efforts of succeeding presidents. As president in the 1980s, James E. Martin was responsible for doubling the size of the library, expanding its holdings and securing its membership in the Association of Research Libraries. William V. Muse, who served as president during the 1990s, made Phi Beta Kappa membership a priority for Auburn while significantly strengthening Auburn’s liberal arts and sciences.

Under the leadership of these presidents, Auburn garnered recognition as a major comprehensive research university.

“Phi Beta Kappa has long been the premier way of recognizing outstanding students at American colleges and universities,” said Bert Hitchcock, current Phi Beta Kappa President. “It serves as an index of the intellectual quality of a university.”

– Margaret Ann Killam
Honoring first Veterinary Medicine dean

Historic home to house new center in Human Sciences

The historic Halliday-Cary-Pick House will become the newly developed Cary Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies at Auburn University.

June Henton, dean of Auburn’s College of Human Sciences, made the announcement April 11 at the ninth annual Spring Symposium for the Women’s Philanthropy Board, which will relocate to the Cary Center. “This historic gift and subsequent creation of the Cary Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies is a tremendous benefit for Auburn University and the Auburn community,” Henton said.

At 360 N. College St., the Halliday-Cary-Pick House was built in the 1840s and is the second oldest surviving house in Auburn.

The Cary Center will integrate the Women’s Philanthropy Board into its operations and offer programs related to financial and philanthropic responsibility, nonprofit leadership and mentoring. Plans for the Center include the development of distance education courses, certificate and degree programs and research.

Henton said the creation of the Cary Center is in tandem with the announcement of a new minor in philanthropy and nonprofit studies for undergraduate students at Auburn. The minor will be offered through the Department of Consumer Affairs in the College of Human Sciences and students can begin to pursue this credential as early as summer of 2011. The Cary Center will serve as a nationally recognized venue to promote the curriculum of the new minor.

Frances Pick Dillard, a Women’s Philanthropy Board founding member and steward of the family homestead, said she shares the enthusiasm for the establishment of the Cary Center.

“Our family has upheld traditions of patriotism, responsibility, leadership, mentoring and philanthropy for generations,” said Dillard. “We are thrilled with the establishment of the Cary Center and look forward to the impact that this work will make on current and future generations of leaders and philanthropists.”

The benefits of the historic home will reach far beyond the College of Human Sciences. For faculty and students in interior design and architecture, the space will be an example of 19th and 20th century design, preservation and architecture. The Cary Center will permanently house the archives of Charles Allen Cary and other artifacts important to the field of veterinary medicine and the students and faculty in the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Henton said the center was named in honor of Cary, the original owner of the home, for the leadership qualities he displayed as the first dean of Auburn’s College of Veterinary Medicine.

“The establishment of the Cary Center in the Halliday-Cary-Pick House will preserve Dr. Cary’s legacy and demonstrates our commitment to the advancement of Auburn University,” Henton said.

Plans are for the Cary Center to be open by July 1, with a formal dedication scheduled in the fall.

National association selects Parr for early-career award

Brian Parr, an assistant professor of agriscience education in the College of Education, has been named the Outstanding Young Agricultural Educator by the American Association for Agricultural Education.

The award recognizes the top faculty members in agricultural education who have served in the field for less than seven years. Parr was recognized recently during the 108th Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists annual convention in Corpus Christi, Texas.

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