Graduation

Vincent “Bo” Jackson, Auburn University’s second Heisman Trophy winner and 1995 Auburn graduate, will deliver the commencement address to this year’s Auburn graduates at spring ceremonies May 9.

Auburn will award an estimated 2,823 degrees during two ceremonies in Beard-Eaves-Memorial Coliseum. The total includes 2,164 bachelor’s degrees, 357 master’s degrees, 222 professional degrees, five specialist degrees and 75 doctorates. A live video stream of the events will be available on the university’s Web site (www.auburn.edu/graduationlive).

The 10 a.m. ceremony will include the colleges and schools of Engineering; Forestry and Wildlife Sciences; Liberal Arts; and Sciences and Mathematics. The 2 p.m. ceremony will be held for the colleges and schools of Agriculture; Architecture, Design and Construction; Business; Education; Human Sciences; and Nursing. Auburn’s professional schools, the School of Pharmacy and the College of Veterinary Medicine, will hold separate ceremonies for their graduates.

Jackson, who will speak at both ceremonies, is the university’s second commencement speaker since Auburn established the practice of having an invited speaker last year, following a request from the Student Government Association in fall 2007. In announcing the addition of commencement speakers, President Jay Gogue said the initiative would provide an opportunity to bring nationally recognized and distinguished speakers to present the keynote address to Auburn graduates.

Jackson is widely known for his athletic accomplishments and successful business career since his retirement from football and baseball. He was inducted into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame in 1996 and the College Football Hall of Fame in 1998. His business accomplishments include serving as president of his

Five simple words help student work past severe disability to earn finance degree

Jake Giambrone lives by five little words: “Don’t sweat the small stuff.”

Yet for Jake everything from brushing his teeth to going to class is anything but a small task.

In December 2000, when he was 15, Jake broke his neck in an Auburn High School wrestling accident, leaving him paralyzed below the neck. Through years of experimental treatments and surgeries, though, he has regained partial use of his upper body.

Now 23, Jake will graduate from Auburn University with a degree in finance on May 9. He has a 3.5 GPA, is a member of several honor societies and plans to attend law school in the fall.

In the coming weeks Jake will hear back from several law schools throughout the Southeast, and also will find out if he has been chosen as a recipient of the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Graduate Scholarship, one of the largest and most competitive scholarship programs in the nation. The scholarship provides up to $50,000 per year for up to six years of study to deserving college seniors and recent college graduates. Approximately 1,000 students are nominated for the program each year, with only 30 receiving the foundation’s financial assistance to attend the nation’s top graduate and professional schools.

If he wins the scholarship, Jake said the money would not only help pay for his tuition, but also his living expenses, which for him is much more than just rent. He also has to pay for two at-home nurses, specialized transportation, therapy and doctor’s appointments.

These expenses that arise from being disabled are a big reason, he says, for wanting to go into law and become an advocate on behalf of the disabled and terminally ill. “Law would level the playing field by utilizing my mental capabilities, not physical limitations, in my quest to help others,” Jake wrote in one of his scholarship essays.

He plans to pursue a degree in tax law to represent and empower others in unfortunate circumstances similar to the one he found himself in eight years ago. “I want to continue learning and growing in this area [tax law] so that I can share my expertise with people in need of just compensation and long-range planning,” he wrote.

In the future, Jake also wants to play a bigger role in support of stem cell research, of which he has seen the benefits first-hand. The summer before Jake started at Auburn, he went to China to have experimental

See Giambrone, page 2
Coming from Temple

New vice president to assume duties at Auburn in June

Ainsley Carry, formerly of Temple University, will assume the duties of vice president for student affairs at Auburn on June 15.

Carry, who was associate vice president for student affairs and dean of students at Temple, was named to lead Auburn’s Division of Student Affairs following a national search.

“We are excited to welcome Dr. Carry to the Auburn family as he brings with him a demonstrated passion for working with students and student programs as well as developing student leaders,” said President Jay Gogue.

“His tenure as an administrator at other Southeastern Conference institutions combined with his experience in the area of strategic planning will prove invaluable for leading Auburn’s Division of Student Affairs.”

At Temple, Carry led 10 departments, including university housing, campus recreation, student activities, career development services, judicial affairs, orientation, leadership programs, student center and student media.

“The two things that impressed me most about Auburn are the highly engaged, involved student body, and top-level leadership that is academically focused and committed,” Carry said. “There is obviously a real passion felt for the university here; even the Auburn Creed speaks to me, signifying as it does a very special place.”

Originally from the Southeast, Carry said he considers himself a “product of the SEC,” having gained experience at the University of Florida and the University of Arkansas. “This is a homecoming for my family and me,” he said.

Carry holds a bachelor’s degree in food and resource economics, a master’s in counselor education and a doctorate in higher education administration, all from the University of Florida. He will receive an executive master’s in business administration from Temple University in 2010. With 17 years experience as a college administrator, Carry has held positions at Southern Methodist University, the University of Arkansas, the University of Florida and Temple.

As Auburn’s vice president for student affairs, Carry will be responsible for services and programs to enhance the academic, physical and social welfare for the university student population. He will oversee the offices of the dean of students, student government, student publications and media, career development services, campus recreation and sports, student organizations, Greek life, international student life, judicial affairs, student residence life, student orientation and retention, the parents’ association, student community services, the student recreation center, the university student center, the medical clinic and the student leadership institute.

In addition to his experience as an administrator, Carry has served as a leadership educator, consultant and strategic planner. He has often given the keynote address at student leadership conferences and has consulted with colleges and universities on strategies for building leadership programs and strategic plans. He has served as a lead facilitator for the NCAA Student Athlete Leadership Conference and the Leadership-Shape Institute.

— Katie Wilder

Giambrone

continued from page 1

stem cell surgery. Two days after the surgery Jake gained movement in his wrists. “After I get a law degree, people will probably pay more attention to me,” Jake said.

“It is hard to be around Jake for long and not draw inspiration from him,” wrote Bill Buskist, a psychology professor at Auburn, in his letter nominating Jake for the scholarship. “I am not sure what it is exactly—his sense of humor, his humility, his optimism, his zest for life, or some combination of these things that rubs off on everyone who spends much time with him.” Jake said the thing he will miss most about Auburn is the overall kindness of the people here.

“I’ll miss the random people that are really helpful,” Jake said. “Here, everyone always holds the door open for me, which is a big help.”

Even after he leaves campus, Jake will retain a family connection to Auburn through his father, Joseph Giambrone, who is a professor in the Department of Poultry Science.

— Lisa Marshall
Although their gowns will be the traditional black, new master’s and doctoral graduates at Auburn’s spring commencement on May 9 will be wearing different trim colors than in the past.

Auburn University has negotiated a change in the colors of the sashes known as graduate hoods. The new colors will be the university’s trademark colors of navy and orange, which are readily associated with Auburn.

The previous colors were powder blue and salmon, but no record was found indicating why or when these colors were chosen. “A long-time interest in incorporating our true school colors into the hoods combined with a timely opportunity through the vendor has allowed us to finally do it,” said Graduation Committee Cochair Dale Coleman of the Department of Animal Sciences.

Committee Cochair Pamela Ulrich of the Department of Consumer Affairs said no university funds are involved in the change.

The new hoods will first be used during the upcoming spring 2009 commencement. Although the previous rental hoods will be retired then, Auburn graduates who have previously purchased their hoods may still use them. Coleman and Ulrich said these colors will continue to be recognized and honored. Alumni have a choice of keeping and wearing the hoods they first received or purchasing hoods with the new official Auburn colors. To purchase new hoods, contact the Auburn University Bookstore in Haley Center at 844-4241.

For more information about the new hood colors, see the Web site www.auburn.edu/graduation.

Auburn will hold its 13th annual Family Fun Day for university employees and their families on May 21 on the lawn of the President’s Home on Mell Street.

Approximately 5,000 people attend Family Fun Day each year.

The 2:45 p.m.-5:30 p.m. event will include games, various types of entertainment and free food and refreshments.

Adults and children alike can win prizes, play games, listen to music and participate in more than 20 activities, including Ring Toss, Horse Shoes, Wheel of Fortune, Peg Ball, Golf, Nerf Football Throw, Bingo, Basketball Shoot, Roll Ball, Dice Throw, Bean Bags, Duck Pond, Fishing Booth, Cup Throw, Animal Balloons, Find Toys in the Sand and the Moon Walk.

This will be the sixth consecutive year the event has been on the lawn of the President’s Home. With limited parking in the area, Tiger Transit will take passengers to and from the event, making stops at the old Credit Union location on Magnolia Avenue, the coliseum parking lot and the corner of Mell Street and Samford Avenue. In addition, buses to and from other locations will make stops within one or two blocks of the festival site.

More than 75 university offices and community businesses are donating prizes for persons attending the festival.

Information cards about the event are being mailed to all university employees. Each participant may use his or her card to enter the drawing for door prizes. Employees who present their personalized cards to the T-shirt table will be eligible for a Family Fun Day T-shirt.

— Kevin Loden

West Magnolia Avenue has become a construction zone as contractors for the City of Auburn perform extensive modifications on the east-west traffic artery along the north side of campus. The main part of the work is around the intersection with Donahue Drive and in front of the College of Business, where the hillside will be lowered to improve sight lines and turn lanes altered to improve traffic flow and safety. Although raised crosswalks were in the initial plans, modifications call for street-level crossings, instead. With a target date for completion by early September, the work will continue through the summer and possibly through the start of fall semester.
Rolling orange

Tiger Transit buses will be much more distinctive and easier to spot in the future. The first of a new line of buses with a distinctive orange, blue and white color scheme joined the Tiger Transit fleet this week. Plans call for adopting the distinctive color scheme for the entire fleet as buses are replaced with newer vehicles. The new color scheme will provide a sharp distinction between the university buses and others serving Lee County.

Eye of the Tiger (Transit)

As security measure, transit system adds video cameras

In an effort to increase security and service for its riders, Auburn’s Tiger Transit bus system is now equipped with video cameras.

Each of the system’s 51 buses has been outfitted with the cameras. “We installed the camera system to increase student safety and confidence,” said David George, the university’s director of Parking and Transit Services. “It is another way we are improving the system.”

The cameras offer transit administrators a comprehensive view of the interior of the bus, the driver area and the front door. And each camera has infrared capability, allowing them to also function at night.

George said the new video system is another way the transit system is evolving to better serve its riders. In 2007, officials installed Trans-Loc, a GPS system that allows riders to monitor buses in motion and the routes in real time on a detailed map displayed on the Internet or a Web-enabled cellular phone. “The Trans-Loc system has been a huge success with thousands of hits per month on the Web site,” he said. “The new video system is another way we are working to meet the needs of our riders.”

In addition to the video system, Tiger Transit has increased the number of buses equipped with bike racks. Now, 63 percent of the fleet have the racks, which assures that all passengers using routes that serve off-campus locations have access to the racks while riding the transit.

The transit system has become an increasingly popular means of transportation for Auburn students getting to and from campus since it came online in the late ‘90s. The system, which passed the 2 million mark for ridership two years ago, continues to see an unprecedented number of riders. Ridership from 2007 to 2008 increased by 216,000 riders, and George said the 2009 numbers are on track to be even higher. He attributes the increase in ridership to an increase in the service and reliability of the system.

Modifying existing routes, adding new routes and increasing the number of buses per route, especially during peak hours, are all ways administrators seek to improve the system, he said.

With such improvements as well as Trans-Loc and the video system, Auburn’s Tiger Transit continues to be a leader among campus transit systems at universities across the country, George said, adding that officials from other universities often contact Auburn to find out how Tiger Transit is evolving and how it maintains its success.

“Many other schools have told us that we have one of the top systems in the nation,” George said. “We tell them it is because we continue to incorporate changes in order to maintain quality service for our students.”

— Katie Wilder

Slaton to receive award at State Capitol

Alabama Secretary of State Beth Chapman has chosen Christa Slaton of Auburn’s College of Liberal Arts to receive the National Association of Secretaries of State Medallion.

The national award recognizes outstanding service and dedication to furthering the association’s mission of promoting fair and honest elections, civic education and service to state government.

Slaton is associate dean in the College of Liberal Arts and a professor in the Department of Political Science, where she has led outreach programs to help local and state officials in Alabama and nationally improve the quality of election services. She will be formally recognized in an awards ceremony at 11 a.m. Wednesday, May 6, in the Old House Chamber of the Alabama State Capitol.
ATAC program helps local firm gain competitive edge during recession

While many firms are sitting on the sidelines waiting for the current economic slowdown to take a positive turn, an Auburn outreach unit is helping a local firm, Hoerbiger Automotive Comfort Systems Inc., use the economic situation to strengthen its competitive position.

Hoerbiger, which manufactures hydraulic lift cylinders for convertible tops and trunk lift gates for a number of the top automakers, has embarked on a Lean Enterprise Certification Program with the Auburn Technical Assistance Center.

Nationally recognized by the Society of Manufacturing Engineers and the Association for Manufacturing Excellence, Lean Enterprise Certification prepares an organization to implement lean manufacturing improvements. The program involves training in lean continuous improvement tools and techniques, on-the-floor implementation and application assistance, coaching in sustaining management, and it prepares company personnel to take the AME/SME Lean Bronze Knowledge Certification examination.

ATAC began its work with Hoerbiger in July 2008. To date, the company credits more than $240,000 in cost savings and efficiency improvements to the program. Among the benefits: Plant officials say the program has prevented the loss of at least three jobs on two production lines; freed up floor capacity to enable an additional production line producing some 200 units per day; has saved the company in the range of $2,000 or more in avoided equipment expenditures; enabled about $2,000 in new equipment investments; reduced the need for overtime; and is helping it to establish better goals and objectives as it pursues additional improvement applications.

“We also have greatly reduced the amount of our work in process, which significantly holds down inventory costs,” said Production Coordinator Marie Buchanan. “And by improving the cross-training of our operators, we have not only improved production efficiency, but we have avoided layoffs.”

ATAC has trained more than 85 percent of Hoerbiger’s 35 production employees through the LECP initiative. Those efforts netted a reduction in overall cycle time of more than 53 percent on one line and a reduction in operator distance traveled of nearly 9,000 feet per shift.

The initiative also has shown bottom-line results in the area of quality, according to Human Resource Manager Kimberly Couch, who noted that quality inspection is now integrated into the manufacturing process instead of being a separate and disconnected step.

— Mitch Emmons

Auburn faculty, student groups urge Legislature to reject bill on tuition

In a special, called meeting on Tuesday, the University Senate unanimously approved a resolution and a letter asking the Alabama Legislature to reject legislation that would limit the university’s ability to raise tuition.

University Senate members noted that the Student Government Association is also asking the Legislature to reject the proposed bill, which would involve the Legislature in some decisions regarding tuition increases.

The measure, which has drawn widespread opposition within public higher education in Alabama, is described by its supporters as an attempt to help students who depend on the financially troubled Prepaid Affordable College Tuition Program to cover their college tuition. A prepaid tuition plan, the PACT program has seen its investment revenues decline due to economic conditions, creating difficulty fulfilling its promise of paying tuition for students whose families have been paying into the plan for a decade or more, in many cases.

With the state facing a severe drop in revenues of its own, advocates of a PACT rescue were unable to rally support for a direct input of funds from the state, so they drafted legislation to prevent institutions from raising tuition on those affected.

However, because state revenues are also down due to the recession, most colleges and universities are facing budget cuts of their own. At Auburn, the base budget — before tuition is applied — is being significantly reduced for 2010, beyond the proration and extensive cuts in 2009. Education leaders say tuition is one of the few sources of new funds but will offset only a small portion of the lost revenues.

The University Senate letter warns: “If we, as a state, use the proposed legislation to ‘fix’ the PACT program, the negative impacts to Auburn, both short- and long-term will not allow the university to live up to the expectations of these families, and critical programs may have to be reduced or cut entirely.”

Hardy wins national award as top agriculture educator

A national association of agricultural, environmental, natural and life sciences colleges and teachers has named Auburn agricultural economics professor Bill Hardy the top postsecondary ag educator in the nation.

The North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture will formally present its prestigious NACTA Teacher Fellow Award to Hardy in June, during its 55th annual meeting at Oklahoma State University. Hardy has been teaching Auburn students the economic, business and legal aspects of agriculture for 37 years and from 2001 to 2008 also served as the College of Agriculture’s associate dean for instruction.

He was selected for the award on the basis of his teaching philosophy; evaluations submitted by current students, alumni and administrators; and a self-evaluation in the areas of availability to students, teaching innovations and department/institutional activity.
Retired officer leaves large estate to ROTC at Auburn

Auburn’s Reserve Officers’ Training Corps has received more than $1.6 million from the estate of U.S. Army Lt. Col. Henry Earl Turner through the Auburn University Foundation.

The gift will be divided among the university’s Army, Air Force and Navy/Marine ROTC programs to support endowments for excellence within those programs.

“Programs such as Auburn’s ROTC program benefit greatly from private giving,” said President Jay Gogue. “Private gifts enable these programs to provide scholarships, awards, team travel and purchase equipment, among other things. In addition, ROTC at Auburn holds a great deal of historical significance since ROTC began with land-grant institutions across the country in 1862.”

Turner became familiar with Auburn through a niece and nephew who are Auburn graduates.

Lt. Col. Jon Segars, commander of Army ROTC at Auburn, said Turner’s gift was out of appreciation for its students, faculty and ROTC program. “Colonel Turner saw Auburn as a place that possessed a strong atmosphere of genuine kindness and respect,” said Segars. “He valued these qualities and wanted to promote them through this generous gift. This gift will have a tremendous impact on all four military services represented in this department.”

Turner received a Bronze Star for his service during World War II and the Korean War. A master parachutist, he served with the 82nd and 101st airborne divisions and worked on parachute deployment and testing during his time in the Army.

He had initially entered military service with the Illinois National Guard and received a wartime commission as a second lieutenant in 1942. He then rose through the ranks until eventually retiring as a lieutenant colonel.

After retiring from the Army, he continued working on parachute testing and development for the federal government.

Formerly of Scottsboro, Turner was a resident of Tempe, Ariz., at the time of his death at age 90 in 2008.

Students in this class go extra mile(s) for MBA from Auburn

Some college students are eager to go the proverbial extra mile to get an advanced degree, but for 30 Auburn students, that extra mile stretches into thousands. These students are active-duty military men and women who are pursuing Master of Business Administration degrees through interactive distance learning software from as far away as Africa and Afghanistan.

The students — officers in the United States Air Force, Army, Marines and Navy — log into a streaming video service provided by Auburn’s College of Business and make use of cutting-edge digital classroom management software to interact with professors and peers.

One example of the active-duty students is Capt. Niklaus Pleisch, a finance officer for the United States Air Force stationed at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California and deployed in Afghanistan. Pleisch said he chose Auburn for the quality of its curriculum, its affordable tuition and its military-friendly reputation.

He plans to use his MBA both to advance within the Air Force and to prepare for a civilian career.

“I’ve heard many fellow soldiers tell me their programs do not offer streaming video options, so it’s difficult for them to get the same material that the on-campus students get,” said Pleisch.

“The material and delivery from Auburn has exceeded my expectations for a distance program.”

Pleisch has reaped immediate rewards from his studies. He has applied skills learned from an operations management term project to streamline processes in his office. He has helped his flight win the Financial Services Office of the Year Award from the Air Force Space Command and attributes several company grade officer awards to knowledge he gained from the MBA program.

Another example is Maj. Steve Kvaal, stationed in Arden Hill, Minn., who serves in the Army as a battalion executive officer and acting commander of a tactical company in an Army psychological operations battalion. Kvaal gives credit to Auburn’s Executive MBA curriculum for supplementing his Army training and helping him become a more self-aware and well-rounder officer.

— Casey Jones

Montgomery exhibit displays work of architecture students

The David Braly Gallery in Montgomery is featuring “Urban Planning Projects by the Auburn University School of Architecture and the City of Montgomery Department of Planning and Development” through May 8.

Professor Behzad Nakhjavan challenged his students to explore, document and develop concepts for new buildings within a 600-yard radius of the Montgomery Biscuits Riverwalk Stadium as part of their year-long graduate thesis project. The result is an informative collection of drawings, architectural plans and models, documentary photographs and observations on the present state and future plans of historic downtown Montgomery.
U.S. News rankings

Engineering, Education graduate programs rise

Several Auburn graduate programs in engineering and education improved their standings in the recently released U.S. News and World Report “Best Graduate Schools” rankings.

The graduate program in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering moved up to 69th from 73rd nationally, is rated 41st among public universities and 24th among the 53 land-grant research universities. Also improving in that college is chemical engineering (50th nationally, 32nd among public universities) and mechanical engineering (62nd nationally, 37th among public universities).

Auburn’s doctoral program in the College of Education saw a jump to 71st from 77th nationally, is rated 50th among public universities and 24th among the 53 land-grant research universities.

“Improving the quality of our academic programs is our major priority at Auburn University,” said Auburn Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Mary Ellen Mazey. “We are pleased that the new graduate rankings indicate we are making progress toward this priority. I commend all of those who played an important role in improving the rankings of our graduate programs.”

In the social sciences, Auburn’s graduate program in psychology was ranked 103rd nationally and 67th among public universities, while the English program was rated 94th nationally and 59th among public universities.

Specific results in Auburn’s College of Engineering saw industrial systems engineering 26th nationally and 19th among public universities; electrical engineering 50th nationally and 29th among public universities; civil engineering with a rank of 58th nationally and 38th among public universities; and computer science and software engineering 58th nationally and 33rd among public universities.

Methodologies for the U.S. News rankings vary by discipline. Factors used in the rankings include: assessment by peer deans, assessment by corporate recruiters, mean GRE quantitative scores, acceptance rate, student-faculty ratio, percentage of National Academy of Engineering faculty members, doctoral degrees awarded, and total and average faculty research expenditures.

Hospitality Gala set for Saturday

Students in Auburn’s hotel and restaurant management program will put into practice what they've learned in the classroom when they host The Hospitality Gala on Saturday at The Hotel at Auburn University.

This year’s event, which benefits educational initiatives of the hotel and restaurant management program, is titled “An International Affair” and will feature the cuisine of three award-winning international chefs as well as silent and live auctions.

“This event is worthwhile for many reasons, not the least of which is that the employment placement rates for graduates from the Hotel and Restaurant Management Program is 100 percent,” said President Jay Gogue. “In addition, students in the program have planned and organized the event themselves, working with various campus offices, and it promises to be something both the program and the university can take pride in.”

The event begins at 6 p.m. with a reception featuring a cooking demonstration and silent auction. A four-course meal will be served at 7 p.m. Throughout the meal, each chef will create and introduce one of three single courses; all three chefs will then collaborate on the dessert portion. A live auction will follow dinner.

This year’s featured chefs include Marco Bustamante, executive chef at Capella Pedregal in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico; John Ellis, chef at Capella Castlemartyr in Ireland; and Kenny Gilbert, executive chef at Capella Telluride in Telluride, Colorado.

Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project wins NEA grant for work with Big Read

The National Endowment for the Arts has selected the Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project at Auburn for one of two national Chairman’s Extraordinary Action Awards. The grant award of $12,000 will support a pilot project to assist the NEA in developing their Big Read program for correctional facilities.

The Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project offers classes in the arts and humanities to incarcerated people in Alabama, and has done so since 2002 as a program of the Department of Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University. APAEP believes that arts and humanities education opportunities provide a foundation for significant human development and that this opportunity is greatly needed for individuals in Alabama’s prisons.

For this project, APAEP will offer Big Read programming as two of its classes and will work with NEA personnel to further enhance the program for the prison setting. The Big Read is designed to restore reading to the center of American culture by providing citizens with the opportunity to read and discuss a single book within their communities.
Environmental studies

Tian receives international award for research

Hanqin Tian, Alumni Professor with Auburn’s School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, recently received the Global Change Science Prize of the Chinese Academy of Sciences for his ground-breaking work as an ecosystem scientist.

The prize committee cited Tian’s breakthrough achievement in quantifying the global and regional carbon budget and its underlying mechanisms when recognizing him with the award.

Through his research, Tian also examines ecosystem processes and exchanges of energy, water, carbon and nitrogen at the interfaces of the atmosphere, biosphere and hydrosphere. Over the past decade, his research has examined the interactions between climate changes and the global carbon cycle, which many experts identify as one of the most important issues of the 21st century.

Tian, whose teaching emphasis is ecology and forest biology, is widely recognized as a leading scientist in the fields of ecology, biochemistry and global change. His research has covered such topics as biogeochemical and hydrological cycles in response to multifactor global changes in climate, atmospheric composition, land use and land cover across the continents. In addition, Tian was among the early scientists who documented how El Nino affects tropical ecosystem dynamics and the global carbon cycle.

Tian’s work has been published in such journals as Nature, Science, Global Change Biology, Global Biogeochemical Cycles and the Journal of Geophysical Research. His research has also been included in assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the National Assessment of the Potential Consequences of Climate Variability and Change for the United States of America.

The Global Change Science Prize was established by Ye Duzheng, an academician, former vice president at the Chinese Academy of Sciences and founder of China’s atmospheric science and global change research initiative.

Tian shares the award with Zhengtang Guo, a professor at the Institute of Geology and Geophysics at the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

— Katie Wilder

Journal lists EOA among best free reference sources

The Auburn-based online Encyclopedia of Alabama has been named a “Best of Free Reference” by Library Journal. The annual best reference list is released each year in April and covers print and online resources.

Officially launched in September 2008, EOA is an online resource covering all facets of Alabama. The project was developed through a partnership between Auburn and the Alabama Humanities Foundation.

The Encyclopedia of Alabama editorial staff is based in the Department of History in Auburn’s College of Liberal Arts.

With its emphasis on authoritative content based on sound scholarship with its articles on Alabama’s cultural and natural environment, the Encyclopedia of Alabama is similar to a traditional print encyclopedia. And its online nature makes it a modern reference tool, offering video, audio, graphics and links to relevant materials.

A list of the people and organizations that have funded the development of EOA may be found on the Web site: www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/