Auburn University President Jay Gogue honored four staff members as Employees of the Year at Auburn’s annual Employee Recognition Program on May 8. Hosted by Auburn University Human Resources, the ceremony also recognized employees for five, 10, 20, 25, 30 and 40 years of service to the university.

The 2013 Employees of the Year are Katie Lackey of the College of Human Sciences, John “Travis” Spraggins of the Alumni Affairs Mailroom, Clint Bellanger of University Libraries and Shirley Gilmore of the College of Business’ Department of Marketing.

The annual awards, which include $3,000 for each winner, are made possible through support from the Auburn University Foundation and the Tigers Unlimited Foundation. Employees of the Year are selected from among the monthly Spirit of Excellence winners for outstanding service to Auburn.

Senior, recent grad join Fulbright Scholars list

An Auburn University Honors College senior and a recent graduate have been awarded Fulbright Scholarships to continue their studies in Europe.

Samantha Lopez, a senior double-majoring in microbiology and French, will study in Belgium, while James Barnett, a December 2012 graduate with a double major in biomedical sciences and Spanish, will travel to Spain. They are Auburn’s sixth and seventh Fulbright recipients in the past four years.

Lopez, of Tampa, Fla., will be working in Professor Isabelle George’s laboratory of ecology and aquatic systems at the Université libre de Bruxelles, where she will examine the activity, diversity and role of bacteria in soil and aquatic environments.

For the past two years at Auburn she has worked under the direction of Leonardo de la Fuente, assistant professor in the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology. Lopez has aspirations to earn graduate degrees in public health and microbiology with the goal of researching infectious agents and treating and curing infectious diseases.

“Samantha’s obvious joy in discovery, her open-minded approach to new understandings, her resolute determination to expand her horizons and her tenacious will to achieve, all inspire those who have the good fortune to work with her,” said Pamela Paine, associate professor of French at Auburn. “She brings to the learning process a balance of open-mindedness and intellectual skepticism.”

Lopez also plays saxophone in the Auburn University Marching Band and is a tutor with Study Partners, a member in the weekly French Conversation Table and a member of the French honors society, Pi Delta Phi.

Barnett, of Childersburg, will conduct research under the direction of Patrick Gamez, research professor of inorganic chemistry at the University of Barcelona.

For the past three years at Auburn, Barnett has conducted research under the guidance of researcher Susanne Striegler, examining the application of copper complexes in the design of anticancer drugs. Given the serious side effects of chemical drugs in the treatment of cancer, his work examines the use of copper complexes as a synthetic enzyme to produce anti-cancer agents.

“James is a promising young chemist with a keen awareness of science’s frontiers and international dimensions,” said Vince Ortiz, chair of Auburn’s Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. “He has already proven himself to be an outstanding student researcher. His Fulbright fellowship will enable him to advance professionally and to increase the cultural versatility of the rising generation of American scientists.”

New dean of Sciences and Mathematics at Auburn coming from Purdue

Following a national search, Purdue University Professor and Head of the Department of Physics Nicholas Giordano has been named dean of the Auburn University College of Sciences and Mathematics, effective Aug. 5.

“The experience Dr. Giordano brings from both the classroom and administrative perspectives will be very valuable not only to the college but the university as a whole,” said Auburn Provost Tim Boosinger. “We look forward to the level of leadership he will provide.”

Giordano began his tenure at Purdue in 1979, first as assistant professor, then rising through the ranks to become head of the Department of Physics in 2007. Among his research interests are the physics of nanostructures and mesoscopic systems; musical acoustics and the physics of the piano; and computational neuroscience and physics.

“I am extremely honored to have been chosen to be the next Dean of the College of Sciences and Mathematics,” said Giordano. “I have been very impressed with all of the Auburn faculty, staff and students that I have met, especially with their commitment to COSAM and to the university.”

Giordano was named Indiana Professor of the Year in 2004 by the Carnegie
Moulthrop turning part of Auburn Oaks into works of art

A portion of the recently removed Auburn Oaks at Toomer’s Corner will be turned into a contemporary work of art for the Jule Collins Smith Museum by Matt Moulthrop, a third-generation wood turner.

Moulthrop’s work has been displayed in museums throughout the United States, including the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American Art in Washington, D.C., and the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh.

Moulthrop, an Atlanta resident, contacted Auburn University after national media picked up the story about the poisoning of the Auburn Oaks. That resulted in the museum’s commissioning the artist to create artwork from Auburn Oaks wood that will be part of the museum’s permanent collection.

“When you consider the legacy and contributions of the entire Moulthrop family to wood turning, I would equate this in art history terms to having Pablo Picasso call you up to talk about creating a painting for the museum,” Laufer said. “We are very grateful for this opportunity.”

A portion of the wood from the Oaks will be delivered to the artist from which he will create a wood bowl about 30 inches in diameter. The entire transformation process, which includes drying, turning and treating the wood, is expected to take approximately one year.

The history of the Moulthrop family name in the wood turning field began with Matt’s grandfather, Ed Moulthrop, who was an architect by trade and started turning wood after reading an article in “Popular Mechanics.”

“Ed Moulthrop designed his own custom lathe and the tools necessary to work with large-scale pieces,” said Laufer. “He is credited with elevating wood turning to a highly regarded art form and is known for large-scale wood vessels from trees that primarily grow in the Southeast.”

“Ed’s son, Philip, worked alongside his father to further customize the tools, techniques and treatment solutions,” she said. “He also created a way of using branches to create a new mosaic effect in his work. Matt apprenticed with both his grandfather and father and carries on the tradition with the way he can read a piece of wood and reveal the story of the wood in shape and color. He continues to honor the legacy and make his own mark through further innovation and technical expertise.”

Laufer said plans to unveil the bowl at a later date are in process and will depend on final delivery of the bowl and the upcoming exhibition schedule.

“So much of the Moulthrops’ unique technique calls for the artist to use art, geometry, horticulture, chemistry, engineering and even history to create the finished product,” Laufer said. “Using those skills, all of which are part of our academic tradition, to create a memorial artwork from the Auburn Oaks for the university’s art museum is a fitting tribute. Long after the last roll, this piece will serve as a reminder of the trees, and our celebrated traditions, as well as a beautiful work of art by a renowned artist that transforms the normal into the extraordinary.”

— Charlotte Hendrix

Museum to exhibit top works in lithography

The lithography exhibition “Tamarind Touchstones: Fabulous at 50 – Celebrating Excellence in Fine Art Lithography” will open Saturday, May 18, at Auburn University’s Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art.

The exhibition features 61 prints from many of the most significant American artists and printers of the last 50 years. Some of the artists include Josef Albers, Willie Cole, Roy De Forest, Richard Diebenkorn and Kiki Smith.

The museum has invited the director of Tamarind Institute, Marjorie Devon, to deliver her lecture “Pressing Ideas: Mastering the Art of Collaboration at Tamarind” on Friday, May 30, at 6 p.m. in the Martin-Perricone Auditorium. The event is for student and museum members with extended gallery hours and a reception to follow.

Dennis Harper, the museum’s curator for collections and exhibitions, said the having visiting exhibition come to Auburn is very relevant to the university’s artistic legacy.

“Maltby Sykes, in a way, is the father of the program, but many fine works have come out of the faculty and student body here over the years,” he explained.

Describing the exhibition, Harper said, “The exhibition demonstrates not only the wide technical possibilities available through lithography, but it also illustrates the changing face of contemporary art over the last half-century.”

The Tamarind Institute is a center for research, education and creativity in fine art lithography with the College of Fine Arts at University of New Mexico. “Hundreds of Tamarind-trained printers have by now established workshops around the world, and lithography plays an important role in many contemporary artists’ processes,” Devon said. “The popularity of digital media has both augmented and threatened hand processes, but many artists still long for ‘the touch of the hand’ that the sensuous process of lithography offers.”

— Moulthrop Studios

Campus Calendar

Saturday, May 18
Exhibition Opens “Tamarind Touchstones: Fabulous at 50 – Celebrating Excellence in Fine Art Lithography,” Jule Collins Smith Museum, continuing through Aug. 17

Monday, May 20
Free Screening for potential speech and hearing problems, 1-4 p.m., AU Speech and Hearing Clinic, Haley 1199; no appointment necessary

Monday, May 27
Holiday Memorial Day, no classes, offices closed for the day

Friday, May 31
Next Auburn Report

Saturday, June 1

Tuesday, June 4
Meeting University Senate, 3:30 p.m., Broun Hall
Irish diplomat visits

Paul Gleeson, center, Ireland’s consul general for the southeastern United States, visited Auburn recently to discuss with students and faculty his nation’s diplomatic and economic relationships with the United States. He is shown here meeting with President Jay Gogue and Bob McGinnis, left, senior counsel to the university president. Gleeson’s visit was the latest in a series of visits from international diplomats as part of a program to provide students with increased international exposure.

New Biodiversity Learning Center houses natural history museum

Auburn University recently commemorated the opening of the new Biodiversity Learning Center in the College of Sciences and Mathematics. The $3 million, 15,000 square-foot facility is located between Funchess Hall and Rouse Life Sciences Building on the Auburn campus.

The Biodiversity Learning Center is the new home of the university’s Museum of Natural History. The museum includes hundreds of thousands of specimens representing the rich history of Alabama, the Southeast and beyond. For more than 25 years, the Museum of Natural History was located in Funchess Hall and the Physiology Building on campus, and Auburn has maintained natural history collections for more than 50 years.

“Research, education and outreach are the major components of the museum, and the new infrastructure will help us to meet our goals,” said Jason Bond, director of the Museum of Natural History.

Included in the museum’s collections are the John D. Freeman Herbarium, a large collection of insects, and more than 450,000 preserved fish specimens.

“In addition to incredibly extensive collections of Alabama plants, insects and fish, we have a spectacular collection of southeastern frogs, snakes and lizards,” said Bond. “Some of our most important specimens are those that are characterized as ‘types.’ Types are specimens that will forever be associated with species that our curators were the first to describe. Our collection includes type specimens for several new fish species and notably, Myrmekiaphila tigris, also known as the ‘Auburn Tiger Trapdoor Spider.”

Sponsored by the College of Sciences and Mathematics, the museum is used primarily by Auburn professors and students conducting biodiversity research. Museum curators will also periodically extend the collection beyond campus and provide specimens to outside researchers as well as to K-12 outreach programs.

To learn more about the Museum of Natural History, visit the website at www.aumnh.org.

CLA names South Florida scholar to Breeden Chair for fall semester

The College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University has selected Thomas Hallock as the Daniel F. Breeden Eminent Scholar Chair for fall 2013. Hallock is an associate professor of English at the University of South Florida in Tampa-St. Petersburg.

During his semester at Auburn, Hallock will collaborate with faculty and students on projects that combine scholarly and creative research. He will teach, hold public lectures and be a guest speaker and workshop leader for Auburn’s Annual Writers Conference.

Hallock is the author of “From the Fallen Tree: Frontier Narratives, Environmental Politics and the Roots of a National Pastoral” and coeditor of “William Bartram, The Search for Nature’s Design: Selected Art, Letters and Unpublished Writings.” He is a graduate of Dickinson College and holds a Ph.D. in English and American Literature from New York University.

The Breeden Eminent Scholar chair was created in 1989 to provide support for both academic and outreach missions and is awarded to a nationally recognized scholar with outstanding credentials in the arts or humanities. The individual must also demonstrate potential and willingness to engage in outreach activities in the community and contribute a unique quality, characteristic or function to the teaching and learning objectives of the College of Liberal Arts.

Giovanna Summerfield, associate dean for Educational Affairs in the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University, said Hallock’s experiences in research and teaching ideally suit the appointment of the Breeden Eminent Scholar.

“Dr. Hallock will produce both excellent outreach programming in the arts and humanities and make significant contributions to the college and the community at large,” she said.

Hallock said he follows the dictum “teach where you are,” adopting a local model to his work. His ongoing projects at USF St. Petersburg include a web-based anthology of early Florida literature and a series of environmental literature courses exploring historic and relic waterways in lower Pinellas County. He is part of the highly regarded Florida Studies Program.

“This is truly a once-in-a-lifetime achievement and a testament to Dr. Hallock’s scholarship and commitment to student success,” said Frank Biafora, dean of the USFSP College of Arts and Sciences.

University Singers performing in major cities, music venues during 10-day tour in Europe

Forty Auburn students, members of the Auburn University Singers led by Dale Farmer of the Music Department, embarked Sunday for a 10-day performance tour of Europe.

They are visiting Brussels, Paris, Strasbourg, Munich and Salzburg. They have performances in Brussels, at Palais de la Femme in Paris, at La Scène, Espace Cultural Pfaffenhoffen near Strasbourg, in Salzburg at the Heckentheater of Mirabell Gardens and in Munich at the BlackBox Theater of Gasteig.

The group is experiencing cultural and sightseeing tours in each city and are joined by several Auburn faculty and guests, including Music Department Chair Sara Lynn Baird, College of Liberal Arts Dean Anna Gramberg and members of the Dean’s Advisory Council.

Sciences and Mathematics dean

Continued from Page 1

Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

The new COSAM dean received a Bachelor of Science in 1973 from Purdue and a Ph.D. from Yale University in 1977. He has taught at both universities, and in 1977 was a visiting scientist at Hahn-Meitner Institute in Berlin. Giordano is a fellow with the American Physical Society and a member of several other leading professional societies.
For the third consecutive year, Auburn University has been named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction, a recognition of the nation’s leading colleges and universities for their dedication to civic engagement, service-learning and volunteering.

Auburn is one of two universities from the state of Alabama and one of three from the Southeastern Conference to be named to the honor roll with distinction. A total of 690 higher education institutions have been named to the 2013 honor roll; of this number, 113 institutions earned the recognition of honor roll with distinction.

“We are very excited to be recognized on the President’s Honor Roll with Distinction for a third consecutive year,” said Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach. “This shows that Auburn is among the leading institutions nationally for public service and outreach.”

Ralph Foster, director of public service, added, “Being named to the Honor Roll with Distinction is so significant because of the scope of the award. The institution must demonstrate commitment and impact in both its outreach programming and curricular engagement, as well as faculty, staff and student service activities.”

The Corporation for National and Community Service considered the scope and innovation of the university’s outreach program; the extent to which service-learning is embedded in the curriculum; the school’s commitment to long-term campus-community partnerships; and measurable community outcomes as a result of engagement. Another requirement was placement of at least 7 percent of work study students throughout the community, which Auburn filled four-fold with almost 30 percent placed in off-campus outreach positions.

The Office of Public Service coordinated Auburn’s application for the honor roll designation. The honor is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service in collaboration with the Department of Education, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Campus Compact and the American Council on Education.

— Carol Nelson

An exhibition of historic items representing American postal, Civil War, Alabama and naval history will be on display through August in the Special Collections and Archives Department of the Ralph Brown Draughon Library.

The exhibit is on the ground floor of the Ralph Brown Draughon Library and is open during all regular Special Collections and Archives Department hours.

The pieces in the exhibition were donated to the library by John and Faye Vick of Andalusia.

Refereed to by historians as the Hampton Roads Peace Conference, these negotiations were between emissaries of the Union and Confederacy aboard a steamer at Hampton Roads, Va., in February 1865. The negotiations are featured prominently in the Academy critically acclaimed and Award-winning movie “Lincoln.”

The papers will be added to the Ralph Brown Draughon Library’s Special Collections and Archives Department, supporting the expansive physical collection of Civil War-related material preserved there. They will also be digitized and made available to researchers and Civil War historians around the world.