Major projects coming on line by end of summer

Five major construction projects on the Auburn campus overseen by Auburn University Facilities Management are nearing completion and scheduled to open for use by the start of the 2013 fall semester.

In addition, another 10 to 15 percent of the university’s 365 current construction projects will be completed this summer. While some projects began months ago, others were initiated following spring graduation.

Ron Booth, director of program management and project execution, said Facilities Management takes advantage of the summer months to complete a number of campus projects that would otherwise be very disruptive to the campus population.

Major construction projects planned for summer completion include the Recreation and Wellness Center; Biggio Drive Parking Facility; Biological Engineering Research Laboratory and Building; Center for Advanced Science, Innovation and Commerce; and South Donahue Residence Hall.

**Recreation and Wellness Center**
The 240,000-square-foot Recreation and Wellness Center is at 601 Heisman Drive. Numerous recreational amenities will be available for students, and to faculty and staff who purchase memberships. The facility will include six regulation basketball courts, a one-third-mile indoor track, racquetball courts, weight and cardio training areas with a variety of free weights and machine weights, multiple group fitness studios, two 50-foot rock climbing walls, PGA Golf Simulator, outdoor leisure activity pool and other features.

**Biggio Drive Parking Facility**
The Biggio Drive Parking Facility was opened in April. At the corner of Biggio Drive and South Donahue Drive, the three-level parking structure holds 566 cars and is available for vehicles displaying “A,” “B,” and “RD” (South Donahue Residence Hall) zone permits. Handicap and motorcycle spaces are available on each level of the parking deck.

**Biological Engineering Research Laboratory**
The Biological Engineering Research Laboratory is a 21,000-square-foot renovation and upgrade to the Corley Building Annex. The renovation will result in a laboratory for conducting chemical analyses on biomaterials, foods and environmental samples. It will also provide facilities dedicated to controlled environmental research of biological processes such as fermentation, anaerobic digestion or antimicrobial function in the soil.

**Center for Advanced Science, Innovation and Commerce**
The Center for Advanced Science, Innovation and Commerce is an 82,200-square-foot, three-story research laboratory building in the Auburn Research Park. Scientists representing a variety of disciplines will conduct research in food safety, water and environmental quality, aquaculture development and bioenergy technologies.

**South Donahue Residence Hall**
The South Donahue Residence Hall will house 418 undergraduate students. Most students will be housed in two-bedroom suites that boast two private baths with tiled showers, living room with a 42-inch flat screen TV, kitchenette with quartz countertops, queen-sized beds, and in-suite laundry facilities. Residents will enjoy a landscaped courtyard at the center of the facility and will be given the opportunity to purchase a parking permit for the new Biggio Drive Parking Facility.

**Among Other Projects**
Renovation projects on schedule for completion by the end of the summer include but are not limited to:
- Renovation of Miller Hall rooms 108, 223, 226 and 227. This renovation project for the School of Nursing will include a new dean’s conference room, a new lecture hall for approximately 120 students, an additional skills laboratory and two new faculty offices.
- Demolition of the Physiology Building. Dating from 1922, the Physiology Building is located along the Thach Concourse. In April, the Biodiversity Learning Center — a 15,000-square-foot, two-story addition to M.W. Smith Hall — was completed for the College of Science and Mathematics. This facility now houses the biological specimen collections that previously resided in the Physiology Building.
- Renovation of Haley Center classroom 2213 to be used as an Active Learning Space as part of the Incubator Classroom project.

— Gail Riese
For CLA, other students

Busy summer of international travel under way

Twelve students in the College of Liberal Arts were in the vanguard of hundreds of Auburn University students going abroad this summer on trips that offer fresh perspectives on history and other cultures, with a touch of modern social media.

The 12 recently returned after a two-week immersion in British history and culture in London, having what several described as the opportunity of a lifetime.

Susan Waters, from the Department of Communication and Journalism in the College of Liberal Arts, created and led the study abroad program in London that provided students three credits for the course in international public relations.

In addition to class time, the students visited with public relations firms and public relations departments within a variety of corporations, such as the premier public relations firm Ogilvy and Mather, newspaper publisher The Daily Mirror and the grocery retailer Sainsbury’s.

The students learned about marketing, public relations, journalism and communication from a business perspective and blogged about their experiences at www.cla.auburn.edu/cmjlondon/.

“The primary purpose for being in London was to experience another culture and to be exposed to the professional world of public relations,” Waters said.

In addition to the direct public relations opportunities the students were involved in, they also took in the sights and landmarks of London, Bath and Stonehenge. In a cultural change of pace, a day trip to Paris via the high-speed Eurostar train provided a blurring change of scenery and an overview of the French capital.

Hannah Berryhill, a junior public relations major, wrote, “I still can’t believe I had such an amazing opportunity with the public relations department to see the world.”

Anna Beth Jager, also a junior in public relations, blogged, “It’s real now, no longer simply pictures on a poster or images on a movie screen. We left our own world behind and took a different culture head on, not knowing exactly what to expect, and left understanding the immense differences between two seemingly similar countries.”

Katie Beck, a senior in public relations, wrote, “I met so many great people, learned so many things and had an experience that I will never forget!”

The College of Liberal Arts provides students with study abroad experiences through several established programs and new endeavors. The Department of English, for example, recently sent 21 students to Central London to study at Regent’s University. This program is in its sixth year and their excursions are being chronicled on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/AuburnSummerInLondon?fref=ts.

Recently 40 members of the Auburn University Singers were led by Dale Farmer, of the Music Department, to embark upon a 10-day performance tour of Europe.

The Singers visited Brussels, Paris, Strasbourg, Munich and Salzburg, with performances in Brussels, at Palais de la Femme in Paris, at La Scène, Espace Cultural Pfaffenhofen near Strasbourg, in Salzburg at the Heckentheater of Mirabell Gardens and in Munich at the BlackBox Theater of Gasteig.

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

In addition, the college’s Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures sends about 200 students abroad every summer. This year, the students are visiting Costa Rica, Vienna, Italy, France and Spain. Students stay in a variety of living quarters including lodging in dorms, with host families, in residence halls and in boarding houses.

The trips are led by CLA faculty and are for 4-5 weeks each, which enables students to experience the languages and cultures of the host countries in an immersion setting.

— Vicky Santos

Creative traveler

One of many Auburn travelers this summer, Anna Beth Jager, a junior public relations major, creatively thanks her parents for helping her to see the world.

Campus Calendar

FRIDAY, JUNE 14

ART EXHIBITIONS “Tamarind Touchstones: Fabulous at 50 – Celebrating Excellence in Fine Art Lithography,” through Aug. 17; “Full Circle: The Sculptures of Jean Woodham,” through Oct. 12; both at Jule Collins Smith Museum

THURSDAY, JUNE 20

FARMERS MARKET Selection of Alabama-grown fresh fruits, vegetables and other farm products, The Market at Ag Heritage Park, corner of Lem Morrison and South Donahue, 3-6 p.m.

MUSEUM FILM “Four Stories for Kanemitsu,” 30-minute film showing the collaboration between artist and master printer in creating a four-color lithograph, followed by docent-led tour of “Tamarind Touchstones” exhibition, Jule Collins Smith Museum, 5 p.m.

MEETING Board of Trustees, The Hotel at Auburn University; committee meetings followed by meeting of full board, times TBA

FRIDAY, JUNE 21

FARMERS MARKET Selection of Alabama-grown fresh fruits, vegetables and other farm products, The Market at Ag Heritage Park, corner of Lem Morrison and South Donahue, 3-6 p.m.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27

FARMERS MARKET Selection of Alabama-grown fresh fruits, vegetables and other farm products, The Market at Ag Heritage Park, corner of Lem Morrison and South Donahue, 3-6 p.m.

FRIDAY, JUNE 28

NEXT Auburn Report
New Staff Council, A&P Assembly leaders

University Staff Council
Jennifer Richardson, center, of Property Services, is the new chair of the University Staff Council for 2013-14, effective July 1, succeeding 2012-13 Chair Joey Ellis, left, of Facilities. Michael Freeman, right, of Risk Management and Safety, is the new chair-elect for the coming year.

Administrative and Professional Assembly
Bryan Elmore, right, of Budget Services, is the new chair of the Administrative and Professional Assembly, effective July 1. He succeeds 2012-13 Chair Chuck Hunt, left, of Information Technology. Ashley Hamberlin, center, of Internal Auditing, is the new chair-elect for 2013-14.

Team led by recent Auburn graduate earns one of three top spots in Alabama Launchpad technology start-up competition

An entrepreneur team led by a recent Auburn University graduate was one of three winners in the Alabama Launchpad Start-Up Competition’s $100,000 proof-of-commercial-relevance final round, recently announced by the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama Foundation.

The team’s company, Carbon NanoTube Engineered Surfaces, or CNTES, was formed to enhance the surface composition of composite materials, improving interlaminar strength by as much as 40 percent to date; the technology could be applied in the manufacturing of products such as stronger and more efficient wind turbine blades. The technology is a co-invention between Auburn and the University of Alabama, which also contributed to the team.

“I want to congratulate team leader Adam Ficken and his team for a great job against tough competition in the 2013 Alabama Launchpad program,” said John Weete, Auburn University assistant vice president for technology transfer and commercialization. “We will continue to support them in their efforts to improve and commercialize the surface engineered materials.”

CNTES was awarded $8,000 to further develop its business plan for entry into the marketplace. Funds were awarded to teams based on the decision of a five-judge panel comprised of entrepreneurs, investors and corporate stakeholders that was weighed with team budgets which were submitted during the course of the competition.

Ficken, a former Office of Technology Transfer intern, is a recent Auburn graduate with an M.B.A. and a master’s degree in industrial and systems engineering. Team members include Xinyu Zhang, an assistant professor in the Department of Polymer and Fiber Engineering in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering; Brian Wright, associate director of commercialization in the Office of Technology Transfer; and Rick Swatloski, director of the Office of Technology Transfer at the University of Alabama.

“Adam did an outstanding job highlighting how the Launchpad funds could be utilized to improve upon the demonstrated physical properties of the technology, which is what the industry is asking for,” said Wright. “Now the testing needs to be done.”

The two other Alabama Launchpad winners were Exscien Corp of Mobile and Nutripilot of Birmingham. In all, 22 teams competed in the event that began in December.

Alabama Launchpad, started seven years ago, is a program of the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama Foundation. The program receives support from six partnering universities: Auburn University, Alabama State University, the University of Alabama, University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of Alabama in Huntsville and the University of South Alabama. More information is available at www.alabamalaunchpad.com.

— Charles Martin

NSF aids launch of institute for minority mentoring

Auburn University is one of seven universities recently chosen by the National Science Foundation to launch the Institute for African-American Mentoring in Computing Sciences. Cheryl Seals, an associate professor in Auburn’s Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering, will serve as a co-principal investigator. The alliance, supported by a $5 million NSF grant, includes Clemson University, the University of Alabama, Carnegie Mellon University, Rice University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Winston-Salem State University.

The institute will serve as a national resource and emphasize mentoring as the primary strategy for increasing African-American participation in computing.

The goal is to increase the number of African-American doctoral graduates entering the workforce with a research focus and to retain and advance African-American faculty and researchers by developing leaders with computing expertise in higher education, government and industry.
Biological Sciences professor named Fulbright Scholar

Professor Narendra Singh, of Auburn University’s College of Sciences and Mathematics, has been awarded a Fulbright grant to teach and conduct research in India from August to December, 2013, at SRM University.

Singh teaches and conducts research in the Department of Biological Sciences involving molecular biology of stress tolerance in plants, genetic manipulation of higher fungi and edible vaccines that can be mixed with feed to ward off diseases that cause massive damage to the poultry industry.

In India, he will teach graduate courses in plant molecular biology and biotechnology and will offer a senior seminar course for undergraduate students. He plans to focus his research on the elucidation of mechanism of action of a plant protein he discovered in 1985 and named osmotin.

“This is an interesting protein that has many different roles, depending upon its location within the plant cell,” said Singh. “Although the sequences of amino acids in the proteins are very different, the folded, three-dimensional structure of osmotin is similar to human adiponectin, which plays an important role in fat and sugar metabolism in humans and mammals.”

Singh will work with M. Parani, professor and head of the Department of Genomics and Genetic Engineering at SRM University. While in India, he will also spend some time at the National Center of Biological Sciences in Bangalore and the Center for Cell and Molecular Biology in Hyderabad.

“We have demonstrated that the expression of truncated osmotin can provide both drought and salinity tolerance in some important crop plants like cotton and soybeans. It can also provide resistance to a number of fungal pathogens in some plants, so the expression of this gene in transgenic crop plants can have great potential for its agricultural application in India and elsewhere,” said Singh. “Since I am originally from India and had all my undergraduate and graduate educations in India, personally, it means a lot to me to be able to go back for some time and provide my expertise and assistance in any way that I can.”

Singh was selected by the 12-member William J. Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, part of the United States Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government and is designed to increase mutual understanding among United States citizens and those of other countries.

SRM University is one of the top ranking universities in India with 33,044 students and 2,358 faculty across all the campuses, offering a wide range of undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programs in engineering, management, medicine and health sciences, and science and humanities.

The private university is recognized by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in the Government of India’s Department of Higher Education as a category “A” institution, the highest category ranking.

Worosz earns society’s teaching award

Michelle Worosz, an associate professor in the College of Agriculture’s Department of Ag Economics and Rural Sociology at Auburn, has been selected to receive the Rural Sociological Society’s 2013 Excellence in Instruction Award. Worosz will receive the award at the society’s annual meeting in New York in August.

The award recognizes a society member for his or her outstanding rural-oriented teaching at the graduate and undergraduate levels. Worosz was nominated by her colleagues and students, who cited her strong commitment to teaching and, specifically, the Sociology of Natural Resources and the Environment course.