

## Burgess to address new graduates at Saturday ceremonies

Auburn University will award 1,150 academic degrees Saturday, Aug. 2, in Auburn Arena during two summer graduation ceremonies featuring addresses by retired U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Ron Burgess, the university's senior counsel for national security programs, cyber programs and military affairs.

The 10 a.m. ceremony will include the colleges, schools and programs of Architecture, Design and Construction; Engineering; Interdisciplinary Studies; Liberal Arts; and Sciences and Mathematics. The 2 p.m. ceremony will be held for the colleges and schools of Agriculture; Business; Education; Forestry and Wildlife Sciences; Human Sciences; and Nursing. The ceremonies can be viewed live through the university's website at [www.auburn.edu/graduationlive](http://www.auburn.edu/graduationlive).

Burgess, a 1974 Auburn graduate, joined the university in 2012 to lead its security and cyber initiatives. He is a 38-year U.S. Army veteran who spent much of his career in the upper levels of military intelligence and security, including service as director of the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency from 2009 to 2012.

After earning his degree at Auburn and being commissioned in military intelligence through its ROTC program, he received a master's degree in education from the University of Southern California in 1980 and a Master of Military Arts and Science from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in 1986.

Of the degrees Auburn will award, 732 are bachelor's degrees, 296 are master's degrees, 102 are doctorates, 17 are education specialist degrees and three are pharmacy degrees.

The College of Liberal Arts will award the most bachelor's degrees with 180, followed by the Raymond J. Harbert College of Business with 128. The College of Human Sciences will present 97 degrees; Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, 89; College of Education, 60; School of Nursing, 57; College of Sciences and Mathematics, 49; College of Architecture, Design and Construction, 31; College of Agriculture, 21; School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, 11; and Office of the Provost, nine degrees in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Auburn University has awarded more than 285,000 degrees since its founding as East Alabama Male College in 1856.

— Charles Martin



Carol Nelson

### Art for Elba

Auburn sophomore Jelani Moore shares the details of the mural design. The first Elba Renaissance Festival brought the town's residents together for a six-day community mural-painting.

### Living Democracy

## Student helps boost town with art

To some, it may look like just another mural painted on a wall in a small town in Alabama, but ask Jelani Moore what he sees and he'll tell you, "It's the best example of democracy I have ever witnessed in my entire life."

The mural can be found on the wall of an Elba business, where residents and visitors who happen to be traveling on Highway 84 see a colorful image that tells the story of the town of about 4,000, located on the banks of the Pea River.

Moore, who is a sophomore majoring in media studies, and three other Auburn University students took their talents into four Alabama communities this summer as part of the 10-week Living Democracy program. The other towns are Collinsville, Selma/Old Cahawba and Linden.

Living Democracy is a collaboration with Alabama communities and the David Mathews Center for Civic Life. In its third year, the program pairs students with Alabama communities and gives them the opportunity to take part in projects to build tourism, engage

youth and simply learn the history of some of the state's hidden gems.

"Some of our students come from large metropolitan areas, and they may not even know the name of the mayor of their town," said Mark Wilson, director of civic learning initiatives in the College of Liberal Arts.

"In these communities, they get to sit and eat lunch with the mayor on a regular basis; they get to go to city council meetings; they start understanding how communities work. All of that will transfer to their future jobs, to their future lives, and particularly, to the kinds of relationships they'll have in the communities in which they live."

Moore arrived in Elba at the end of May and did not waste any time getting out and getting to know the local citizens. He's working with Auburn's community partners Mark Gray of Covenant Community Church and Philip Box and Justin Maddox of Restoration 154, a local nonprofit organization. The name Restoration 154 has a dual meaning – it stands for the 154 projects the

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Plus dance studio

## New addition to Telfair Peet features black box theatre

A black box experimental theatre and a 1,500-square-foot dance studio are part of a newly constructed addition designed to enhance the experience of audiences and performers at Auburn University's Telfair B. Peet Theatre.

The \$3.9 million project is a two-story, 10,471-square-foot addition to the existing theatre, featuring a production space that will accommodate up to 150 patrons and a dance studio that can double as an event space. The addition will expand production possibilities for Auburn's theatre, music and dance programs and provide the latest technology, training and education for students.

A black box theatre is just that – a square performance space with black walls and a flat floor, which allows for flexibility in the ways the area is used for different kinds of performances.

"Such a space allows our faculty and students' imaginations to run wild and makes it possible to provide theatre that satisfies our increasingly discerning audiences," said Robin Jaffe, production manager and faculty technical director in the Department of Theatre in the College of Liberal Arts. "It will also provide the skills and experience our students need to be competitive in their future careers."

The addition boasts a completely digital lighting control system, engineered sprung flooring in both the theatre and studio and a wire tension grid which allows safe access to lighting, cables, speakers and effects. The grid is the first of its kind at a university in the state of Alabama and will safely hold up to 90,000 pounds.

The new space also includes additional lobby and office space and a drop-off drive for patrons of music and theatre events, as well as dressing rooms for productions in the black box theatre.

"The difference in what we've had to work with and what we have with the new facility is immense, not just in square footage, but also in the possibilities

of productions that can be done in such an amazing and flexible space," Jaffe said. "The theatre addition will add to the experience of our patrons, students, faculty, staff and guest artists and allow for truly innovative production design."

– Carol Nelson



### Inside the black box

In this cutaway view of the new Telfair Peet Theatre addition, from the architect's rendering, the black box experimental theatre occupies the right side of the structure. Another feature of the addition is the dance studio, above at left.

## English as Second Language now required for future teachers

This summer, Auburn University's College of Education has begun requiring all students in the Department of Curriculum and Teaching to take ESL-infused literacy classes.

"When a school system rapidly changes in terms of its language demographics, this can be very frustrating for teachers," said Jamie Harrison, who specializes in teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. "Requiring our pre-service teachers to develop the skills they will need before they go into the classroom demonstrates progressive thought and will make our graduates even more valuable."

Nearby Opelika City Schools are seeing an influx of Latino students whose native language is Spanish, and Auburn's schools are seeing lots of Korean students, whose families are here for the Kia-Hyundai industries along the I-85 corridor.

"This literacy requirement is not at all common on college campuses, but I think it is just a great thing we are doing here at Auburn," Harrison said. "I worked in public schools for 12 years as a mainstream reading teacher, but I always carried my ESL perspective into the classroom, as well. I was in Georgia, and many of my Latino students did not even hear English spoken at home, so I know how important it is to be prepared for these settings."

"The trend in ESL studies is to mainstream the students rather than take them out of the classroom," Harrison said. "It really becomes an advocacy thing, where we can teach other teachers about language or at least collaborate in the classroom. The main thing our pre-service teachers here at Auburn must have is a good understanding of the language acquisition process, and the wide range of language abilities that an English learner might present. Perhaps that student can read, but not speak English. It takes time to learn a second language, especially the rigor of academic English in the classroom."

Complicating matters recently in Alabama was the legal battle over House Bill 56, widely considered the nation's strictest anti-immigration law, parts of which were struck down by the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals. Many teachers felt the law put

them in the compromised position of asking a student about his or her legal status.

"I taught a graduate course in literacy and ESL this summer, and we had guest lecturers come in from the Southern Poverty Law Center to discuss the lingering ramifications of HB 56," Harrison said. "Their focus was on the rights of immigrants to access public education in Alabama and the United States. One takeaway from their presentation is that our schools will continue to become increasingly diverse, so Auburn is doing the right thing to prepare our pre-service teachers for the 21st century classroom."

– George Littleton

## Volunteers sought for Move-In Mania

With fall semester fast approaching, the newest members of the Auburn Family will be finding their way to the Plains and settling in on campus throughout the beginning of August.

To welcome new students to Auburn, the Department of University Housing and the Office of Residence Life will hold Move-In Mania 2014 on Saturday, Aug. 9, and Wednesday, Aug. 13, from 6:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at campus residence halls.

Move-In Mania intern Kelsey Prather said they are looking for students, faculty, staff and members of the community to volunteer to assist as movers, unloaders, greeters and refreshment providers, particularly for the Wednesday session.

"We have the opportunity to give the newest members of our Auburn Family a 'Welcome to the Plains' they will never forget," Prather said. "We have the opportunity to show our newcomers why Auburn is special and such a wonderful community. We will also be able to make them feel as welcome as possible as they move into their new homes."

Information about volunteering for Move-In Mania is available online at <https://fp.auburn.edu/housing> or email at [moveinmania@auburn.edu](mailto:moveinmania@auburn.edu).



Photos by Mike Clardy

### Before and after

The above photos show Parkerson Mill Creek before, left, and after a restoration project to clear and clean up the formerly overgrown, trash-littered creek and restore it to a more attractive setting across the southwest quadrant of campus. The newly landscaped, park-like setting enhances new buildings, such as the Donahue Residence Hall, at the top of both photos, as well as a new parking deck, in the background at right in the "After" photo, and the new Wellness Kitchen, center-right, which opens to campus diners on Aug. 18, when fall semester begins.

### Eyesore no longer

# Makeover gives new look to Parkerson Mill Creek

A small creek that winds past the football and baseball fields and old coliseum of Auburn University has been transformed this summer from eyesore to outdoor classroom.

The push to complete construction and campus restoration projects before fall typically marks the end of summer semesters at Auburn. One of those projects this year was the restoration of a section of Parkerson Mill Creek that runs through Auburn's campus near Plainsman Park, the new South Donahue Residence Hall and Beard-Eaves-Memorial Coliseum, former home of Auburn basketball.

Through the years, this particular section had become overgrown and unsightly. "Parkerson Mill Creek has been a project on the table for more than 10 years," said Charlene Lebleu, an associate professor in the landscape architecture program. "When I first came to campus 10 years ago, I was told there was a creek that went through campus, but I could not find it."

"Parkerson Mill Creek was a fenced-in, grown-up ditch that no one really even knew was here and just kind of avoided," said Ben Burmester, campus planner for Facilities Management. "From an aesthetic point of view the restoration is a huge improvement. A second benefit is just improving the water quality. Environmental management that we do on campus is part of the role we have as stewards of the land."

The campus master plan, which was approved in 2013, established natural resource management areas around Parkerson Mill Creek. The \$300,000 project was university-funded, mostly through bonds and athletic support. The creek restoration included widening the floodplains, cleaning out the stream, seeding and landscaping the surrounding grounds and adding an outdoor classroom. The project was timed to coincide with the completion of the nearby Auburn Wellness Kitchen in July.

"This stream restoration created an opportunity to understand more about water resources and the impacts that we can have on a stream and then a river and then eventually Mobile Bay, just by taking some small steps," said Eve Brantley, an associate professor of crop soil environmental sciences and the state water resources specialist for the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

"Working on this stream segment will introduce people to an innovative way to manage streams for habitat, water quality improvement and aesthetics," Brantley said. "Especially right here in the core of campus, it brings it to a place where people can get to the stream and understand it is more than just a ditch. It is a vibrant, full-of-life water body."

Brantley noted that the improvements to the creek have enhanced the social and ecological functions, enhanced the biological livability of the landscape and made the area available for environmental research. The outdoor classroom aspect of the restoration presents the opportunity for student learning.

As part of an urban landscape, stormwater is shunted directly to the stream, increasing water volume and causing the stream base to fall apart. The restoration created a more stable stream base to prevent the destruction of sidewalks and buildings. In-stream structures were also added, which helps flow water energy and keep it to the center of the stream channel, which deters the erosive energy from irritating the stream bank. The project also maximized the floodplains, which helps store floodwaters and transform contaminants that are in the water into less harmful constituents. This cleans up the water downstream.

The restoration brought students, faculty and visitors together to understand more about water resources. The project incorporated experts in engineering, horticulture, soil science, environmental sciences, landscape architecture and urban planning.

"Several organizations, facilities and the sustainability initiative are all working together to increase our sustainability across campus, not only through creek restoration, but through cisterns, rain gardens, permeable paving and other types of best management practices for stormwater," Lebleu said.

Brantley said, "We now have a stream on campus that is a more highly functioning ecological unit, right here next to our athletic units and our academic units."

She added, "I have a real sense of pride that we've taken the steps to look at managing our resources in a new way, in a better way, knowing that there will be adjustments and there will be lessons learned, but that's what life is all about, learning new ways to do things and then sharing it with others. I couldn't be more proud and happier that we've taken this step."

– Tori Rivers

## Wooten Memorial Run set for September

The College of Sciences and Mathematics will host the fourth annual Marie W. Wooten Memorial Run on Saturday, Sept. 20, beginning at 6:30 a.m. at the Donald E. Davis Arboretum.

The event will feature a 10K and 5K run and a one-mile walk.

The race is held each year in honor of Marie Wooten, former dean of the College of Sciences and Mathematics, who died in November 2010, when she was struck by an automobile while jogging. An avid runner, Wooten had planned to hold a 5K to raise money for scholarships. The race honors her memory and helps COSAM continue her vision for the future of the college as all proceeds go toward scholarships.

For more information, contact Brook Moates at brook@auburn.edu or 844-2931.

# Elba Renaissance

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organization plans to do to improve the lives of Elba's citizens and the 154 miles of the Pea River.

"The number one goal of the Living Democracy project is for students to develop skills and interests in active citizenship," Wilson said. "Leaders in the civil rights movement said it best: 'We are the ones we've been waiting for.' We want students to learn that and live that. It's about politics, but not partisan politics. It's about how we make decisions, organize and act for the public good."

Moore says he knew going into the project that he wanted to put his artistic skills to work in Elba and was interested in painting a community mural. Little did he know that local business owner and Auburn alumna Millie McCullough already had designed a rough sketch of the mural she envisioned for the wall of her business at 214 Factory Avenue North.

"I explained to her why I was in Elba for the summer, and we hit it off immediately," Moore said. "Apparently, she and her associates had been planning this for months, but because of lack of time, it got shoved to the back of the shelf."

McCullough shared her initial sketches and invited Moore to meet with her, Elba Mayor Mickey Murdock and Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Sandy Bynum. Soon, he was incorporating his own ideas into the design and deep in the planning of a weeklong community mural-painting event set to take place just two weeks into his Living Democracy experience.

The project soon became the first Elba Renaissance Festival which would feature live music, a theatre performance by the Elba High School drama team, a masquerade party and potluck, and of course, the community mural painting.

"We've talked about that wall for at least two years," said Elba attorney and Auburn alumna Debbie Jared. "The scaffolding's been sitting there for probably six months. Then Jelani came and said, 'In two weeks, we're doing this, and we're going to have a festival.' He's been a very positive influence for us."

The city purchased the paint and constructed a stage, while Moore and other volunteers drew the final design on the wall to prepare it for painting.

"It takes some serious math to project something that large on a wall using nothing but pencils and rulers," Moore said. "But after hours of arguing, scaling, drawing, then rescaling, we got it done all in a day's work."

People came from around Coffee County to take part in the festivities.

"These were no Warhols or Michelangelos," Moore said. "They were just Brant and Becky from two houses down. Yet, in this moment, they were creators. ... Throughout the entire week, I was delighted to see how many people showed up every day for six days just to paint a wall."

"Jelani's project in Elba is just one example of how each student in the program is able to connect their individual gifts and creativity to needs and assets in the community," said Living Democracy co-director Nan Fairley. "Watching the mural progress so rapidly in Elba seems like a miracle. But we have had many opportunities to be amazed when we see what the Living Democracy students can do as they work side-by-side with equally creative community partners."

As part of Living Democracy, the students are required to write extensively about their experiences, some of which are shared on a blog and will be used in a magazine to be published at the end of the summer. Some of the students' writings also regularly appear in the local newspapers of the towns in which they're living.

"There's a lot of value in having an outsider come in and look at things fresh, but at the same time also being so involved that he understands what people are wanting and expecting," Maddox said.

Maddox added, "He's building relationships with folks and seeing that there are a lot of different personalities and ideas involved, but I think it helps the community to have somebody who can be a new voice and help guide things. The wall had been there waiting, but sometimes you need someone to come in, set a timeline and say, 'we're going to do this,' and get the ball really rolling in the right direction. A lot of people around here have a lot of good ideas about things that need to happen, but sometimes you need an instigator."

"I think with Living Democracy the benefits are twofold, especially with the

setting being a small town," said Box. "The students come in and learn that a small town offers a lot and that there's something to be gained by living in a place like Elba. The benefit for the community is that the student comes in and generates some renewed excitement and inspires people to get involved. ... The town adopts the student, and the student adopts the town."

– Carol Nelson



## Photographer honored for portraits

Jeff Etheridge, chief photographer at Auburn University, has been honored by two national associations for his recent portrait of Harold Franklin, Auburn's first African American student.

The portrait, right, which graced the cover of the summer 2014 issue of Auburn Magazine, recently won an award of excellence in photography from the University and College Designers Association and won second place in the "People and Portrait" awards category from the University Photographers Association of America.

The UPAA also recognized Etheridge with an honorable mention for the above picture of Maurizio Antonini, resident director for the College of Human Sciences program in Ariccia, Italy.

Etheridge is head of Photographic Services in the Office of Communications and Marketing at Auburn.

