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For the faculty and staff of Auburn University

Student center
Site preparation has begun on a new student center between Jordan-Hare Stadium and the Quadrangle residence halls. When construction is complete in 2008, the $50 million complex will replace Foy Student Union, which has been the center of activities and programs for students at Auburn since the early 1950s.

AU awards first scholarships in new program to boost student diversity

Forty students in this fall’s freshman class at AU are part of an innovative program that combines scholarships with a series of academic and social initiatives to help talented but atypical freshmen adjust to life as Auburn students.

The 40 new students are the first to enter Auburn with financial aid from the university’s new Provost Leadership Undergraduate Scholarships. Known as PLUS scholars, the students are receiving $2,000 scholarships, renewable for up to three years.

Part of a pilot program to boost diversity among Auburn’s student body, the PLUS scholarships are awarded to academically qualified students who are first-generation college students, exhibit financial need under federal guidelines and/or add to the diversity of the Auburn student body. All PLUS scholars must be United States citizens or permanent residents, with Alabama residents receiving first priority.

The PLUS Retention Program, however, involves far more than scholarships, said Overtoun Jenda, AU’s associate provost for diversity and multicultural affairs.

Along with the financial aid, the scholars will participate in initiatives to help them overcome obstacles that confront most college students but are often overwhelming to those with special circumstances, said Jenda. He noted that first-generation college students, students with insufficient financial resources and students from minority populations often cite isolation and lack of a network for academic and social support along with financial worries, as reasons for dropping out of college.

“Nearly all students go through an adjustment period when they come to college, but the majority are able to find the resources and build the social and academic networks that help them reach their goals,” said Jenda. Students whose parents went to college and those who feel they have a lot in common with their peers have a relatively easy time adjusting, he explained.

However, he noted, students from more diverse backgrounds often lack these advantages. “Our goal is to help these students overcome the isolation and other challenges so they can become fully integrated into the university community and complete their degrees,” Jenda said. “When we do that, the entire student population benefits from the variety of experiences and viewpoints these students bring to campus.”
College of Business advances six spots among peers in new U.S. News ranking

The AU College of Business moved up six places to 51st among the nation’s best undergraduate business programs in the new U.S. News & World Report edition of America’s Best Colleges. Among public institutions, AU’s business college is ranked No. 31 in the nation, marking the fourth consecutive year the college has attained a top 40 business ranking.

The Auburn program was ranked No. 6 among Southeastern Conference-member institutions beginning on the University of Florida’s Warrington College of Business, the University of Georgia’s Terry College of Business, the University of South Carolina’s Moore School of Business, the University of Alabama’s Gatton College of Business and the University of Tennessee’s College of Business.

PLUS scholarships continued from page 1

Jenda said he is encouraged that several corporate donors stepped forward to help support the program. In addition to the financial help provided by the scholarships, PLUS scholars receive assistance through peer mentoring by older students, leadership training in multicultural organizations, workshops in college survival skills and counseling services at AU’s Multicultural Center.

A key initiative of the program, Jenda said, is the cohort system, in which groups of 10 or 15 PLUS scholars take classes together during their freshman and sophomore years. That approach, he added, will provide the students with a built-in network of peers who can encourage and help each other in and out of class. Additional help, he noted, will come from mentors who have had similar experiences and succeeded.

Next year, students who remain in school and continue in the PLUS program will become mentors for PLUS scholars in the 2007 freshman class. He added that, over time, the program will help Auburn increase the diversity of its student body, produce more graduates from diverse backgrounds and help ensure that all Auburn graduates thrive in the working world.

Information on AU’s PLUS program is available online at www.auburn.edu/diversity.

AU Report Editor Ray Summerville. Contributing editors and writers: Katie Summerville and Ted Suggs; Photographers: Collen Treat, College of Education; and Dina Kanellos, College of Business. Photography: Jeff Ethridge; Photographic Services. Historic photos courtesy of AU Archives and AU Photographic Services.

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, August 29

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR “Fostering Critical Thinking,” noon-1:30 p.m., Foy 203; open to all faculty, staff and graduate students, bring your toolkit.

Wednesday, August 30

EXHIBITION IN PROGRESS “Rural Studio: Education of the Citizen Architect,” 10 a.m.-5 p.m., through Saturday, Sept. 2, Julie Collins Smith Museum.

Thursday, August 31

COMMITTEE SESSIONS AU Board of Trustees, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., AU Hotel; for agenda, see www.auburn.edu/administration/trustees/agenda091006.html

WEB CONFERENCE “Forging Campus Partnerships in Alumni Relations,” noon-2:30 p.m., Goodwin Room, Alumni Center

PUBLIC LECTURE “Scottish Identity,” Murray Pittock, professor of Scottish and Romantic literature, University of Manchester, England, 4 p.m., Foy 203

Friday, September 1

MEETING AU Board of Trustees, 9 a.m., AU Hotel

OPEN HOUSE Draughon Library, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; demonstrations, exhibits, Aubie and cheerleaders, refreshments, prizes

Monday, September 4

HOLIDAY Labor Day, offices closed, no classes

Next AU Report, expect delivery through campus mail one day later than normal.

Thursday, September 7

AWARDS CELEBRATION Faculty Awards for Excellence in Instruction, Research and Outreach, 4:30 p.m., pre-ceremony social at 4 p.m., Foy中铁

Tuesday, September 12

SESQUICENTENNIAL LECTURE “Auburn University Desegregates,” Harold Franklin, the first African-American student to attend AU, Malcom Olliff, author of Just Another Day on the Plain: The Desegregation of Auburn University, 4 p.m., Special Collections, Draughon Library

New ceremony to honor faculty for outstanding achievements

AUBURN will celebrate the achievements of four faculty members and recognize several other faculty members for their role in the university’s year-long sesquicentennial celebration.

The Faculty Awards for Excellence in Instruction, Research and Outreach celebration will be at 4:30 p.m. at Tillery Theatre.

The event marks the first time these annual awards have been presented to AU faculty.

Among those receiving awards at the public event are Joseph Kicklighter, professor of history, and Robert Lishak, associate professor of biological sciences. Both will receive the Gerald and Emily Leischick Endowed Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching. S.D. Worley, professor and interim chair of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, will receive the Creative Research and Scholarship Award and David Bransby, professor of agronomy and soils, will receive the Award for Excellence in Extension.

Recipients of this year’s Alumni Undergraduate Teaching Excellence Awards also will be recognized.

Thees Theatre season to start with ‘Godspell’

The Grammy Award-winning musical “Godspell” will lead off a set of five productions in the 2006-07 season of AU Theatre at Tillery Poet Theatre’s main stage.

AU Theatre is offering free admission for Auburn faculty and staff, with a valid university ID, to the second night of each play in the upcoming season.

Faculty and staff who attend on other nights may obtain tickets in person at the Parking Services lobby or season tickets that help support the productions.

Continuing a policy established last year to introduce more students to live theatre, AU Theatre will again admit AU students for free to all performances.

“Godspell,” which is loosely based on the biblical Book of Matthew, will run Sept. 27-Oct. 1, plus Oct. 6 and Oct. 8. Show times are at 7:30 p.m. except for Oct. 29-31. Outdoors and Sundays. The popular musical was an instant hit since it came on the air in 1971, spawning several million-selling pop music hits, including “Day by Day.”

Other plays in the package are “Speak Truth to Power,” about the dangers faced by human rights activists, on Oct. 12, the farce “The Flea in Her Ear” on Nov. 10, and “The Merry Wives of Windsor” on Dec. 8-9.

Tickets, which are open to the general public, are scheduled to start at 8:30 a.m. and conclude in late afternoon.

The meetings, which are open to the public, are scheduled to start at 8:30 a.m. and conclude in late afternoon.

The agenda is posted online at www.auburn.edu/administration/trustees/agenda090106.html.
AU college gets $1.8 million gift to produce more math teachers

The AU College of Education has received a $1.8 million estate gift from an anonymous donor to help improve the quality of mathematics education in the nation’s schools. Reflecting a national pattern, fewer than 100 of the college’s 2,300 students major in mathematics education, despite a nationwide shortage of math teachers. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, in the 1999-2000 academic year, 68.5 percent of middle school students and 31.4 percent of high school students nationally were taught by math teachers who lacked certification and a major in the field.

College of Education Dean Frances Kochan said the gift will help the college identify and recruit more students with proficiency in mathematics and prepare them for teaching careers in that field. “In the College of Education, we strive to help each student become the most competent, committed and reflective professional possible,” Kochan said.

“Financial support provided by donors plays a pivotal role in recruiting and retaining quality students,” she added.

The estate gift will eventually assist multiple undergraduate and graduate students through full tuition scholarships. Scholarship applicants are expected to have scores on the mathematics section of the ACT in the upper 10 percent. Students who are enrolled in undergraduate and graduate mathematics education programs and maintain a 3.0 grade-point average will be eligible for support. The college has awarded 92 undergraduate student scholarships and 11 graduate awards for the 2006-07 academic year.

Since October 2001, the College of Education has raised $10.8 million to support students, faculty and various programs within the college. The gifts have come during AU’s “It Begins at Auburn” campaign, a six-year $500 million comprehensive campaign to increase private support.

Scholarship honors College of Business professors

Auburn, Ala., couple, J.R. and Carole Parrish, have established a scholarship endowment for students in the AU College of Business to honor two faculty members, H. S. Feild Jr. and Achilles Armenakis.

Feild and Armenakis began their Auburn careers in 1973, both are senior faculty in the Department of Management and both have published extensively in academic journals in their discipline.

Feild, an expert in human resource selection and research methods in human resource management, holds the Torchmark Professorship of Management. The brother of Carole Parrish, Feild holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Mississippi State University and a doctorate from the University of Georgia.

Armenakis is the James T. Purcell Sr. Eminent Scholar in Management Ethics. He holds an M.B.A. from Louisiana Tech University and a doctorate in business administration from Mississippi State University. He taught at East Carolina University and Mississippi State before coming to Auburn.

J.R. and Carole Parrish, 1954 graduates of Auburn, are lifetime members of the Auburn Alumni Association and are members of the Samford Society.

Talking trade

AU officials and faculty met last week at Dixon Conference Center with visiting delegates from Africa. AU Outreach hosted the visiting delegates as part of a program of the U.S. State Department to boost trade ties between the United States and African countries. Among Auburn representatives in the sessions were Royrickers Cook of University Outreach, at the podium, and Syd Spain of AU Research, at the screen.

AU vet med professor elected to AVMA office

Charles Hendrix of the AU College of Veterinary Medicine was elected vice president of the American Veterinary Medical Association during the association’s recent annual meeting.

Hendrix is a former Congressional Science Fellow for the AVMA and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He is also a past chair of the AVMA’s committee on wellness.

An Auburn faculty member since 1981, Hendrix has received the veterinary college’s Norden Distinguished Teaching Award twice and the AU Student Government Association Teacher of the Year Award twice.

He has authored two textbooks, Diagnostic Veterinary Parasitology and Laboratory Procedures for Veterinary Technicians.

How Auburn Stacks Up

Annual credit-hour production at AU 2000-01 to 2005-06

Source: Institutional Research and Assessment

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