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Richardson named 17th president of AU during search for successor

The AU Board of Trustees removed the “interim” from the title of Ed Richardson on Friday, naming him the 17th president of Auburn University.

The former interim president, who has led the university for two years, will carry the title of president during the final stage of the search for his successor.

Richardson said he still plans to retire as soon as his successor is on board, and Board member Charles McCrary, chair of the presidential search advisory committee, said the change in title should not affect the search. McCrary said the committee still expects to identify finalists around the end of the year.

Trustee Dwight Carlisle, who was absent from Friday’s meeting, recommended in a letter to Board President Pro Tem Earlon McWhorter that Richardson be named president, and other members concurred. Faculty representative Conner Bailey said the Executive Committee of the University Senate also supports the appointment at this stage of the search.

The appointment came at a meeting involving adoption of the university’s budget for 2006-07 and extended discussions of scholarships and increased recruiting of high-achieving students.

Richardson said Auburn will use portions of its record state appropriation for 2006-07 to fund additional scholarships for in-state students and a new alternative fuels initiative.

He added that the record appropriation is also being used to increase faculty salaries to 99 percent of the regional average for peer institutions and to support initiatives within AU’s Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs.

“We were pleased and very appreciative of the Legislature and Gov. Riley for the appropriation we received in the most recent legislative session,” Richardson said. “These additional funds will allow us to address some of Auburn’s and the state’s greatest needs. This is a good start.”

The state education budget for 2006-07 contains $187.2 million for operations and maintenance at the AU main campus, an increase of $25.4 million over the current budget year, which ends Sept. 30. Including the AUM campus, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Alabama Agricultural Experiment station, the state allocation to AU for 2006-07 is $288 million, an increase of $42.5 million.

See Scholarships, page 2

Adding housing

The South Campus Residence Halls have long been the largest collection of student housing at Auburn. In recent decades, on-campus availability of student housing has decreased while demand grew. Reversing that trend, the Board of Trustees on Friday approved an 18-acre site west of Wallace Center for new residence halls to house 1,600 students in six or seven buildings.
Hitchcock wins humanities award

Bert Hitchcock, Hargis Professor of American Literature in AU’s College of Liberal Arts, has won the 2006 Alabama Humanities Award from the Alabama Humanities Foundation.

Hitchcock, a member of the Department of English at Auburn since 1971, will receive the award on Sept. 18 at a luncheon ceremony at the Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham.

The foundation’s newsletter states that the Alabama Humanities Award is given annually “to an individual in Alabama who has made an exemplary contribution to the public understanding and appreciation of the humanities.” Previous winners include AU President Emeritus Harry M. Philpot, author Harper Lee, former Gov. Albert Brewer and historian Wayne Flynn, who recently retired from Auburn.

A noted scholar on Southern writers, Hitchcock served as board of the English Department from 1977-99 and has held the Hargis Professorship since 1999. An authority on 19th-century American literature as well as Southern literature, Hitchcock has co-edited three editions of the textbook anthology American Short Stories, which is widely used in colleges and universities.

Scholarships continued from page 1

The state appropriation is included in a $73 million AU budget approved Friday by the Board of Trustees for the fiscal year starting Oct. 1. The main campus portion is $550.8 million.

Richardson announced a commitment of $3 million toward additional scholarships for in-state students. He said $2 million would come from the AU general fund and an additional $1 million from a new foundation through which the Auburn Alumni Association has committed to make available revenue from its affinity credit card program.

“The Board of Trustees has established providing additional scholarships to in-state students as a high priority,” Richardson said. “With the appropriation we received this year, we were able to fund this priority now so that additional scholarships would be available for full-segment of 2007.

He added, “I also want to commend the Auburn Alumni Association for its commitment of funds for these scholarships. This is a great example of how the alumni, too, see a need and helped the university address that need.”

Richardson also announced a commitment of $3 million to the Auburn Alternative Fuels Initiative, a new endeavor aimed at advancing economic development in the state by reinventing natural-resources based industries and establishing new industries based on energy and value-added products from renewable biomass. He said $2 million would come from the general fund and an additional $1 million from the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

He said the new state money is also being used to meet a goal of making AU more competitive in attracting and retaining talented faculty. Budget forecast project that AU salaries will reach 99 percent of the Southern Regional Education Board average in the coming year, meeting a goal set by the AU Board in 2000. This year, Auburn’s faculty salaries reached 97 percent of the regional average.

In addition, the money is being used to fund a growing number of initiatives in Auburn’s Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs. The initiatives support the recruitment and retention of minority students and the recruitment of minority and women faculty.

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, September 6

PUBLIC READING
Author and AU graduate J. Wes Yoder reading from his new novel Carry My Bones, 4 p.m., Julie Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art

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., Volta Theatre

FARMERS MARKET
Fresh produce, farm goods from area growers, 3 p.m.-6 p.m., Ag Heritage Park, West Samford Avenue

Monday, September 11

NEXT: AU Report

Tuesday, September 12

FACULTY WORKSHOP
“Student Engagement and Building Learning Communities,” 8:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m., AU Hotel; for reservation information online, see www.auburn.edu/outreach/di/ diot_events.php?id=139

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR “LETTER “Auburn University Desegregates,” Harold Franklin, the first African-American student to attend AU, and Martin Offutt, author of just Another Day on the Plain: The Desegregation of Auburn University, 4 p.m., Special Collections, Draughon Library

Tuesday, September 13

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR “Structuring the Messiness of Writing and Learning,” noon-1:30 p.m., Foy 208; open to all faculty, staff and graduate students; bring your lunch

Tuesday, September 26

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR “How to Conduct a Valid and Reliable Peer Review,” noon-1:30 p.m., Foy 208; open to all faculty, staff and graduate students; bring your lunch

Publication places AU among top institutions in U.S. and Canada

Auburn has been named one of the nation’s best institutions for undergraduate education by The Princeton Review. The New York-based education services company features AU in The Best 351 Colleges, the 2007 edition of its annual guide to North America’s best colleges.

Only about 15 percent of the four-year colleges in America are featured in the book, which includes a two-page profile for each school and student survey-based rankings of top 20 colleges (from among those profiled in the book) in various categories.

The book’s profile on AU states the university has excellent programs in business, agriculture, engineering, nursing and architecture.

The rankings are based on The Princeton Review’s survey of students attending colleges featured in the book. Students rated their schools in several areas and reported on their campus experiences. Rankings categories range from best professors, administration and campus food to lists based on student-body political leanings, interest in sports and other aspects of campus life.

The book cites AU as having an outstanding library, good “town-gown” relations and friendly, happy students who are among the nation’s best sports fans.

Bevly wins second award from Defense Department

The Office of Army Research in the U.S. Defense Department has selected David Bevly, an assistant professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering in AU’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, to receive a grant from the ARO’s Young Investigator Award Program.

The grant will support work involving global positioning systems and inertial navigation systems, measurements to be made on unmanned ground vehicles guide themselves in potentially threatening situations.

This is the second Young Investigator Award in 2006 for Bevly, who received a similar grant from the Office of Naval Research for his work with autonomous navigation and control of canines used for security assistance.

The Young Investigator grants support research by faculty who are less than five years out of doctoral studies and show exceptional promise.
Archives adds to collection on one of America’s first aviation heroes

AU Libraries recently expanded the collection of University Archives materials on Eddie Rickenbacker, pioneering race car driver, air-combat hero of World War I and founder of Eastern Air Lines.

Among the new items with special significance for historians is a 1918 memorandum from Mason M. Patrick, chief of air service for the American Expeditionary Force, recommending that Rickenbacker and two other AEF pilots undertake a trans-Atlantic flight. Patrick considered the three as America’s most qualified aviators based on their flying experience in World War I. The general also wanted the American military to get credit for the daring feat.

The first non-stop, solo trans-Atlantic flight took place nine years later, when in 1927 Charles A. Lindbergh made the jump from New York to Paris.

Other materials shed new light on the early days of auto racing. In 1919, Eddie’s younger brother, Dewey, contemplated following in his footsteps as an automobile racer. Big brother advised against this choice; Eddie asked his mother to inform Dewey that she had been worrying about the safety of the Rickenbacker boys long enough. Eight days later, Eddie advised Dewey that automobile racing promoters merely wanted to use the Rickenbacker name as a public relations device. These two letters have been added to the collection.

The new materials also document Rickenbacker’s career in the aviation industry. These items reflect his leadership in the industry as chief executive officer of the pioneering commercial aviation company he founded, Eastern Air Lines. Among other things, the materials concern corporate communications, labor-management relations and the use of stock options as employee incentives.

AU historian David Lewis, who published a biography of Rickenbacker last year, said the materials open fresh insights into the early days of aviation. “Auburn has achieved national and even international recognition with this collection,” he added.

Bonnie MacEwan, dean of libraries at Auburn, said the Rickenbacker papers constitute one of the library system’s premier manuscript collections. She noted that Lewis, a national authority on the history of technology, has been instrumental in building the collection while writing what critics have called the definitive biography of the aviation pioneer.

Peter Jones of Auburn’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, received the 2006 Carroll Smith Mentor’s Cup from the Society of Automotive Engineers during the society’s recent Formula SAE competition in Detroit.

Jones, an associate professor of mechanical engineering, has been the adviser for Auburn’s Formula SAE team for six years and worked with the university’s Baja SAE teams for 12 years.

The award recognizes outstanding mentoring by one of the nation’s 190 Formula SAE advisors. It is named for the late Carroll Smith, who was team manager for Carroll Shelby’s victorious Le Mans endurance team and long-term head design judge for Formula SAE.

The award is presented each year by the Sports Car Club of America.

How Auburn Stacks Up

Percent increase in library volumes, 1994-2004

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<th></th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>2004</th>
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<tr>
<td>AU</td>
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<td>U Tenn</td>
<td>36</td>
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Source: Institutional Research and Assessment

The AU Report is an official publication of Auburn University. Each unit mailing copies of this document to off-campus addresses must include its return address. The Office of Communications & Marketing will not accept billing for copies mailed by other units.

Pinkert named associate dean in Vet Med

Carl A. Pinkert has joined Auburn’s College of Veterinary Medicine as associate dean for research and graduate studies and professor of pathobiology.

He served at the University of Rochester Medical Center from 2000-06 as professor of pathology and laboratory medicine in the Center for Aging and Developmental Biology and as director of the university’s Transgenic Facility. Prior, he spent nine years on the University of Alabama at Birmingham faculty as associate professor of comparative medicine and as director of the UAB Transgenic Animal/Embryonic Stem Cell Resource and national NIH Transgenic Mouse Development Facility.

He earned a Ph.D. in 1983 from the University of Georgia in animal reproductive physiology and was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Pennsylvania through 1986.

Pinkert has served as editor of the journal Transgenic Research and has served on the editorial boards of three other major journals in veterinary medicine.

The new Auburn faculty member and administrator was a Sigma Xi national lecturer from 1993-95 and a recipient of the 1997 Doerenkamp-Zbinden Foundation Research Prize, which was awarded for biomedical research that significantly impacted the welfare and well-being of research animals.

Building Science

With rapid progress over the summer, exterior work has been completed on the Miller Gorrie Center, the new home for the Department of Building Science in the College of Architecture, Design and Construction. Advanced technologies taught in the college were used in construction of the $9.3 million facility, which is set for completion in October.