Four Auburn faculty earn top awards

Auburn will present its top annual awards for teaching, research and outreach to four faculty members on Wednesday.

The 5 p.m. public ceremony at The Hotel at Auburn University will also honor other faculty achievements in 2008. The event marks the third time these annual awards have been given in a combined ceremony.

Auburn’s top teaching award, the Gerald and Emily Leischuck Endowed Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching, will go to Daniel Butler of the College of Business and Steven Kincaid of the College of Veterinary Medicine. Butler is an associate professor in the Department of Marketing and the Thomas Walter Professor of Technology Management at Auburn, and Kincaid is Alumni Professor in the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology.

The Creative Research and Scholarship Award, the university’s top award for research, will go to Rex Dunham, Alumni Professor in the College of Agriculture’s Department of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures.

The university’s top outreach award, the Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach, will go to Chris Rodgers, the Scharnagel Professor of Mathematical Sciences in the College of Sciences and Mathematics.

Also, recipients of this year’s Alumni Undergraduate Teaching Excellence Awards will be recognized. The awards recognize outstanding teaching of undergraduates, with the winners selected from faculty who were nominated by department heads, deans, alumni and students. A committee of retired faculty selected the recipients.

This year’s Alumni Undergraduate Teaching Excellence Award winners are Kelly Bryant, an associate professor of industrial design in the College of Architecture, Design and Construction; Joey Shaw, a professor in agronomy and soils in the College of Agriculture; and Ed Williams, a professor of journalism in the College of Liberal Arts.

The university will also honor new Alumni Professors for 2008. The faculty members receive five-year non-renewable professorships that are sponsored by the

U.S. Navy engineering officer

Facilities gets new leadership

Capt. Daniel P. King, a civil engineer who is retiring from the U.S. Navy after 28 years, has been named assistant vice president for facilities at Auburn, effective Dec. 8.

In his new post, King will oversee campus maintenance, planning and related functions, including many responsibilities formerly held by John Mouton of the McWhorter School of Building Science. Mouton recently returned to his academic post after three years as special assistant to the president.

“Dan King brings a tremendous amount of expertise leading complex facilities management operations and teams to this position,” said Don Large, Auburn’s executive vice president, who led the search committee. “He also brings a great deal of enthusiasm, and we’re happy to welcome him to the university and the community.”

Large added, “John Mouton did an excellent job overseeing and advising the president’s office these past three and a half years. I understand his desire to return to the faculty and look forward to seeking his counsel from time to time in the future. His knowledge and expertise is a great asset to Auburn.”

King holds a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from the U.S. Naval Academy, a master’s degree in civil engineering from MIT and a master’s degree in civil engineering from MIT and a master’s...
Smith director

Gaines Smith, director of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, has received the 2008 National Distinguished Service Ruby recognition from Epsilon Sigma Phi, a national organization of Extension professionals.

The Distinguished Service Ruby is the most prestigious recognition presented by Epsilon Sigma Phi. It is designed to recognize outstanding thinking, performance and leadership in Cooperative Extension. The award also recognizes that the recipient has made significant contributions to Extension at the state, regional and national levels.

Smith was honored at the recent Galaxy III conference in Indianapolis. At the conference, he gave the Ruby Lecture during a luncheon recognizing his achievements.

A member of ESP for 33 years, Smith called the award a high point in his 43-year Extension career. “I accepted the Ruby Award not just for myself, but for all of the dedicated Extension professionals in Alabama,” he said. “This award is a testament to the history and success of Extension in our state.”

Smith noted that while the way that Cooperative Extension works is changing dynamically as it tries to keep pace with increasingly more technically savvy clients, there are several critical elements that must be kept in the forefront as Extension moves forward.

He said Extension must make a cultural change concerning funding sources. “For years, we have been dependent on funding from local, state and federal governments. More recently, grants and contracts have added to the revenue stream. But to ensure our future success, Extension must be open to seeking out new and diverse sources of funding and to modifying how we do business to take advantage of those funding sources.”

He continued, “Another challenge is to move our programs beyond success to significance. People, especially decision makers, must believe that our programs are necessary for their daily lives and for a prosperous future.

“But for this transformation from success to significance to occur, leadership is critical. Effective, visionary and committed leadership is needed to keep Cooperative Extension on track to continue our heritage of success. Leadership is key.”

Smith began his career as a county Extension agent in Jefferson County. He served at the district level before joining Alabama Extension’s state administrative team in the 1980s. He directed the shift from county-based and generally focused programming to regionally based programming, which focuses Extension educational efforts within 14 program priority teams.

Richard Leakey to speak on environment

Environmental activist and anthropologist Richard Leakey will discuss endangered wildlife and global environmental problems at 4 p.m. Monday, Oct. 6, in the Sciences Center Auditorium as part of the Littleton-Franklin Lecture Series.

One of the world’s foremost authorities on wildlife and nature conservation, Leakey is the author of more than 100 articles and books, including “Origins,” “The Sixth Extinction” and “Wildlife Wars: My Fight to Save Africa’s Natural Treasures,” his memoir. He has been profiled on “60 Minutes” and was named one of Time magazine’s “100 Greatest Minds of the 20th Century.”

The Littleton-Franklin Lectures are Auburn’s oldest and most prestigious lecture series. All presentations are open to the public. The series is named for Professor Emeritus Taylor Littleton and benefactors John and Mary Franklin.

ACES director

Smith receives national award for Extension work

Faculty honors

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Auburn Alumni Association with funds endowed from Auburn Annual Giving. These awards are presented on the basis of research, publishing and teaching.

The 2008 Alumni Professors are Susan Brinson, a professor of communications and journalism in the College of Liberal Arts; Steve Duke, an associate professor in chemical engineering in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering; Dan Givens, an associate professor in pathology in the College of Veterinary Medicine; John Saye, a professor of curriculum and teaching in the College of Education; and Joey Shaw, a professor in agronomy and soils in the College of Agriculture.

The Distinguished Graduate Faculty Lecturer for 2008 is Bernhard Kaltenboeck, a professor of veterinary microbiology in the College of Veterinary Medicine. This award is sponsored by the Auburn Alumni Association and the Graduate School. The recipients are nominated by deans and department heads and chosen by the Graduate Faculty Council on the basis of excellence in research.

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Facilities leader

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degree in information systems technology from George Washington University. He also completed the executive advanced management program of the Wharton School of Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania.

Since graduating from Annapolis as an ensign in 1980, King has risen through the ranks to captain and the position of public works officer of the U.S. Naval Academy since July 2006. In 2007, he directed 330 contract actions with a total value of $82 million.

“This is a great opportunity; my wife and I enjoyed seeing the community,” said King, who is married to the former Janet Czaplicki of Connecticut. “I really look forward to being part of the Auburn Family, and can’t wait to get started.”

King’s Navy commendations include a Legion of Merit, four Meritorious Service Medals, two Navy Achievement Medals, a Meritorious Unit Commendation and two Combat E’s.
Sustainability

Auburn joins nationwide effort toward protecting environment

With sustainability and environmental protection included in both Auburn’s new strategic plan and its master plan for campus development, President Jay Gogue has signed a statement on behalf of the university that he predicted will help provide direction for those efforts.

With his Sept. 9 signing of the Presidents Climate Commitment, Gogue joined 580 of his peers at other institutions. The commitment has gained widespread support across the nation since 2006, and the list of signers from the Southeast includes the presidents of Georgia Tech, the University of Tennessee, Clemson, the University of North Carolina, the University of Florida and others.

Auburn is the first public institution of higher education in Alabama to sign the commitment; Birmingham Southern is the only other college in Alabama to have signed. After the Presidents Climate Commitment received support from the University Senate, the Student Government Association and other campus representative organizations, Gogue signed the statement pledging Auburn to work toward becoming climate-neutral. The process involves multiple steps, such as creating institutional structures to guide the plan, completing a comprehensive inventory of all greenhouse gas emissions and developing and implementing an institutional action plan.

Noting steps toward sustainability and environmental protection under way or planned across campus, Auburn’s commitment to reducing energy use and the university’s carbon footprint predates his signing of the document.

Institutions represented in the Presidents Climate Commitment develop their programs individually, based on their own circumstances and needs, but participating institutions can learn from the best practices of each other, said Lindy Biggs, director of the Auburn Sustainability Initiative.

“Auburn is in good company,” Biggs said. “A lot of highly respected institutions are committed to reducing their carbon imprint and educating their students in environmental responsibility, and so are we.”

Biggs, who is also an associate professor of history, said the university has made rapid progress in environmental sustainability in recent years, with major increases in the amount of materials going to recycling sites instead of landfills, the construction of buildings with the energy-efficient LEED classification and steps toward incorporating environmental awareness into the academic program.

She said a greenhouse gas emissions inventory was started during the summer and should be finished this semester. The results will aid the university community in efforts to establish and refine programs and activities that improve energy efficiency, she explained.

Noting that highly respected scientists have warned that the Earth’s climate could face a tipping point toward undesirable climate change as early as 2015, she said, “The consequences of climate change will be very difficult to repair, but we can take actions now to minimize the impact on people, the global economy and the environment.”

While solutions need to be widespread, Biggs said universities have a special role to play in addressing climate change. “Universities are very important not only in educating our students and the public about climate change, but also in producing future leaders,” she said. “Within a relatively short time, today’s students will be the leaders who will have to carry the world into a sustainable future,” she added. “It is reassuring to see that so many of our students want to prepare themselves to do this kind of work.”

Sustainability and energy efficiency have been gaining increasing attention in administrative areas at Auburn since the university launched the Sustainability Initiative in the 2004-05 academic year. After being funded annually for its first four years, the initiative has achieved permanent-funding status for 2008-09, ensuring stability for campuswide programs to enhance sustainability.

Meanwhile, colleges and schools at Auburn have been introducing matters related to sustainability and climate change into their curricula. Last spring the Curriculum Committee approved a minor in sustainable studies that is housed in the Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies. Also, for spring semester the Department of English will offer 28 sections of its sustainability-themed Composition II classes.

Biggs said the Student Government Association and the University Senate have also played key roles in Auburn’s environmental efforts beyond offering their support for the Presidents Climate Commitment. The SGA, for instance, created its Committee for Environmental Initiatives, which looks for activities that can reduce the campus carbon footprint.

“There has been a lot of involvement and interest in sustainability throughout the university,” she said. “It is encouraging to see so many people interested in helping Auburn move toward more sustainability across campus and beyond.”

— Roy Summerford

On the road

Agriculture Professor David Bransby, a nationally known authority on renewable energy, departed Auburn on Sept. 26 on a cross-country drive in this bio-truck owned by Wayne Keith of Springville. When they reach the West Coast, Keith will drive the truck from Berkeley, Calif., to Las Vegas in a race for vehicles powered by non-commercially available fuels. En route, they are fueling the truck with wood and other biological fuels instead of gasoline.
Interdisciplinarity: The 21st century research paradigm

By S.W. Schneller, Dean, College of Sciences and Mathematics

Over the last 50 years the American people have enjoyed a period of unprecedented prosperity. This pleasant phenomenon is in no small measure due to fundamental advances through university research.

In contrast to industry, whose research ambitions are driven by the need for rapid turn around and profit margins, university inquiry thrives on risk taking and ventures into the unfamiliar and uncertain. Research is the hallmark of great fundamental advances through university research.

Research is about posing questions and seeking answers. The questions can arise from the obvious such as efforts to improve health and seeking alternative energy sources to ones more philosophical such as understanding of the cosmos. Many of the questions asked certainly come from queries with practical consequences; others are the products of the innate curiosity of the human spirit.

The objective of research, however, is to make a difference. The path to discovery is not a straight one and, as a result, it is difficult to anticipate what will be a significant discovery. For example, who would have predicted the changes that are accompanying the evolution of the worldwide web? One of the many satisfactions that drive research is the endless string of surprises it provides.

Until most recently, scientific discovery has been largely single investigator driven. However, with today’s need to confront and comprehend the more complex questions facing society, scientists from many disciplines are being asked to coalesce their expertise in an integrated, rather than a parallel, way.

For example, the interface of chemistry, physics, neuroscience and mathematics gave us magnetic resonance imaging and positron emission tomography. These techniques look into the brains of awake, behaving human beings and observe their minds in action. This has revolutionized an understanding of such complex issues as mental illness and drug addiction.

In meeting the myriad of today’s scientific challenges we may need to phase out single-discipline science and move toward a more integrated interdisciplinarity.

“In meeting the myriad of today’s scientific challenges we may need to phase out single-discipline science and move toward a more integrated interdisciplinarity.”

Campus Forum is a periodic discussion by Auburn faculty, staff and administrators of issues in higher education that are of special interest to the campus community but which are infrequently discussed in the commercial news media. Views in each Campus Forum are the independent expression of the writer.
Glass art

Visiting artist’s display in Biggin Gallery enters final week

Visiting artist Jiyong Lee, who is widely known for his glass sculptures, will discuss the art of glassmaking in a public lecture at noon Friday in Biggin Gallery. A display of glassworks by Lee and fellow artist Brian Frus will be on display at the gallery this week until Lee’s presentation, which closes the exhibition.

“We are excited to have our first glass exhibition at Biggin Gallery and particularly pleased that Jiyong Lee will give an artist talk on Oct. 10,” said Barb Bondy, the department’s exhibitions and lectures coordinator.

“Some of the works on exhibit were created specifically for the Auburn show; we are premiering new works by these two glass artists,” Bondy added. “We have not had a glass exhibition until now, but there is another impressive glass work in this area that is permanently on exhibit at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art at Auburn University rotunda by internationally-known glass artist Dale Chihuly.”

Works in the “Life: Segmentation and Seed” exhibition explore the essential relationship of how light affects glass. “Both artists have created glass sculptures that seem to pull in light, capture and contain it within, creating an inner light, life,” said Barry Fleming, interim chair of the Department of Art. “The design of the exhibition matching the elegance of the work has made a stunningly beautiful show,” Fleming said. “We are very pleased with the positive response to this exhibition and hope the university and greater community have the opportunity to view it.”

Jiyong Lee heads the glass program at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. He earned his master of fine arts degree at Rochester Institute of Technology in 2001; upon graduation, he was hired to teach in the program for four years as a visiting assistant professor. Lee was born and raised in Korea where he received a degree in ceramics design from Hong-ik University. In 2005, he received the Emerging Artist Award from the Glass Art Society. Also, he received the Saxe Award in 2004 for the Outstanding Teaching Assistant from the Glass Art Society. Also, he received the Saxe Award in 2004 for the Outstanding Teaching Assistant from the Glass Art Society.

Lee’s education in both Korea and the United States represents two different cultural perspectives that have prepared him to educate students who come from diverse backgrounds.

Having his feet in both cultures has also broadened his personal aesthetics and appreciation for different ways of thinking. Brian Frus is an emerging glass artist who earned his master of fine arts degree at Rochester Institute of Technology in 2003. He obtained his bachelor’s degree from Jacksonville University in Florida in 2001.

Frus has recently been appointed as education director at Urban Glass in Brooklyn. Urban Glass offers a comprehensive education program of classes, workshops and intensives at every skill level in a wide variety of glassworking techniques, including glassblowing, hot casting, kiln casting, lampworking, fusing, slumping, neon, mosaics, stained glass and coldworking.

Frus has a professional history that includes assistantships and numerous glassblowing demonstrations. He taught in the glass department as assistant professor of glass at Jacksonville University from 2006-08 and has served as guest professor at Ireland’s National College of Art and Design. In 2003-06, he taught and was facilities and studios manager for the Pittsburgh Glass Center.

Frus work has been featured in numerous exhibitions in Florida, Pennsylvania and New York. Gallery hours for “Life: Segmentation and Seed” by Jiyong Lee and Brian Frus are 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday.

— Barb Bondy

Researchers developing ‘virtual labs’ for teaching science in middle school

Engineering researchers at Auburn and three other universities are working on a U.S. Department of Education project to extend the benefits of fully equipped science laboratories to middle school students through their computers.

N. Hari Narayanan, a professor in Samuel Ginn College of Engineering’s Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering, is part of the multi-university research team that is designing a virtual science experimentation platform for middle school science instruction.

Narayanan is collaborating with researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Kansas State University and Bentley College on the project, which is supported by a $1.5 million grant from the Institute of Educational Sciences in the U.S. Department of Education.

“The revolution in computational science has not yet impacted science education in schools,” said Narayanan, whose research has previously been supported by the National Science Foundation and Office of Naval Research. “This project will help introduce students to computational tools. It will also create an advanced physics simulation system, with an interface customized to children for building and running virtual experiments.”

Narayanan said the project is designed to draw on the strengths of each partner institution. Auburn will lead computer science research and development, drawing upon Narayanan’s expertise in human-computer interaction and educational technology.

Faculty from the physics education research group at Kansas State will provide domain expertise, while researchers at the Information Design Department of Bentley will conduct usability testing.

Wisconsin’s College of Education will deploy and evaluate the system in schools. The researchers say they hope to carry out several design and test cycles during the three years of the project to produce a proven system ready for national dissemination.

“Students will be able to explore what-if scenarios by changing physical properties and principles in ways not possible in the real world,” Narayanan said. “We will test the system in schools in Wisconsin and Kansas, and ultimately make it available to science teachers nationwide.”

— Sara Borchik
How did they do that?

Building Science students provide answers in book on classic structures

We recognize them, study them and long to visit them — iconic structures such as the Great Pyramids, Notre Dame and the Colosseum. They remain marvels in the modern day even though many were built during centuries or millenniums past. And while much is known about the structures themselves, what exactly do we know about who built them and how they were constructed?

These were the questions that Linda Ruth’s “Deconstructing Construction” class sought to answer this summer. Made up of 17 senior-level undergraduate building science students and one graduate student, the class centered around a whirlwind study-abroad trip to Western Europe and Egypt to visit 17 construction marvels. But Ruth’s students weren’t just casual observers. Their mission was to study each structure in depth and collectively produce a textbook about the history of construction.

The project emerged when Ruth, an associate professor in the College of Architecture, Design and Construction’s McWhorter School of Building Science, was searching for a textbook to use in her “History and Introduction to Construction” class.

“I realized that there was no textbook that focused on how architecturally significant buildings were constructed. Everything was about the architectural history of it: why it looked the way it did, what the architects were trying to express through the design,” she said. “It really frustrated me.”

As an architect, Ruth said she appreciated studying architectural history and learning about famous architects like Frank Lloyd Wright and Antonio Gaudi. But she realized that because of a lack of information and resources available, building science students could not study construction history in the same way.

“I’d ask my construction students who the famous builders were and we didn’t know. We didn’t know who built those Gothic cathedrals or who the people were that built the Great Pyramids,” she said. “It seemed sad to me that my students didn’t have those heroes to look back on.”

From this problem, the idea for the textbook was born. The students built upon that idea, producing the new book. Ruth will use the book to teach incoming freshman building science students about the history of construction as well as architectural history through the framework of construction.

To take the book from idea to reality, Ruth recruited Ross Heck, professor of graphic design with the college’s Department of Industrial Design, to collaborate and lead the book’s design efforts. She also engaged two of her fellow building science professors in the project. Professor Michael Hein and Associate Professor Paul Holley provided assistance to the students throughout the project in regard to the analysis of the buildings’ structures and project management, respectively.

Ruth then chose the students who participated in the study abroad opportunity through a rigorous selection process. Each student had to interview and display excellent writing and research skills in addition to meeting other criteria before being granted admission to the “Deconstructing Construction” class. Once chosen, the group had a week-long “Structures Boot Camp” before departing for nearly two months to Europe.

From the outset, each student was assigned a different structure and subsequently a book chapter. The students were responsible for researching their individual structures and becoming experts on how each was built. Ruth’s students also had to understand and explain the design and construction of their respective structures using modern technology and formats. As the class would arrive at a particular structure, the student in charge would take over telling his or her classmates about the construction marvel and its significance in construction history.

The 17 structures chosen for the textbook are representative of different types of architecture or periods in time. For example, the Parthenon represents Greek architecture and the Eiffel Tower is from the Industrial Revolution. Other structures were chosen because of what they represent for builders; the Tower of Pisa, for example, represents an instance when bad things happen to good builders.

Students described the once-in-a-lifetime trip as a transformative experience. “This project has changed me as a builder because I’ve learned that anything is possible. When you think there isn’t the technology available or you think it can’t be done, look at the structures we studied and think they accomplished these things hundreds of years ago and they still stand today,” said student Jeff Jantz.

Student Corey Lemming said the experience changed his outlook as a future builder. “For more than 4,500 years, builders have been doing the impossible. Builders are the ultimate problem solvers, even if it takes 200 years to build something,” Lemming said. “I think [the experience] has made me a more patient builder. Next time I run into a problem on a construction site, I will remember the buildings I visited this summer. The builders did not give up on something just because it seemed impossible; each one of these buildings broke important barriers in the evolution of construction practices.”

Ruth said she hopes her students will continue to draw on their experiences as they become builders themselves.

“It was important for me to show them that the issues that they are going to deal with are the same issues that builders 4,000 years ago were dealing with: how to deal with labor force, how to get materials to the site, how to deal with soil conditions, how to build a good foundation so that these buildings are still standing after 4,000 years,” she said. “The solutions to the problems are different but the problems are still the same.”

Ruth said she plans to expand the book in the near future. She has three students who will be traveling to England this fall to research and report on Stonehenge, the Millennium Dome and 30 St. Mary Axe.

“I hope what all the students take with them is an appreciation for the heritage of the construction industry,” she said.

— Katie Wilder
Howard Goldstein, an associate professor of music in the College of Liberal Arts, has been appointed to the Daniel F. Breeden Eminent Scholar Chair for the Humanities at Auburn for spring semester.

As the Breeden Eminent Scholar, Goldstein will provide musical outreach leadership for the college’s Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities. Among his duties, Goldstein will coordinate a variety of performances, classroom instruction and outreach activities for the Tasman String Quartet, which will be in residence at Auburn from Feb. 15-March 15.

Goldstein, a member of the Department of Music faculty since 1992, is director of the Auburn University Orchestra and the Community Orchestra. He is also director of music for the Auburn University Theatre. He holds master’s and doctoral degrees in music from the Peabody Conservatory of Music.

Supported by an endowment from Auburn alumnus Daniel F. Breeden, the Breeden Eminent Scholar Chair was established in 1989 to provide support for the academic and outreach missions of the College of Liberal Arts.

Which is better for heart health: Exercise, vitamin B3 or both?

A study by Auburn College of Education researchers has produced a clearer picture of the relationship between exercise and niacin on men at high risk of cardiovascular disease.

A feature article on the study, co-authored by Peter Grandjean, an associate professor and TigerFit program director in the Department of Kinesiology, and Eric Plaisance, a former doctoral student in the department, appeared in the July 2008 issue of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, which is published by the American Society for Nutrition.

Based on the results of their study, the researchers concluded that aerobic exercise is more effective than extended-release niacin in reducing post-meal triglyceride concentrations. They found that niacin appears to enhance the triglyceride-lowering effects of exercise after a meal and that the combination of exercise and niacin may be beneficial to people resistant to insulin.

The study examined whether niacin, also known as vitamin B3, enhances the triglyceride-lowering effect of aerobic exercise. High levels of triglycerides in blood have been linked to atherosclerosis and the risk of heart disease and stroke. Plaisance and colleagues studied 15 men between the ages of 30 and 65 who were classified as high-risk for cardiovascular disease.

The men ate high-fat meals and then participated in aerobic exercise one hour before another high-fat meal. They consumed another high-fat meal after taking a six-week supply of extended-release niacin. Their responses were also measured after taking a six-week supply of extended-release niacin and consuming a high-fat meal one hour after a period of aerobic exercise.

Hotel celebration
City of Auburn Mayor Bill Ham, left, and June Henton, dean of the College of Human Sciences, joined Hans van der Reijden, general manager of The Hotel at Auburn University, on Sept. 30 in a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating both the 20th anniversary of the hotel and the conclusion of a $20 million renovation of the hotel’s 243 guest rooms and suites. Managed by the Atlanta-based West Paces Group, the university-owned hotel is home to the Dixon Conference Center and Ariccia Restaurant. The facility is also the focal point of the hotel and restaurant management program in the College of Human Sciences.

When great minds meet...

tempers may flare, as in this scene of an imaginary meeting between a young Einstein and a young Picasso in the play “Picasso at the Lapin Agile,” which was to wrap a two-week run at Telfair Peet Theatre on Oct. 4. Next up in the University Theatre season is Oscar Wilde’s “Lady Windermere’s Fan,” which starts Nov. 13. Call the box office at 844-4154 for ticket information.
Texas A&M professor selected to lead Building Science

The College of Architecture, Design and Construction has named Richard A. Burt as the new head of the McWhorter School of Building Science.

He succeeds John Murphy, who is now directing international education for the school.

Burt comes to Auburn from Texas A&M, where he held an endowed professorship and was associate head in the Department of Construction Science.

“I came to Auburn in 2004-05 mainly to visit Paul Holley’s survey camp,” Burt said. “I met the faculty and toured the building while it was under construction and I was impressed. I had also known John Murphy from Texas A&M.”

The former Texas A&M professor said his introduction to Auburn then helped to influence his decision to come now. “I wasn’t looking to become a department head this soon. I was an associate head at A&M and I think there are only a handful of schools I would even consider moving away from A&M for, and this was one of them.”

Burt grew up in England and has worked in the construction industry and related academic fields since he was 16 years old. He is a member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, and earned master’s and doctoral degrees from Texas A&M.

Burt said he was attracted to the McWhorter School of Building Science by a remarkable faculty, industry involvement and the study abroad program. He said that he was most surprised when he met the students, who told him that they had no problems whatsoever with the program. “That’s unusual. That tells me that it is a really, really good program.”

As head of the school, Burt said he plans a thorough curriculum review to build upon the program’s success and to prepare for the future needs of the industry. “I want us to really think about what it is the industry needs from our students in the future,” he said, “because they are not the same things that I learned in school.”

“Richard’s administrative experience as associate head of the construction program at Texas A&M University has prepared him with an excellent background and the needed expertise to provide strong and inclusive leadership to the faculty and students in Auburn building science,” said Dan Bennett, dean of the College of Architecture, Design and Construction.

— Carol Nelson

Pharmaceutical Care Center to offer flu vaccinations

The Pharmaceutical Care Center will be administering flu shots on campus beginning Oct. 14. Watch Auburn Daily for the flu shot clinic schedule.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends flu shots based on an individual’s risk of complications from the flu or because they are in close contact with someone at higher risk of influenza complications.

For adults, medical experts recommend flu vaccination for pregnant women, people 50 years of age and older, people of any age with certain chronic health conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease), people who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, household contacts of person at high risk for complications from influenza, household contacts and out-of-home caregivers of children less than six months of age and health care workers.

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