Ceremony to honor faculty for teaching, research, outreach

Auburn University will hold its seventh annual Faculty Awards Ceremony Tuesday, Oct. 30, at The Hotel at Auburn University.

The 6 p.m. invitational dinner and ceremony recognizes outstanding faculty achievements in teaching, research and outreach. Twenty-two faculty members will be honored in this year’s program, which will be hosted by Provost Timothy Boosinger.

Among faculty receiving awards are Lawrence Wit, associate dean and a professor in the College of Sciences and Mathematics, and Andrew Freear, Wiatt Professor in the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture and director of the Rural Studio in the College of Architecture, Design and Construction. Both are winners of the Gerald and Emily Leischuck Endowed Presidential Awards for Excellence in Teaching, recognizing them as the university’s top teachers for 2012.

Wit, who is retiring after 36 years on the Auburn faculty, has served the past 22 years as a professor and associate dean for academic affairs in the College of Sciences and Mathematics. In the college’s mammalian physiology classes, his teaching methods and class content have brought critical acclaim to both Auburn’s biomedical sciences students and the university’s premedical program.

At the Rural Studio in Newbern, Freear has applied a hands-on architectural pedagogy that teaches students to design and build charity homes and community projects, improving living conditions for citizens of West Alabama. Freear has practiced extensively as an architect in England and the United States and taught at the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London.

Christopher Roberts, dean and a professor in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, and Ruth Crocker, a professor of history in the College of Liberal Arts, will receive the Creative Research and Scholarship Award.

Roberts became dean of engineering in July, after serving nine years as chair of the Department of Chemical Engineering, where he was the George E. and Dorothy Stafford Uthlaut Professor. His research in nano-materials synthesis and processing is supported by the National Science Foundation, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy, the National Energy Technology Lab and others.

Crocker, a faculty member in the Department of History since 1983, was among a group of faculty who helped develop Auburn’s Women’s Studies Program, and she served two terms as director. She has published 15 articles and book chapters and two books, Governor issues call for nominations to fill two seats on Board of Trustees

Gov. Robert Bentley issued a call on Oct. 11 for nominations to fill two open positions on the Auburn University Board of Trustees.

The positions are now held by John Blackwell representing District 8 in North Alabama and Sam Ginn in an at-large position.

Ginn and Blackwell are not eligible to serve additional terms due to an age requirement under the Alabama Constitution. Their seven-year terms expired in February and March, respectively, but trustees may serve until their replacements are appointed and confirmed, up to a maximum of 12 months beyond the end of their terms.

“As in the past, members of the committee are looking for leaders who are forward-looking, service-oriented and dedicated to furthering Auburn’s instruction, research and extension missions,” Bentley wrote in a letter to “Members of the Auburn Family.”

The deadline for submitting nominations and supporting information is Nov. 9.

To be eligible for appointment to the Board of Trustees, under the Alabama Constitution, a prospective nominee must be a resident of the continental United States and less than 70 years of age when appointed. Members of the selection committee or employees of Auburn University are not eligible.

The selection committee consists of the governor or his designee, Bill Stone and Gaines Thomas representing the Auburn Alumni Association’s Board of Directors, and Auburn Trustees Raymond Harbert and Jimmy Rane. After interviewing up to three nominees for each position, the committee will make appointments, which are subject to confirmation by the State Senate.

Direct questions to the Board of Trustees Office at 844-4866 or trustees@auburn.edu.
Faculty honors

Continued from Page 1

including a feminist biography of philanthropist Margaret Olivia Sage.

The Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach will go to Cheryl Morgan, a professor in the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture and director of the Center for Architecture and Urban Studies’ Urban Studio in the College of Architecture, Design and Construction.

Morgan, an Auburn faculty member since 1992, is a founding board member of the citizen leadership program YourTownAlabama. Under her direction, the Urban Studio’s Small Town Design Initiative Program has worked with more than 70 small towns and neighborhoods developing master plans for future growth and development.

In addition, recipients of this year’s Alumni Undergraduate Teaching Excellence Awards will be recognized. This year’s winners are Robert Boyd, a professor in the Department of Biological Sciences in the College of Sciences and Mathematics; Shelly McKee, an associate professor in the Department of Poultry Science in the College of Agriculture; and Karla Simmons, an assistant professor in the Department of Consumer and Design Sciences in the College of Human Sciences.

Also to be honored are the 2012 Alumni Professors, who receive five-year, non-renewable professorships sponsored by the Auburn Alumni Association with funds endowed from Auburn Annual Giving. These awards are presented on the basis of research, publishing and teaching. The 2012 Alumni Professors are Chantel Acevedo of the Department of English in the College of Liberal Arts, D. Allen Davis of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures in the College of Agriculture, Henry Kinnucan of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology in the College of Agriculture, Margaret Ross of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Technology in the College of Education and Herbert Jack Rotfeld of Marketing in the College of Business.

Gary Gruenhage, a professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics in the College of Sciences and Mathematics will be recognized as Auburn’s 2012 Distinguished Graduate Faculty Lecturer. Recipients are chosen annually by the Graduate Faculty Council on the basis of excellence in research.

Martha Escobar, an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts, will receive the Provost Award for Excellence in Fostering Undergraduate Research and Creative Scholarship.

The President’s Outstanding Collaborative Units Award recognizes the Center for Bioenergy and Bioproducts and seven faculty members: Steven Taylor, director of the center and a professor and head of the Department of Biosystems Engineering in the colleges of Agriculture and Engineering; Sushil Adhikari, an assistant professor in the Department of Biosystems Engineering; Christopher Roberts, a professor and dean of the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering; Mario Eden, the Joe T. and Billie Carole McMillan Professor and chair of the Department of Chemical Engineering; Oladiran Fasina, an associate professor in the Department of Biosystems Engineering; Mark Hall, an Extension specialist at the Tennessee Valley Research Extension Center; and Tom Gallagher, an assistant professor in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences.

– Carol Nelson

Plant Science open house to feature latest on research into sustainability, other topics

Greenhouse tours, a presentation on permeable pavements and hands-on activities, will be part of the lineup when the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station’s Plant Science Research Center at 75 Woodfield Drive hosts an open house and rainwater-gardening class for the public Tuesday, Oct. 30, from 2-4 p.m.

The tours at the center, from 2-3:30 p.m., will spotlight several research projects related to integrated organic pest management, disease management for ornamentals, field crops and vegetables.

A program on rainwater gardening will begin at 3:30 p.m. and will include information about stormwater and watershed management, the Parkerson Mill Creek Watershed Project, the Saguatchee Watershed Management Plan and native plants. Participants will have the opportunity to help plant rainwater garden beds at the center.

The open house activities are sponsored by Auburn’s College of Agriculture, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Saguatchee and Parkerson Mill Creek watershed projects.

Following the research center’s open house, a tour of Auburn’s Donald E. Davis Arboretum also will be offered. The tour, set for 4:30 p.m., will feature several new low-impact development features, such as a pitcher-plant bog and permeable walkways.

Campus Calendar

Friday, October 26

Public Lecture Gen. Lloyd Austin III, U.S. Army vice chief of staff, and Charlene Austin, advocate for military families, 11 a.m., Auburn Alumni Center; part of the College of Education’s Keystone Lecture Series

Public Lecture “AU Warrior Research Center,” JoEllen Sefton discussing ways to improve life for current military, veterans and their families, 4 p.m., Auburn Alumni Center; part of the Game Day Lecture Series

CADC Pumpkin Carve More than 400 jack-o-lanterns creatively carved by students, pumpkins lit for viewing from 6-10 p.m., courtyard of Dudley Hall

Monday, October 29

Land-Grant Commemoration Program celebrating the anniversary of Morrill Act, which established the land-grant program for education, 9-11 a.m., Dixon Conference Center; sponsored by Alabama A&M, Auburn and Tuskegee universities

Fine Arts Event “Angelou and the Arts,” art with dance and theatre performances celebrating work of Maya Angelou, 4 p.m., Jule Collins Smith Museum

Wednesday, October 31

Multicultural Center Film “Spinning into Butter,” 2 p.m., Student Center 2225; part of the Watch and Learn Film Series

Thursday, November 1

Film and Discussion “Kiss Me Deadly,” 5:30 p.m., Jule Collins Smith Museum; part of the Life Interrupted Film Series, concurrent with the museum’s “Art Interrupted” exhibition

Friday, November 2

Public Lecture “Auburn v. Alabama: The Origin of the Rivalry,” Archivist Dwayne Cox, 4 p.m., Auburn Alumni Center; part of the Game Day Lecture Series

Monday, November 5

Concerts Auburn University Campus Band, 4-5 p.m., Goodwin Band Hall; admission free; Auburn University Low Brass Ensemble, 6-7:30 p.m., Goodwin Recital Hall, admission $10 for public, $5 for students; Auburn University Trumpet Ensemble and Dean’s Brass Quintet, 7:30-9 p.m., Goodwin Recital Hall, admission $10 for public, $5 for students

Tuesday, November 6

Meeting University Senate, 3:30 p.m., Broun Hall

Wednesday, November 7

Recital Music Department faculty Lisa Caravan on cello and Jeremy Samolesky on piano, 7:30-9 p.m., Goodwin Recital Hall, admission $10 for public, $5 for students

Thursday, November 8

University Theatre Aristophanes’ “Lysistrata,” 7:30 p.m., Telfair Peet Theatre; also Nov. 9-11 and Nov. 13; tickets available online or at Theatre Box Office

Friday, November 9

Next Auburn Report
Guests from Ecuador
The consul general and vice consul general of Ecuador visited Auburn this month for meetings with Auburn students, faculty and administrators. Based in Atlanta, Vice Consul Cristina Velazquez, left, and Consul Francisco Riofrio, center, are shown with University President Jay Gogue. The visit by the diplomats was part of an initiative to broaden the international exposure of students and increase ties between the university and countries around the world.

General, wife presenting 2012 Keystone Lecture
The Auburn University College of Education will celebrate the 10th anniversary of its annual Keystone Leader-in-Residence lecture series with an address by Gen. Lloyd Austin III and Charlene Austin at 11 a.m. Friday, Oct. 26, at the Auburn Alumni Center.

The Austins are both graduates of the college’s counselor education graduate program. Lloyd Austin serves as the U.S. Army’s vice chief of staff, while Charlene Austin has been an advocate for military families and a volunteer for the United Service Organization, the United Way, Operation Homefront and the Military Child Education Coalition.

Lloyd Austin, who served as commanding general of U.S. Forces in Iraq before moving to the Pentagon in January, earned one of Auburn University’s Lifetime Achievement Awards earlier this year. In supporting his nomination for that award, retired admiral and former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mike Mullen described Austin as “a soldier and a statesman. ... He personifies the ideals of 21st century service.”

The Austins began graduate coursework at Auburn while stationed at Fort Benning. Charlene Austin earned her master’s degree in 1985 and Lloyd Austin finished his in 1986.

Established in 2003, the College of Education’s Keystone Leader-in-Residence program introduces students to proven leaders in education, human services, health services, community services and government.

The program emphasizes that education, much like the keystone of an arch, serves a central, supporting role in society. Keystone Leaders spend a day on campus visiting with students, faculty and staff, and share their personal and professional experiences through a campus-wide lecture and various classroom and small-group meetings.

– Troy Johnson

Congessional recognition
Third District Congressman Mike Rogers recently joined members of the College of Liberal Arts’ Department of Political Science in honoring Auburn junior Emily Scammell, winner of the department’s first Political Science Award. Rogers recognized the Honors College student through published remarks in the Congressional Record and a framed copy of the document. Shown, from left are Political Science Department Chair Gerry Gryski, Scammell and Rogers.

– Michael Tullier

Thirteen newly endowed professorships awarded
As part of its recent Endowed Professorship Campaign Awards ceremony, Auburn University presented 13 new professorships to faculty in four colleges and schools. In addition to honoring faculty, the ceremony celebrated the philanthropic spirit of alumni and friends who created these professorships.

Faculty honorees included one faculty member from the College of Business, five from the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, two from the Auburn University and Auburn University Montgomery Schools of Nursing and five from the College of Sciences and Mathematics.

The 2012 ceremony is the third event uniting the donors and recipients of professorships created during Auburn’s 2010 professorship campaign. The 12-month campaign, which targeted the creation of 81 professorships, generated 95 new professorships and added more than $14 million in value to the university’s endowment.

Approximately 15 percent of Auburn’s faculty members hold endowed professorships, which help to recognize, retain and recruit outstanding faculty talent.

“These professorships support Auburn’s mission by recognizing our faculty’s intellectual vibrancy, elevated instructional standards and personal service to the university and their respective disciplines,” said Provost Timothy Boosinger.

Typically, faculty members receive endowed professorship appointments for a three-year period following a peer-based competitive process. Earnings from these endowments fund salary enhancements, travel and professional development, as well as research and outreach activities.

Endowments such as these can support associate professor, professor, department chair and dean positions in any of Auburn’s colleges and schools, as well as in specific specialties, degree programs or departments. Professorships bear the name of the individual, corporation or foundation establishing the endowment, or may be named to honor or memorialize another individual of the donor’s choosing.

– Troy Johnson

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Partnership with United Nations

Efforts increase in hunger-awareness campaign

Auburn University is now a partner with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for World Food Day, which is observed annually on Oct. 16 around the world.

June Henton, dean of the College of Human Sciences, and Harriet Giles, director of external communications for the college, were asked by FAO in the spring to engage campuses worldwide through Universities Fighting World Hunger in raising awareness about domestic and global hunger.

A student committee representing UFWH campuses around the world suggested FAO use the new “Why Care?” campaign, which was started by four Auburn students in a Hunger Studies capstone course.

“Because their creative idea was the one selected and because these students and Auburn faculty and Hunger Solutions Institute personnel have provided the leadership for campaign oversight on behalf of UFWH, Auburn was asked to become an FAO World Food Day partner, a prestigious recognition by one of the world’s most important multilateral international organizations,” said Giles.

Kate Thornton, director of hunger and sustainability initiatives in the College of Human Sciences, tasked students in her Hunger Studies capstone course this spring to create a project that engages others in the war on hunger.

“They spent the semester prior learning about hunger, the huge number of people it affects, the debilitating consequences, and most importantly the people who suffer from hunger day in and day out – and they wanted to do something about it,” said Lauren Little, president of Auburn’s Committee of 19, who joined the “Why Care?” campaign this fall with another student Morgan Taylor. “Not just because they were getting a grade, but also because they really cared about hunger and wanted to make a difference.”

Four students – Aubrey Sullivan, Jennie Daniel, Devin Walker and Anna Kate Mullinix – realized they could inspire and remind people about the plight of others around the world if they were asked to simply state why they cared about hunger.

They started the “Why Care?” campaign small by getting their friends and family to pose with signs that explained why they care about hunger. It grew around campus, with many student organizations participating. The “Why Care?” team started visiting campus events, setting up tables around campus, and petitioning others to submit their photos via social media.

Courtni Ward, last year’s Committee of 19 president, promoted it with students and other participants from around the world at the Universities Fighting World Hunger Summit in Honduras in March. And FAO started pushing it on its World Food Day website earlier this month. The campaign has resulted in hundreds of individuals from around the globe submitting photos with statements of why they care about hunger.

“Partnering with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for World Food Day is an extraordinary opportunity for Auburn,” said Thornton. “It puts Auburn in another leadership position in the War on Hunger. Not only are we the lead academic partner with the World Food Programme through Universities Fighting World Hunger, but this gives us an opportunity to expand our network to other agencies.”

Auburn University has been a leader in the hunger fight ever since it partnered with the United Nations’ World Food Programme in 2004 to establish a War on Hunger campaign on campus. In 2006, Auburn and the WFP partnered again to develop a global initiative, Universities Fighting World Hunger. More than 300 colleges and universities worldwide have since joined in the fight against hunger and malnutrition at home and abroad.

– Amy Weaver

Index

1 Faculty to be honored for teaching, research, outreach at 2012 awards ceremony
1 Governor issues call for nominations to fill two seats on Board of Trustees
3 Donor support leads to creation, awarding of 13 new professorships to Auburn faculty

Legislators discuss issues at SGA event, Page 1