Open enrollment period set for health, tax plans

As part of the annual benefits open-enrollment period during November, full-time employees of Auburn University will have the opportunity from Nov. 1-Dec. 2 to make changes or add to or drop their health, dental, vision or cancer insurance plans.

Any new or changes to coverage will take effect Jan. 1, at the start of the 2014 calendar year.

No action is necessary for employees who wish their insurance plans to continue without change through 2014. There will be no change to premiums for health, dental, vision or cancer insurances for 2014.

The open enrollment period also applies to the flexible spending account plan, which enables participants to save on their federal income taxes by setting aside money each pay period for co-pays and other medical expenses not covered by insurance, as well as child and elder care expenses.

These set-aside funds result in tax savings for most participants by reducing the amount of salary subject to the income tax. While the dependent care account funds must be used by Dec. 31 each year, participants have until March 15 of the following year to use their health care flexible spending account funds.

Since flexible spending accounts are for one year at a time, current participants must re-enroll during the open enrollment period to continue their accounts.

Most employees participate in the health insurance plan, which is funded by a mix of employee and university contributions and administered by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama. The percentage of the university’s contribution to premiums for employee health insurance varies on the basis of each employee’s annual pay.

Employees are also eligible for a $300 annual discount to their health insurance premiums through health screenings under the Healthy Tigers Wellness Program. Screenings must be completed and forms submitted by Nov. 30 to the Auburn University Pharmaceutical Care Center in Harrison School of Pharmacy’s Walker Building. See the Healthy Tigers website www.auburn.edu/administration/business_office/payroll/healthytigers/initiative.html for details.

For the coming year, employees may also shop in the National Health Insurance Marketplace for individual and family coverages. Employees eligible for the Auburn University Health Plan may choose to remain on the Auburn University Health Plan or enroll in coverage through the NHI Marketplace. If coverage is purchased through the national marketplace, changes to Auburn University Health Plan elections should be made by Dec. 2. The National Health Insurance Marketplace is available online at www.healthcare.gov.

The Office of Payroll and Employee Benefits is distributing information packets about insurance and flexible spending accounts. That office will also host the “Getting Ready for 2014” Benefits Fair on Nov. 13-14 at the Information Technology Building on Lem Morrison Drive.

For additional information, see the website www.auburn.edu/payroll or contact Payroll and Employee Benefits in Ingram Hall.

Historic garden at Ross Square gets new look

Centennial Garden at Ross Square, just west of Samford Hall, has been transformed by the Facilities Management Landscape department.

Originally completed and dedicated in 1956, Centennial Garden commemorates Auburn’s first 100 years and holds a great deal of historical significance for the Auburn Family.

“In 1896, [Auburn] played their first home football game against Georgia Tech in Ross Square and won 29-6,” recalled David Housel during a speech he delivered during Auburn’s Sesquicentennial Lecture Series in 2006. A former, long-time Auburn athletics director and sports information director, Housel is a historian of Auburn athletics. A sign in the garden notes the area was utilized for athletics and military drills until 1929 and “now memorializes a century of service to Alabama and the Nation.”

A number of overgrown Abelia and Holly shrubs were removed from the site including 50 roses that have been root-pruned and potted and will be replanted in another area of campus in the spring. “By removing all the tall, overgrown plant material, the Centennial Garden at Ross Square has a new, more open look following its makeover.

See Makeover for historic garden, Page 2
Makeover for historic Ross Square garden

Continued from Page 1

The historic Ross Square garden appears to be much bigger and has really opened up the space,” said Brittany Foster, a greenhouse associate and designer of the plant beds. “I really enjoyed helping to transform this space for all of the students, faculty, staff, alumni and visitors who travel through this sentimental campus site.”

Foster incorporated a number of fall annuals into the design including Ornamental Redbor and Wild Dusk Kale, orange and blue pansies, Dusty Miller, Ornamental Lilac Eclipse Kale, and Bright Lights Ornamental Swiss Chard. The existing Japanese Maples and majestic Crepe Myrtles frame the space and give shade to passersby. Mulched beds on the east and west sides of the garden will be planted with flowering annuals in the spring.

Interim Landscape Supervisor Mike Moore said the Koi fish in the center pond of the garden have been relocated to the pond in the Garden of Memory, which is west of Mell Street between the President’s Home and the Hill Residence Halls.

“We cleaned and chlorinated the pond. We also removed the old concrete benches and replaced them with new iron seat-back benches, and placed new sod where the overgrown shrubs were originally located. I think the area seems more campus friendly and inviting,” said Moore.

– Gail Riese

Campus Calendar

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 31
DOCUMENTARY FILM “In God’s Land,” with discussion by filmmaker Pankaj Rishi Kumar, 2 p.m., 355 Davis Aerospace Engineering Hall
CLASSIC FILM Director F.W. Marnau’s silent 1922 horror film “Nosferatu,” 5 p.m., auditorium, Jule Collins Smith Museum

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6
PANEL DISCUSSION “Europe and the South: Visions of Blackness,” Panel of Foreign Languages and Literatures faculty members, international perspectives on topics related to Heartbreak Hotel, Auburn alumna Anne Rivers Siddons’ novel based on her observations of the emerging Civil Rights Movement in the mid-1950s, 3 p.m., Ballroom, Foy Hall

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13
NEXT Auburn Report
DOCUMENTARY FILM “Brother Outsider,” Examining role of political activist Bayard Rustin in the Civil Rights Movement, 2 p.m., Multicultural Center Reading Room, 1330 Student Center

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15
MEETING Auburn University Board of Trustees, time TBA, The Hotel at Auburn University

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25
THANKSGIVING BREAK No classes this week

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS Offices closed for remainder of week for observance of Thanksgiving

Auburn senior selected as a finalist for United Kingdom’s Marshall Scholarship

Auburn University senior Patrick Donnan has been named a finalist for the highly selective Marshall Scholarship for an opportunity to study in the United Kingdom next year.

He will interview at the British Consulate in Atlanta Nov. 12. He is one of 160 finalists nationally, out of approximately 900 nominees, competing for the 40 Marshall Scholar slots available to U.S. students. Those selected may attend their choice of any U.K. university.

“Patrick is a wonderful candidate for the Marshall Scholarship because of his leadership in the classroom, the laboratory, and to advancing science in the community,” said Melissa Bauman, Auburn University assistant provost and director of the Honors College. “We are excited for Patrick and wish him the best in his final interviews next month.”

Donnan, a native of Auburn, is a student in the Honors College double-majoring in physics and music, concentrating on the bassoon, and minoring in mathematics.

He is also an editor of the Auburn University Journal of Undergraduate Studies and a 2013 Barry M. Goldwater Scholar. He conducts research in the College of Sciences and Mathematics’ Department of Physics as a member of the theoretical and computational atomic physics group.

Paul Harris, associate director for national prestigious scholarships in the Honors College, said, “I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Patrick throughout the application process.”

As a double major in physics and music, he is not only bright and intellectually engaging, but he also gives generously of his time and talents whether promoting research among his fellow physics majors or sharing his love for music as a member of the Auburn symphonic band.

The Marshall Scholarship program was established in 1953 by an act of the British Parliament in honor of U.S. Secretary of State George C. Marshall as an expression of Britain’s gratitude for economic assistance received through the Marshall Plan after World War II. The program is overseen by the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission.

– Charles Martin

Visiting diplomats

President Jay Gogue welcomed the consul general and a consul from Japan’s consulate in Atlanta to Auburn this month as part of a university program with international consulates in the United States for meetings with faculty and students. The Auburn program is led by Bob McGinnis, senior counsel to the university president.

Shown, from left, are McGinnis, Japanese Consul Toshinori Matsuura and General Consul Kazou Sunaga, and Gogue.

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– Charles Martin
For Lall, tough challenges make research exciting

Professor Pradeep Lall, who received one of Auburn University’s two 2013 Creative Research and Scholarship Awards in September, enjoys solving engineering problems. Not just any problems – tough ones that could make a contribution to society or improve the quality of human life. And he especially enjoys working with his students on the solutions.

“I value the opportunity to work with bright students who are passionate to learn both in the classroom and the laboratory,” said Lall, the Thomas Walter Professor in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering’s Department of Mechanical Engineering and director of the college’s NSF Center for Advanced Vehicle and Extreme Environment Electronics. “I specifically enjoy having an opportunity to make an impact on their lives,” he said. “Auburn University is a wonderful place to work with world-class facilities and friendly people who strive tirelessly to be best in their profession. It is special to be part of the Auburn Family.”

Lall’s research focuses on finding methods for making electronic systems more reliable, safer, energy efficient and more survivable in the harshest of environments. He is working on:

♦ Making portable electronics more survivable during accidental drops so that smartphones, laptops and tablets can continue to function.
♦ Testing and improving LEDs, a new, more energy efficient form of lighting, so they can last longer and maintain color consistency in extreme environments.
♦ Enhancing unmanned electronic systems to survive thousands of g-forces of acceleration so they can continue to function when they are launched into space and land on distant planets.
♦ And formulating leading indicators or bell-weather systems related to safety, such as electronic warning systems incorporated into automobiles.

“Fault-prognostication (identifying failures before they occur) has high relevance to everyday safety in cars which often use lane departure warning systems and collision avoidance systems,” he said. “The leading indicators allow early identification of system faults prior to catastrophic failure.”

Since joining Auburn in 2002, Lall has become one of the top researchers in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering and across the Auburn campus, says Jeffrey Suhling, chair of the Department of Mechanical Engineering, who nominated Lall for the Creative Research and Scholarship Award.

“He is an internationally recognized research innovator and a tireless worker,” Suhling said. “In addition to his outstanding research accomplishments, he is an effective and innovative teacher, as evidenced by the student comments in his teaching evaluations. A recent set of student comments stated ‘great teacher,’ ‘most well organized and instructed class,’ ‘effective teacher,’ ‘one of the best teachers that I have had at Auburn,’ and ‘well organized and delivered course.’ Other students have pointed out his enthusiasm in class and his ability to make course content exciting and interesting.”

Lall says his family has been his greatest supporters throughout his career. “My dad taught me the importance of a systematic approach and the organization of knowledge,” Lall said. “He was the one responsible for instilling in me the self-confidence to take on the toughest of problems. My mom was a school teacher, so I learned all about focus, hard work and single-minded passion from a very young age.

“My wife is a physician and has long work-hours also. One has to be not just good but great at juggling work and home life to keep up with things, and she does it day in and day out. Our children were very young when we moved to Auburn. Somewhere along the way, a little of my engineering has rubbed off on them. They have participated in Science Olympiads at regional, state and national levels.”

He added, “I would not be able to put in the long hours without my family’s support and encouragement.”

Lall has won numerous awards, including, most recently, one of Auburn’s Creative Research and Scholarship Awards along with Professor Conner Bailey of the College of Agriculture. Lall also won Auburn’s 2013 SEC Faculty Achievement Award in April.

He is also a recipient of the College of Engineering’s Senior Faculty Research Award and is the founding faculty adviser for Auburn’s student chapter of the Surface Mount Technology Association.

In 2012 he was named a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, or IEEE, and received the Best of Conference Paper Award at its Electronic Components and Technology Conference. He serves on the Administrative Committee of the IEEE’s Reliability Society and is its representative on the IEEE-USA Government Relations Council for Research and Development Policy.

He is a fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, or ASME, and he chaired the Congress Steering Committee for the 2012-2013 ASME International Mechanical Engineering Congress.

Lall holds three U.S. patents and serves as associate editor for the IEEE journal, “Transactions on Components and Packaging Technologies,” as well as the ASME “Journal of Electronic Packaging.” He has written two books, 13 book chapters and more than 325 journal and conference papers on electronic packaging, as well as design, modeling and predictive techniques.

He earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Delhi, master’s and doctorate degrees from the University of Maryland and a Master of Business Administration degree from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

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Editor’s Note: Profiles in Excellence is a periodic feature of the Auburn Report presenting Auburn University faculty who have been honored by the university or nationally for the top level of achievement in teaching, research or outreach.
The Auburn Alumni Association has selected four Auburn University graduates as recipients of its highest honor, the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The awards will go to Tim Cook ’82, CEO of Apple Inc.; Pat Sullivan ’72, 1971 Heisman Trophy winner and current head football coach at Samford University; Larry Benefield ’66, dean emeritus of the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering; and John Brown ’57, chair emeritus of Stryker Corp., one of the world’s leading medical technology companies.

Cook succeeded Steve Jobs as CEO of Apple Inc. in 2011 after serving as the chief operating officer from 2005 to 2011. He was listed in Time magazine’s annual “100 Most Influential People in the World” list in 2012 and has been an independent director of Nike Inc. since November 2005.

Cook is the founding chair of the Auburn University Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering’s Alumni Council, founded the ISE Endowed Fund for Excellence and the Tim Cook Leadership Scholarship, established the Tim Cook Endowed Professorship, and was selected as the distinguished Auburn Engineer and Outstanding ISE Alumnus of 2000. He also gave the 2010 Auburn University commencement address.

Sullivan was a three-year starter at quarterback for the Tigers and was named an All-American and the SEC Player of the Year in both 1970 and 1971. Following his senior season, he was named the MVP of the 1972 Senior Bowl, and he played in the College All-Star Classic, taking on the Super Bowl champion Dallas Cowboys. Sullivan played professional football for five seasons with the Atlanta Falcons, Washington Redskins and San Francisco 49ers.

Sullivan is a member of six halls of fame, including Senior Bowl, Gator Bowl, Sugar Bowl, Alabama Sports, National Football and National High School. He is the 35th head football coach at Samford University.

Benefield retired in 2012 after more than three decades at Auburn University. He earned his bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from Auburn and spent four years as a civil engineering officer in the U.S. Air Force, where he was awarded the Bronze Star for service in Vietnam.

As dean, Benefield led the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering to significant advances, attracting the attention of peer institutions and moving Auburn engineering to the highest rankings in its history. Benefield is a member of the board of directors of Alabama’s Engineering Hall of Fame and a board member and vice chair of the National Center for Asphalt Technology.

Benefield was inducted into the Alabama Engineering Hall of Fame in 2013. Brown became chairman emeritus of Stryker Corp. in January 2010 after a 32-year career as president and chief executive of the medical equipment maker. He transformed the company from a $17 million hospital bed producer into one of the world’s leading medical technology companies, with $8.7 billion in revenue in 2012.

In 2011, Brown and his wife, Rosemary, pledged $10 million to Auburn University’s College of Veterinary Medicine in memory of a college friend and longtime faculty member.

An endowed eminent scholar chair in chemical engineering funded by Brown has expanded the department’s capabilities to advance teaching and research in biomedical engineering.

Cook, Sullivan, Benefield and Brown will be honored at a dinner and induction ceremony in March at the Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel and Conference Center at Grand National.

– Carol Nelson

Auburn University’s Anti-Bullying Summit, which brings together educators, mental health practitioners and community groups to address bullying and cyberbullying, has been recognized as an extraordinary program by the University Professional and Continuing Education Association.

“The summit, over the last three years, has provided a forum for more than 500 educators and community leaders to learn about the far-reaching impacts of bullying in schools and communities,” said John Freeze, associate director of the Office of Professional and Continuing Education.

Freeze added, “The program has been instrumental in bringing together practitioners, researchers and learners alike to share information and learn from each other. It’s a remarkable and touching experience to see the participants leave with a renewed perspective on just how devastating and far-reaching the consequences of bullying can be, as well as with a reinvigorated commitment to put an end to it.”

Auburn received the Special Populations Award which recognizes a program that identifies and targets specific groups with unique needs. The award was presented on Oct. 17 at the University Professional and Continuing Education Association-South regional conference in Birmingham hosted by Auburn University.

“The UPCEA Program for Special Populations Award is an important recognition for the Anti-Bullying Summit because it acknowledges and validates our efforts to provide a high-quality learning opportunity for teachers, administrators, counselors, community leaders and even students to help bring a heightened sense of awareness to the issue of bullying,” Freeze said.

He added, “The award is particularly special because it is awarded through a peer-reviewed nomination process, which means that based on the strong merits of the program, Auburn University’s peers in the continuing education field felt the Anti-Bullying Summit was deserving of recognition.”

The Office of Professional and Continuing Education in University Outreach and the Truman Pierce Institute host the annual summit which explores topics including the need to develop supportive school cultures, address cyberbullying, develop understandings of the root causes of bullying and explore the processes for building intervention plans.

“We are excited about this important recognition of the Anti-Bullying Summit and of OPCE’s many contributions to the ongoing success of this initiative,” said Cindy Reed, director of the Truman Pierce Institute, an outreach and research center of the College of Education.

“TPI is proud to partner with OPCE on this and other efforts to engage with communities as we work to provide programming in areas of critical need for Alabama and beyond,” said Reed. “Efforts to educate the public about the consequences of bullying as well as how to address this issue in comprehensive, proactive ways are essential.”

The annual UPCEA-South conference attracts more than 100 continuing education faculty and professionals from around the Southeast. Freeze also was selected as chair-elect for the UPCEA-South organization for 2014 and will assume the chairmanship for the group in 2015.

– Carol Nelson

Backscheider inaugurates lecture series at university in Wales

Paula Backscheider, Philpott-Stevens Eminent Scholar in the Department of English in Auburn’s College of Liberal Arts, recently gave the inaugural lecture, “Fashioning Wartime Women,” for the Institute of Literature, Languages and Creative Arts at the University of Aberystwyth, Wales.

As appropriate for the Institute, the talk included scholarship on literature, art history, opera, politics, and drama.

Backscheider is also a member of the advisory board for the Welsh University’s Centre for Women’s Writing and Literary Culture.
Auburn unit, Oak Ridge address cyber security

Auburn University and Oak Ridge National Laboratory have announced a formal collaborative agreement between the university’s Cyber Initiative and the Oak Ridge facility that will focus resources and expertise on security issues in the cyber domain. Oak Ridge National Laboratory is the largest science and energy national laboratory in the U.S. Department of Energy system.

In announcing the agreement, officials said the increasing complexity of technology and critical infrastructure requirements for cyber security has created an urgent demand for the development of information transfer, storage and security solutions across the nation. Also, the number of cyber-based threats and attacks affecting government, industry and financial institutions are increasing at an exponential rate. In response, UT-Battelle, the management contractor for Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and Auburn University have agreed to collaborate on programs and projects that address these critical issues.

“It is a great thing for Auburn University to work with a national laboratory of this caliber, especially one that has the outstanding reputation that Oak Ridge does,” said retired Lt. Gen. Ron Burgess, senior counsel for national security programs, cyber programs and military affairs at Auburn University. “Both in terms of resources and focus areas, this is a good marriage.”

Burgess said that through its affiliation with Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Auburn will be able to tailor both teaching and research efforts to address the increasingly hostile and complex cyber domain. Auburn students will be better prepared to contribute meaningfully to the cyber work-force from day one. Experts can be exchanged and can work together on areas of common interest. Some of the topics that Auburn University and Oak Ridge National Laboratory will address collaboratively include open source analysis and intelligence research, cyber security analysis and information assurance.

The scientific programs at Oak Ridge National Laboratory focus on materials, neutron science, energy, high-performance computing, systems biology and national security. It partners with universities and industries to solve challenges in energy, advanced materials, manufacturing, security and physics. The laboratory is home to several of the world’s top supercomputers and hosts a DOE Leadership Computing Facility – home of the Titan supercomputer.

“Oak Ridge National Laboratory views partnerships as critical to the success of our research and development mission,” said retired Maj. Gen. Dick Webber, director of Cyber Programs Integration for Oak Ridge National Laboratory. “The partnership with Auburn University opens the door for collaborative opportunities to advance our nation’s cyber security capabilities.”

Career website cites Auburn as happiest university in America

Auburn University is the happiest university to work for in the nation, according to the online career community website CareerBliss.

“CareerBliss recognizes those universities that excel in providing a happy work culture,” said Heidi Golledge, the site’s CEO and co-founder.

Key factors included one’s relationship with his or her boss and co-workers, work environment, job resources, compensation, growth opportunities, company culture, company reputation, daily tasks, and job control over work performed on a daily basis. The website states that Auburn “reigns supreme in providing a happy work environment.”

The site published the survey results under the banner CareerBliss Happiest Universities to Work 2013.

Auburn topped the list with a 4.4 score out of a possible 5.0. Pros cited for Auburn’s work environment include “Fast-paced environment, diversity. Can be group-oriented and supportive. Encourages a family-like atmosphere.”

Cited on the flip side were limited opportunities for advancement and “not challenging enough” or “structured enough” for some.

Other universities in the top 10 include Carnegie Mellon, Texas Tech, Houston, Wisconsin, Cal Poly Pomona, Northeastern, Boston, San Diego and Georgia Tech.

ACES agent named president of National Association of County Agents

Henry Dorough, a regional Extension agent with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, recently assumed the office of president of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents during the NA-CAA’s 98th Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference and Galaxy Conference, in Pittsburgh.

Gary Lemme, director of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, said Dorough will be a great asset to the national association and its members. “The NACAA will benefit from Henry’s expertise and leadership, much as the farmers, producers and others he has worked with over the years in Alabama have benefited,” said Lemme. “He will bring the knowledge, commitment and passion to his tenure as NACAA president that he gives daily to the citizens of Alabama.”

Dorough previously served the national association as secretary for three years, followed by two additional years serving the association as vice president and president-elect. He was one of more than 500 Cooperative Extension Service agricultural agents and their families who attended the week-long professional improvement program. Other Galaxy Conference attendees included more than 1,700 Extension Service employees.
Images from Halloween Pumpkin Carve

The glow of more than 400 jack-o-lanterns lit up the courtyard of Auburn University’s Dudley Hall on Oct. 25, as students from the College of Architecture, Design and Construction held the college’s 25th annual Pumpkin Carve.

Examples of the creative student carvings are featured here in photographs by student photographer Johnny Wang of Photographic Services.
Auburn Business Incubator starts Virtual Incubator Program for off-site start-ups

The Auburn Business Incubator has launched a Virtual Incubator Program as an expansion of its programs to assist start-up and early stage companies.

Located in the Auburn Research Park, the Auburn Business Incubator, also known as ABI, is a full-service mixed-use incubator managed by the Auburn Research and Technology Foundation. This incubator is a technology-based program charged with the mission of assisting start-up and early stage companies in being successful by linking them to a network of services from the university and community.

Since opening in May of 2011, the ABI has prompted the development of additional services designed to provide further assistance to start-up and early stage businesses operating within the local and extended communities.

“We have an increasing number of qualified companies expressing interest in the incubator that we cannot accommodate with physical space when we are at capacity, so we developed the virtual program to be able to service their needs,” said John Weete, executive director of the Auburn Research and Technology Foundation.

The 11 current clients in the incubator represent a variety of business sectors, such as energy efficiency, civil and mechanical engineering, software development, marketing/advertising, investment, fossil energy, website development, IT consulting and biomedical. Three of the clients are currently or began as student-owned companies. Also, the Small Business Development Center is located in the incubator.

Participants of the Virtual Client Program will have access to shared cubicle space and conference rooms outfitted with high quality audio/visual and telecommunication equipment. Virtual clients, like facility-based clients, will be able to attend programs and meetings designed to assist with business development.

For more information, contact Phil Dunlap, assistant director for the Auburn Research and Technology Foundation, by phone at 844-7462 or email (tpdunlap@auburn.edu) or see the ARTF webpage at www.auburnrtf.com.

Auburn faculty participate in NAE symposiums

Steve Duke and Brian Thurow from Auburn University’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering are participating in fall symposiums sponsored by the National Academy of Engineering.

Duke, associate dean for academics and an Alumni Associate Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering, is participating in the NAE’s fifth annual Frontiers of Engineering Education Symposium on Oct. 27-30 in Irvine, Calif.

Duke is one of 73 educators from around the nation chosen to attend the FOEE, which brings innovative educators together to learn from research and to share ideas and best practices in education through sustained dialogue. Participants return to their institution with a charter that can be used to promote education improvement.

Thurow, the W. Allen and Martha Reed Associate Professor in the Department of Aerospace Engineering, recently participated in the NAE’s 2013 U.S. Frontiers of Engineering Symposium, a two-day event in September in Wilmington, Del. Thurow attended sessions on designing and analyzing societal networks, cognitive manufacturing, energy and flexible electronics.

Thurow was chosen among 100 of the nation’s outstanding engineers ages 30 to 45 who perform exceptional research and technical work in industry, academia and government.

The NAE’s Frontiers of Engineering program brings together engineers from all disciplines in industry, universities and federal labs to facilitate collaborative exchange, as well as promote the transfer of new techniques and approaches that will help to sustain and build U.S. innovative capacity.

Duke and Thurow were nominated by their peers and chosen from a competitive pool of applicants.

Food Systems Leadership Institute adds two pros from Agriculture for fall

Auburn University College of Agriculture faculty members Donald Conner and Henry Fadamiro have been accepted into the Fall 2013 Food Systems Leadership Institute.

The leadership institute is a two-year executive development program dedicated to equipping scholars in higher education, government and industry with the leadership competencies, organizational-change skills and broad interdisciplinary perspective of food systems necessary to invent and reinvent the food systems of the future.

Conner is head of and a professor in the Department of Poultry Science. Fadamiro is Alumni Professor in the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology and also serves as associate director of the Southern Integrated Pest Management Center and as Alabama IPM coordinator.

Conner and Fadamiro will participate in three week-long residential sessions as well as personal leadership development coaching, mentoring, independent projects and interactive distance learning activities.

The Food Systems Leadership Institute is a program of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. North Carolina State University is the primary host institution for the institute.

Documentary looks at challenges to family farming in emerging nations

Filmmaker Pankaj Rishi Kumar will present and discuss his recent documentary, “In God’s Land,” on Thursday, Oct. 31, at 2 p.m. in the Davis Aerospace Engineering Hall, Room 355.

“In God’s Land” documents the profound place of land in the economic, cultural and religious life of a small village in Tamil Nadu, India. The local temple has sold off farming land that may in fact belong to the villagers. However, land ownership in India is complex. Kumar uses both traditional documentary filmmaking and animation to explore the villagers’ claims to the land, recorded in oral history, and raise questions about the relationship between state and temple authorities.

Kumar, a graduate of the University of Pune’s Film and Television Institute, was an assistant editor on the widely praised “Bandit Queen” and has worked extensively as a film editor.

“In God’s Land” is an offering in the War, Peace and Justice lecture series and is co-sponsored by the Anthropology Program, the Department of Political Science and Auburn Connects! Common Book Program.