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report

FOR THE FACULTY AND STAFF OF AUBURN UNIVERSITY



Santa Aubie

Aubie Claus led Auburn students in renditions of traditional Christmas carols and other holiday songs earlier this month during the annual lighting of the giant holly tree in front of Samford Hall. The ceremony marks the start of the holiday season, which includes Christmas, New Year's Day, Hanakkuh, Kwanzaa and the recent Ramadan.

AU to honor integration pioneer

Josetta Brittain Matthews, who was a pioneering black graduate student and instructor at Auburn University in the 1960s and '70s, will receive an honorary doctor of science degree from Auburn during fall commencement on Friday.

Matthews, who is a retired Tuskegee University professor, was the first African American to receive a graduate degree from AU and was also Auburn's first African American faculty member.

She will join 1,483 new graduates who will receive their degrees in the 2 p.m. ceremony in Beard-Eaves-Memorial Coliseum.

Matthews was one of three black students who broke the color barrier at Auburn in the mid-1960s. In recent years, AU has also presented honorary degrees to Harold Franklin, who in 1964 was the first African American to enroll at AU, and Samuel Pettijohn, who in 1967 was the first African American to receive an undergraduate degree from AU.

After earning a bachelor's degree from predominantly white Indiana University, Matthews enrolled in graduate school at AU in 1965 and earned her master of education degree in August 1966. With the master's degree, she taught political science and French language at Tuskegee until she

returned to Auburn for the doctoral program in social science education in 1971 and earned her doctorate in 1974. Her dissertation was titled "The Image of American Negroes, 1960 to 1970, as Reflected by Issues of the Journal of Negro Education and Ebony Magazine."

While pursuing her doctorate in what was then Auburn's School of Education, Matthews agreed to serve as a history instructor in the School of Arts and Sciences, now the College of Liberal Arts. After receiving her doctorate, she returned to Tuskegee as an assistant professor and served that university for nearly 20 years.

College of Education Dean Fran Kochan said Matthews' success as a student and educator ranks among the highlights of the college's 90-year history.

Andrew Weaver, the longtime head of the Department of Curriculum and Teaching in the College of Education, was chair of Matthews' graduate committees for her master's and doctoral degrees.

Weaver, who is now the college's acting associate dean for administration, recalls that Matthews was unfazed by her pioneering role in the college. "She was well prepared and did great work in both the

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SACS says AU in full compliance with its accreditation standards

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools last week declared AU in full compliance with the agency's standards for accreditation.

Meeting Tuesday in Atlanta, the SACS Commission on Colleges accepted a report from a SACS special committee that confirmed Auburn's compliance with the agency's standards. The agency will follow last week's action with a formal letter confirming Auburn's status in January.

SACS placed AU on probation in December 2003 over questions involving university governance and athletic administration and lifted the probation one year later, after AU changed policies and procedures in those areas to meet the agency's criteria.

After lifting the probation last year, the agency monitored AU's progress in implementing its new

policies and procedures during the past year. The final evaluation focused on relationships among trustees, plans for a presidential search and annual evaluation of the president.

A special committee visited Auburn in September and issued a report saying AU was in compliance on each point evaluated.

Interim President Ed Richardson said the SACS decision marked the culmination of efforts by many people on behalf of the university. "We took a very hard look at the concerns when we were removed from probation last year and addressed those very aggressively," he said. "I want to thank everyone who worked extremely hard on this matter: the administration, the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students and alumni."



Quality of Life Awards

Global philanthropist Ratan Tata of India, right, received one of two International Quality of Life Awards from AU's College of Human Sciences last week in New York. AU Human Sciences Dean June Henton and former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger presented the award to Tata.

Two receive Quality of Life Awards in NY

Alabama Gov. Bob Riley, New York Gov. George Pataki and former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger helped AU's College of Human Sciences present International Quality of Life Awards at the United Nations in New York last week.

Interim AU President Ed Richardson and College of Human Sciences Dean June Henton led an AU delegation that included several prominent alumni.

Pataki joined Henton in presenting an award to Hugh L. Carey Battery Park Authority of New York for its innovative urban revival efforts, including recovery of the area around the World Trade Center after the terrorist attack of 2001.

Kissinger helped Henton present the award to Ratan Tata, leader of India's largest corporation, which is globally renowned for its philanthropy.

Graduation and honorary degree

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master's and doctoral programs," he said.

"She became an integral part of our student body," Weaver said. "She was an outstanding graduate student."

"She came here to get a degree and become part of the university, and she did it about as well as anyone could," he added.

Weaver said Matthews' academic background was an apparent factor in her success as a graduate student at Auburn and later as a professor at Tuskegee. He noted that Matthews' father had been a prominent faculty member at Alabama State University and Matthews had been a stellar student

at Indiana University before she came to Auburn.

Also at the ceremony, AU will award 49 doctoral degrees, five education specialist degrees, 230 master's degrees, one professional degree in pharmacy and 1,199 bachelor's degrees.

The College of Business will award the most bachelor's degrees, 348, followed by Liberal Arts with 324. Other bachelor's degrees by college or school are: Agriculture, 56; Architecture, Design and Construction, 48; Education, 101; Engineering, 154; Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, 9; Human Sciences, 68; Nursing, 15; and Sciences and Mathematics, 75.

Upcoming Events

Monday, December 12

FINAL AU Report of fall semester

Friday, December 16

GRADUATION ceremony, 2 p.m., Beard-Eaves-Memorial Coliseum

Thursday, December 22

OFFICES CLOSE for holidays

2006

Tuesday, January 3

OFFICES REOPEN following holidays

Monday, January 9

FIRST DAY of classes for spring semester

Thursday, January 12

FACULTY SEMINAR "Twelve Ways to Get Great Student Evaluations," James Groccia, director, Biggio Center, noon-1:30 p.m. (bring your lunch), auditorium, Draughon Library

Monday, January 16

HOLIDAY Martin Luther King Day, no classes, offices closed for day

FIRST AU Report of spring semester, distribution on Tuesday



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Unique performers

Auburn attracts numerous visiting performers throughout the year, but few are as unique as the African Children's Choir, which performed at Telfair Peet Theatre earlier this month. All 23 children are under age 12 and come from some of the poorest villages in Africa. On a world tour, the musicians were brought to Auburn with support from University Outreach.



On campus this week

Team begins review of state of AU

A team of consultants will be on campus this week as part of its review of major issues that could impact the search for a new AU president.

The team, which will be at AU Monday through Wednesday, is led by James L. Fisher, president emeritus of Towson University in Maryland. The consultants will examine long-simmering issues of governance and relationships among key constituencies and propose ways to address problems in those areas.

The AU Board hired Fisher, who is also president emeritus of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, on Nov. 18, after presidential

search consultant John Kuhnle advised the university to conduct the assessment before beginning the search early next year for a new president.

Fisher, who has authored 10 books on university governance, is to report the team's findings and recommendations to the AU Board on Feb. 3.

The review team has requested one-on-one interviews with individuals inside and outside the university. The team will also conduct focused sessions with groups of faculty, students and administrators randomly selected by Fisher.

Other review team members are:

- ◆ Gene A. Budig, former president of Illinois State University, West Virginia University and the University of Kansas. Budig is also a former president of the American League in professional baseball.

- ◆ James V. Koch, Board of Visitors Professor of Economics and president emeritus of Old Dominion University and former president of the University of Montana.

- ◆ Alvin J. Schexnider, interim president of Norfolk State University, where he has also served as acting president. He is a former chancellor of Winston-Salem State University.

- ◆ Martha W. Tack, professor of educational leadership at Eastern Michigan University. She previously served on the faculties of Bowling Green State University and the University of Alabama, where she also served as assistant to the president.

- ◆ Kenneth A. Shaw, former chancellor of Syracuse University. He has also served as president of the University of Wisconsin System, chancellor of the Southern Illinois University System and president of Southern Illinois University.

- ◆ Farris W. Womack, former executive vice president of the University of Michigan and former vice chancellor of the University of North Carolina.

- ◆ Michael J. Worth, a former vice president at George Washington University and at the University of Maryland, College Park.



Heavy lifting

In one of the more unusual gifts to AU in recent times, Caterpillar Corp. last week presented the Facilities Division with a \$60,000 compact telehandler for moving loads of up to 5,500 pounds.

Book about rise of New Christian Right receives national honors

A recent book on the conflict between church and state in America's courts has won a national award for its author, Steven P. Brown, an associate professor of political science at Auburn.

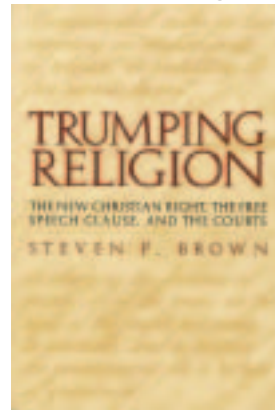
Brown's book, *Trumping Religion: The New Christian Right, the Free Speech Clause and the Courts*, won the Franklyn S. Haiman Awards for Distinguished Scholarship in Freedom of Expression from the National Communication Association in November. The annual award from the nation's largest group of communication scholars recognizes ground-breaking research and writing in the social sciences on the subject of free speech.

Brown, who teaches constitutional law at Auburn, avoids choosing sides in his analysis of one of the most divisive issues in American politics over the past quarter century. Instead, he presents a detailed analysis of the extent to which federal courts have set the stage for and then been drawn into heated political battles between liberals and conservatives over separation of church and state in the public sector.

The book, published in 2002 by the University of Alabama Press, examines the counteroffensive that five major public interest law firms have mounted since 1980 in response to restrictions placed by the U.S. Supreme Court on religious expression in the public sector in the 1960s and '70s. Those restrictions, which ended nearly two centuries of accommodating religion in the public sector, came at the behest of the political left such as the American Civil Liberties Union, prompting political and religious groups on the right to organize and fight back in the courts.

"Conservative religious interest groups began organizing to oppose the ACLU because they felt that no one was standing up for their rights," said Brown, who holds a Ph.D. in government from the University of Virginia.

After failing to persuade federal courts to relax their rulings against officially sanctioned religious expression in public schools, a conservative coalition of law firms, including the American Center for Law and Justice, also known as the ACLJ, began winning cases with arguments and strategies that the ACLU had long claimed as its own: freedom of speech and freedom from discrimination.



Rather than claiming rights under the establishment and free exercise clauses of the U.S. Constitution, the conservative groups staked a claim to the freedom of speech rights under the First Amendment.

They argued those rights in the courts and, more often, before school boards and local governments when test cases presented themselves. More often than not, Brown said, the mere threat of legal action was sufficient for the conservative groups to achieve their goals.

"Conservatives argued that they have the same rights as anyone else to organize and express themselves in public institutions," said Brown. "In a number of cases, they have prevailed in the courts with the argument on behalf of the free-speech right to self-expression."

But, he added, "The downside is that this is the same argument used for liberal causes. Gay rights groups, for instance, use the same argument in their attempt to organize and express themselves in the public sector."

Thus, despite winning victories in court, the conservative religious coalition created a precedent that has aided liberal causes which are anathema to many religious conservatives.

To succeed in politics and the courts, conservative religious groups adopted some of the same organizational, fund-raising and political tactics that had been successful for liberal groups in the 1960s and '70s, and the result has been the same. "Powerful interest groups, in general, tend to be excessive in their rhetoric, and they play political hardball," he said.

"Unfortunately, an environment in which no one is willing to compromise is not good for political dialogue," he added. "Most people are in the middle on these issues, but the ones at the ends of the political spectrum carry on the dialogue."

Since both the conservative groups and their liberal opponents are well-financed and are absolute in their views, they frequently carry their battles from the political arena to the courts, especially when one or the other believes it can achieve results quicker there.

"There is a danger that the free speech issue could cheapen religion, especially if you have to make the argument that religious expression is just another form of expression," Brown said. "Under that circumstance, you could win the battle but lose the war."

"...you could win the battle but lose the war."

Steven Brown

United Way closes gap in quest to meet goal

With the end of fall semester approaching, the United Way campaign at AU was within \$4,000 of its \$140,000 goal for 2005 last week.

As of Tuesday, the campaign had received more than \$136,000 in donations and pledges from the AU community.

"The university community has been enormously supportive of United Way this year, and we are hopeful that a few more people will come forward to put us over the top," said Campus Campaign Chair Bill Sauser of the College of Business.

"It is our hope that no person will be turned away in their hour of need," Sauser added.

United Way supports 34 local charities and organizations that serve the community.

How Auburn Stacks Up

AU departments with most student credit hours, fall 2005

| | |
|-------------------|--------|
| Mathematics | 25,450 |
| English | 22,439 |
| Bio Sciences | 19,361 |
| History | 13,795 |
| Management | 11,044 |
| Foreign Lang. | 9,057 |
| Sociology | 9,373 |
| Psychology | 9,057 |
| Comm. & Journ. | 7,088 |
| Political Science | 6,674 |

Source: Institutional Research and Assessment

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