Educators join forces in I-85 economic effort

Representatives from universities, community and technical colleges and K-12 school systems along Interstate 85 in East Alabama recently joined forces with business leaders to boost the role of education in the region’s economic development.

The new Educational Services Cluster is part of the I-85 Corridor Initiative. That larger organization — a partnership of local governments, private sector organizations and educational institutions — is committed to increasing the prosperity of communities along Interstate 85.

The team of educators and business leaders will conduct much of its work through two task forces.

The “K-20 Create Excellence in Alabama” task force will identify and evaluate programs for best-practice models and programs for use in the region.

K-20 is kindergarten in public schools through the doctorate level of universities.

The “Exporting Services and Products” task force will identify expertise in the academic institutions and businesses to assist in economic development.

“This is a wonderful opportunity to work together to examine what it would mean to more fully establish an educational focus in our region,” said Frances Kochan, interim dean of the AU College of Education.

Ethics Commission places forms on Web for employees

The Alabama Ethics Commission is reminding AU faculty, staff and administrators that every employee whose salary is $50,000 or more per year must file a Statement of Economic Interests form with the Ethics Commission by April 30.

The filing requirement is unchanged from previous years and applies to employees of all state agencies, including public universities, as well as political candidates and office-holders. The requirement applies to all employees at or above the minimum salary level, even if an employee actually has worked less than a year at that salary level.

The only difference from previous years is that the Ethics Commission is no longer mailing the forms.

(See Ethics forms, page 3)
Baker Mellon, former director of the Physical Plant at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, has joined the AU administration as assistant vice president for Facilities.

Mellon became head of the Facilities Division in February, reporting to Executive Vice President Don Large. He succeeds Caroline Cotts, who served for two years as interim associate provost for Facilities and is now special assistant to the president.

At UNC-Greensboro for seven years, Mellon headed a facilities operation similar to Auburn’s. “There was a difference in scale, with Greensboro having an enrollment of 35,000 and a proportionately smaller physical plant than Auburn, but the operations were very similar,” he said.

“The infrastructure maintenance program operated much the same. Also like Auburn, the campuses in the University of North Carolina System had major construction programs under way with funding for all jobs,” Mellon said.

Before going to UNC-Greensboro, Mellon was a facilities engineer in the private sector for three years. He also retired from 20 years as a pilot in the U.S. Navy.

“Although this is my first time to live in Alabama, Melon said moving to Auburn is almost like returning home because his family has roots in Hogansville, Ga., and his wife’s family is from Brevard.

Mellon said most of the challenges in running a facilities operation at Auburn are similar to those he faced in the past. However, he added, the overall volume of work in a 10-year period in the AU Facilities Division was a pleasant surprise.

“I knew coming in that there were a lot of very competent people here, but I did not expect such an abundance of talent. I have been very pleased to find such a high level of competence and cohesion among the staff at every level,” he said. “This is a very well-run operation.”

Mellon said his goal is to support and build on the current strengths of the Facilities Division. He said he will work with the staff of Facilities to refine operations as necessary and encourage team-building approaches to problem-solving.

Assistant vice president

Melson takes charge of Facilities

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CopyCat celebrates 10th anniversary

CopyCat, AU’s full-service copy center, will celebrate its 10th anniversary on Thursday with an open house from 2 p.m.-4 p.m. at its operations center in Foy Union, opening home because his family has roots in Hogansville, Ga., and his wife’s family is from Brevard.

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Upcoming Events

Tuesday, March 16

• Teaching With Technology Day: Faculty exhibits illustrate innova-
tions in teaching technology. Co-hosted by Drauglith.
• Meeting and Election Results: University Faculty, 3 p.m., Brown Hall.
• Presidential Symposium: “War, Peace and Justice in the Middle East and Asia.” Foy Union ballroom. Panel discussion: “Women in Hinduism, Judaism, Islam,” 9 a.m.-noon; “Women, War and Peace-Mak-
ing,” 1:30-5 p.m. Film: “This is Not Living,” noon.

Wednesday, March 17

• AU World’s Fair: Cultural displays by students from 40 countries, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Haley Center concourse.
• Meeting: Staff Council, 10 a.m., Foy 208.
• Saint Patrick’s Day Celebration: 3 p.m.-6 p.m., Foy ballroom. Events: “Who was Saint Patrick?” public lecture by Dan Szechzi, History Department, 3 p.m., Low Tea, 4 p.m; Irish music by Neisy Daonel, dancing by the Auburn Celtic Dancers, 5 p.m.
• Presidential Symposium: “War, Peace and Justice in the Middle East and Asia,” Foy 217. Roundtable discussion: “Feminism in Global Perspective,” 9.11 a.m.-5 p.m.
• Neil and Herenette Davis Lecture: AU alumnus Eric Ludgood, vice president of CNN International, 5 p.m, Dixon Conference Center.

Thursday, March 18

• Public Reading: “The Passion of Belle Rix,” Bo May, 4 p.m., Pebble Hill.
• Film Festival: Movie Gallery Student Video Competition and Jay Sanders Film Festival, 7 p.m., Dixon Conference Center.
• AU Theatre Dance Concert: “Dance,” directed by Judith Nordell with special guest artists from New York, 240 p.m., Telfair Peet The-
atre. Also, same time, Friday and Saturday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday.
• Free Night: No admission charge for Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, 5 p.m.-9 p.m.

Friday, March 19

• Meeting: Board of Trustees, Dixon Conference Center. Committee start-ups—see at a.m. Meet boards meet at 1 p.m., with time subject to change, depending on strength of committee meetings.

Sunday, March 21

• Staff Council Social. For all staff members represented by the Staff Council, 6 p.m.-9 p.m., Old Auburn Ale House.

Tuesday, March 23

• AU Theatre: “Anton in Show Business,” 7:30 p.m., Telfair Peet The-
atre. Also, Wednesday-Friday and April 6-10. Box Office: 844-6414.

Weekend Events

March 18-20

• AU Report: Roy Summerford. Contributing editors and writers: Bob Lowry and David Granger. AU Communications; Katie Crew, Educa-
tion; Diane Clifton, Outreach; and Karen Neibert, Engineering. Photography: Jeff Ehrlende and Tricia Muggins, Photographic Services; and (page 4) AU Art Department. Assistant Vice President for Communications and Market-
ing: John Hachlet. Director of Communications: Dodie Doudle.

The AU Report is published by the Office of Communications and Mar-
teting at Auburn University. Issues appear each Monday during academic terms, except for major holidays or the Monday after a major holiday. Copies are dropped free in mailboxes for faculty and staff at all on-campus offices. Deadline for delivery of items for publication is 4 p.m. on Wednes-
day before publication date. Direct inquiries, suggestions and news items to: AU Report, 23 Samford Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849. Telephone: 334/844-9999. E-mail: summero@auburn.edu

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Upcoming Events

Vice President Lynne Hammond, center, and Mary Feather, director of Temporary Employment Services and the employment center.

AU opens new classrooms for staff

AU Human Resources has inaugurated two new classrooms for employee training in the university’s new employment and training center at 146 N. Gay St., across from Auburn City Hall.

“This is a major breakthrough in the university’s ability to provide training and other educational services for its employees,” said Lynne Hammond, interim assistant vice president for Human Resources.

“While the first time we have state-of-the-art class-
rooms specifically designed for the training needs of Auburn employees,” said Pat Deery, director of Human Resources Development in AU Human Resources.

“The training staff and employment services staff of Human Resources moved into the building on March 1. The building, once home to the city’s Hol-
field Memorial Library, serves three major func-
tions. Persons seeking staff positions at AU now apply at the North Gay Street site instead of in Lang-
don Hall, and employees expand their skills and knowledge in the same building. Operations of Temporary Employment Services are also handled out of that building.

Human Resources plans to phase out its employ-
ee classes on campus and will hold nearly all employee training sessions in the new training cen-
ter in the future.

The first class in the facility last week was a ses-
sion for staff on writing for organizations. Deery said Human Resources Development moved the writing class to the new center when a scheduling conflict arose at another location on campus. Such scheduling conflicts over space on campus will no longer be a problem, he added.

For decades, Human Resources has scheduled to schedule employee training sessions around other employees at Foy Student Union, Dixon Conference Cen-
ter and academic classrooms on campus. The shuffle of classes from building to building also limited the technology and training materials the office could present for classes.

“We now have resources available to meet the needs of employees in one location, and we don’t have to schedule around other users anymore,” Deery said. “That gives us a lot more flexibility in scheduling and assembling materials for better training.”

Two technology-laden classrooms accommod-
ated up to 20 people each and can be combined into a single teaching area for 40 people. Computer-
assisted video and visual-display technologies in the classrooms are similar to advanced technologies used in faculty in the university’s newest high-tech classroom building.

To reach the facility from campus, Deery recom-

dends that AU employees take Tiger Transit’s new longer one-cent fare. The center is con-
gested and parking is limited downtown, just as it is on campus, and Tiger Transit provides fast and easy access,” he said.

Ethics forms—(continued from page 1)

The Ethics Commission, citing budget constraints, is asking state agencies, universities and other arms of the state to refer employees to the commission’s Web site, www.ethics.alalinc.net. Employees cov-
ered by the law are asked to download, print, com-
plete and mail the forms to the Ethics Commission before the deadline.

Failure to comply with the filing requirement will result in financial penalties by the commission and could result in prosecution in state courts by the Alabama attorney general.

Contact the Ethics Commission at the Web site above or by phone at 334-242-2907.
Swamidass named head of Walter Center

Paul Swamidass of the AU College of Business has been named director of the Thomas Walter Center for Technology Management in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering by Engineering Dean Larry Benefield.

The Walter Center is a cooperative venture integrating certain technological and management areas of instruction and research in the two colleges. Swamidass, formerly the center’s associate director, succeeds James Bryant, who recently retired.

“I am confident that Dr. Swamidass will continue to make significant contributions to the teaching and research efforts of the Thomas Walter Center,” said Benefield. “His expertise in manufacturing technology and operations management will help lead the center in its innovative cross-disciplinary efforts.”

“The Thomas Walter Center enables the College of Engineering and the College of Business to engage in programs that are inaccessible to most other universities in this country,” said Swamidass. As director, Swamidass, a professor of operations management, will oversee the center’s programs and activities in preparing undergraduate engineering and business students to work in technology-intensive businesses through the Business-Engineering-Technology program.

The center also focuses on studies of the use of technology in industry, research on manufacturing supply chains and commercialization of AU inventions and patents. The center’s faculty also collaborate on technology-management projects with faculty at peer universities.

Education council names Stadler ACE Fellow

Holly A. Stadler, head of the Department of Counseling and Counseling Psychology in the AU College of Education, has been named an American Council on Education Fellow for 2004-05.

The ACE Fellows Program, established in 1965, is designed to strengthen institutions and leadership in American higher education by identifying and preparing promising faculty and senior administrators for responsible positions in college and university administration.

For 2004-05, ACE selected 35 Fellows, who were nominated by the presidents and chancellors of their institutions. Each ACE Fellow will focus on an issue of concern to the nominating institution while spending all or a portion of the academic year working with a college or university president and other senior officers at a host institution.

Stadler said she will spend two semesters next year at a host school yet to be named. The Auburn professor will examine ways in which policy becomes practice within a large university system, will work with governing boards and committees and will assist with strategic planning.

For additional information or to make a tax-deductible donation, contact the foundation at 745-5870, or write to the J.W. Darden Foundation, P.O. Box 1581, Opelika, AL 36801.

Swamidass

Health designs AU Art Professor Ray Dugas holds the latest in a series of seasonal posters he is designing for IBM Global Well-Being Services. IBM is distributing the posters to its world-wide operations to promote physical fitness among its thousands of employees. A member of the Art Department faculty since 1974, Dugas teaches graphic design and has designed numerous posters, logos and other projects.

Reception on Tuesday to honor Pritchett

The Office of the Provost will host a public reception for Associate Provost and Vice President for Graduate Studies John F. Pritchett from 5 p.m.-6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Dixon Conference Center.

Pritchett retires on March 31 from AU after 31 years of service. At Auburn, he has been a professor, department head, dean, associate provost, interim provost and vice president.

Organizations raising funds for Darden restoration

University and community organizations are participating in a fund-raising effort for restoration of the historic Darden House in Opelika.

The house, built in 1904, was for nearly half a century the home of the first African-American physician in Opelika and Auburn.

For additional information or to make a tax-deductible donation, contact the foundation at 745-5870, or write to the J.W. Darden Foundation, P.O. Box 1581, Opelika, AL 36801.

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