Volunteers across campus have launched the 2013 United Way campaign at Auburn University to provide financial support for local charities and nonprofit social services.

The campus campaign, a key part of the Lee County United Way Campaign, is seeking contributions from faculty, staff and others to assist 25 local nonprofit agencies and programs that provide important services to area youth, elderly and disabled persons, as well as families suffering from extreme economic hardship.

The campus goal is $140,000, which is a major part of the $925,000 goal for Lee County.

Lynne Hammond, the university’s assistant vice president for human resources, is chair of the campus campaign, and June Henton, dean of the College of Human Sciences, is honorary chair. Hammond said more than 40 volunteers throughout campus provide leadership for the campaign in their respective areas.

Henton and Hammond stressed the collective impact of United Way contributions on the community.

“It is my privilege to serve as honorary chair of our campus campaign this year,” said Henton. “I am a great believer in collective philanthropy, to have everyone chip in a little to accomplish a big goal. There is no organization better than United Way to effectively combine large and small donations and put them to serve a great cause. Signing up for even a small monthly contribution through payroll deduction will not only allow us to meet our $140,000 goal, it also will give us a great sense of satisfaction that we joined together with our colleagues to help our community thrive.”

Noting that all contributions are applied locally, Hammond reiterated that United Way provides a means for faculty, staff and others to leverage their gifts for maximum effect. “Together, we can make a significant difference in the quality of life for those in need in our community,” Hammond said.

“Even small contributions can make a huge difference,” Hammond added. “An example of this is that a one dollar contribution can provide roughly $40 worth of grocery products at retail prices, or seven meals, because of the ability of our local food bank, a United Way agency, to leverage the dollars to maximum advantage.”

The campus campaign began in late September, with volunteers distributing pledge cards to faculty and staff. The active phase will continue until Thanksgiving, and some campaign activities usually continue into December.

Hammond said the campus campaign is again encouraging friendly competition among units by having prize drawings every two weeks. The winners will be selected at random from the unit with the highest participation rate. Prizes include framed artwork, memorabilia from the Athletic Department and a grand prize from The Hotel at Auburn University of a one night stay with a brunch for two.

Volunteers for the Faculty and Staff of Auburn University
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For local aid, services

Campus United Way launches 2013 campaign

Campus United Way

President Jay Gogue recently helped faculty and staff volunteers kick off the 2013 campus United Way campaign. From left, Gogue is shown with Human Sciences Dean June Henton, honorary chair of this year’s campaign, Rebecca Benton, executive director of United Way of Lee County, and Lynne Hammond of Human Resources, chair of the campus campaign.

Local agencies and programs providing assistance through the United Way include: American Red Cross East Alabama Chapter, Food Bank of East Alabama, Salvation Army, 2-1-1 Community Connections, Achievement Center, Andrew Willis Fund, Auburn City Schools Dental Clinic, Auburn Day Care Centers, Dixie Youth Baseball Opelika, Auburn Dixie League Baseball, Domestic Violence Intervention Center and East Alabama Mental Health.

Also included are EAMH-MR Family and Children Services, East Alabama Services for the Elderly, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Lee County, Child Advocacy Center of East Alabama, Community Market, Child Care Resource Center, Greater Peace Child Development Center, Joyland Child Development Center, Junior Achievement, Lee County Literacy Coalition, Project Uplift, Lee County Youth Development Center, Unity Wellness Center and the William Mason Emergency Fund.

Volunteers across campus have launched the 2013 United Way campaign at Auburn University to provide financial support for local charities and nonprofit social services.

Organizers of the campus presentation say Steves is expected to discuss “Travel as a Political Act,” the title of one of his latest books in which he reflects on how a life of travel has broadened his own perspectives and how travel can be a significant force for people and understanding in the world.

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Rick Steves’ visit is sponsored by the College of Human Sciences and the Office of International Programs, with support from the Auburn University Special Lectures Fund and Auburn Connects! Common Book Program.

Auditorium seating will be determined on a first-come, first-served basis. Ballroom B will be used for overflow seating.

Marilyn Bradbard, director of international programs for the College of Human
College of Liberal Arts activities honor author, alumna Anne Rivers Siddons

The Auburn University College of Liberal Arts will celebrate best-selling novelist and alumna Anne Rivers Siddons in a free, public tribute on Friday, Oct. 18, at 5 p.m. at The Hotel at Auburn University. Siddons has been named the inaugural Women’s Leadership Institute Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.

“A Tribute to Anne Rivers Siddons” will feature a student art exhibition depicting themes from her debut novel “Heartbreak Hotel,” a performance by the Auburn University Singers, a theatrical adaptation of Siddons’ letter to The Auburn Plainsman and discussions of Siddons’ work by members of the Auburn University faculty.

The event is part of CLA Reads, the College of Liberal Arts’ semester-long, college-wide reading program. This year’s selection, Siddons’ novel “Heartbreak Hotel,” fictionalizes her days at Auburn during the tumultuous civil rights period. The novel recounts the event of her firing from The Auburn Plainsman as a columnist and gives detailed insight into the Auburn experience of the past. The book also was adapted into the film “Heart of Dixie” in 1989.

“She helps us understand the fraternity/sorority culture and the significance of relationships to those who came before us,” said Barbara Baker, executive director of the Women’s Leadership Institute. “She helps us understand a host of things like the dating culture of yesterday, race relations and all manner of social relationships. She shows us how the Auburn we know today was made from the Auburn of yesterday.”

The Women’s Leadership Institute Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes an Auburn University alumna who has achieved national acclaim over a lifetime of successful and sustained contribution to culture through arts, humanities, business or politics.

Baker said Siddons was selected “because of her long and successful career as a writer, and because of her literary and artistic depictions of the South, Southern life, and particularly Auburn University.”

Siddons graduated from Auburn in 1958 with a degree in illustration and a minor in English.

Creative research and scholarship

Provost Timothy Boosinger, right, congratulates Conner Bailey, left, of the College of Agriculture, and Pradeep Lall, center, of the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, winners of Auburn’s 2013 Awards for Creative Research and Scholarship. Bailey and Lall were among faculty honored Sept. 17 at the eighth annual Faculty Awards Celebrating Excellence ceremony.

Campus Calendar

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2**

**PUBLIC LECTURE** Distinguished Graduate Faculty Lecturer S.D. Worley, “Invention of a Water Disinfectant – Laboratory to Marketplace,” 3 p.m., Langdon Hall Auditorium

**PUBLIC LECTURE** Travel authority Rick Steves, “Travel as a Political Act,” 4 p.m., auditorium, The Hotel at Auburn University, seating availability first-come, first-served, with overflow seating in Ballroom B

**PUBLIC LECTURE** Richard Penaskovic, professor of religious studies, “Hospitality in Judaism, Christianity and Islam,” 4 p.m., Student Center 2225

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY THEATRE** “On the Verge,” 7:30 p.m., Telfair Peet Theatre; also 7:30 p.m., Thursday-Friday, Oct. 3-4; for tickets, call 844-4154

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5**

**MUSEUM BIRTHDAY PARTY** and family day celebrating 10 years, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Jule Collins Smith Museum

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8**

**MEETING** University Senate, 3:30 p.m., auditorium, Broun Hall

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9**

**DOCUMENTARY FILM** “Our Spirits Don’t Speak English,” a Native American perspective on Indian Boarding Schools, 2 p.m., Multicultural Center Reading Room, Foy Hall

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10**

**PUBLIC LECTURE** “Myths, Presumptions and the Need for Probative Research in Obesity,” David B. Allison, head of the Nutrition Obesity Research Center at the University of Alabama-Birmingham, 11 a.m., 101 Overton Educational Wing, College of Veterinary Medicine; part of the Joy Goodwin Lecture Series

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15**

**PUBLIC LECTURE** Pulitzer Prize-winning author and historian David McCullough, 11 a.m., Auburn Arena; part of the Littleton-Franklin Lecture Series

**DOCUMENTARY FILM** “Birth of the Living Dead,” with filmmaker Rob Kuhns, 6 p.m., auditorium, Jule Collins Smith Museum; free but seating is limited, advance tickets recommended and available online at www.jcsm.auburn.edu/programs; part of the Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16**

See Anne Rivers Siddons, Page 3
Profiles in Excellence

Professor honored for outreach to build stronger families

Francesca Adler-Baeder embodied the mission of a land-grant institution long before she came to Auburn University.

Adler-Baeder says she first learned about “valuing hard work dedicated to a larger purpose” from her parents — a father who served in the U.S. Army for 30 years and a mother who provided selfless support to her husband and family.

She has devoted her life to community education and family science research since earning two degrees in human development and family studies from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

A member of the faculty of Auburn’s Department of Human Development and Family Studies in the College of Human Sciences since 2001, Adler-Baeder says she believes teaching, research and outreach are fundamentally intertwined.

“It should all be moving our communities forward towards enhanced quality of life,” said Adler-Baeder. “It’s what the College of Human Sciences is all about and it’s the founding principle of Auburn University.”

Auburn selected Adler-Baeder, a professor and Extension specialist, to receive the 2013 Faculty Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach, which honors the engagement of exemplary faculty members and demonstrates the tremendous impact outreach has on the community, state and nation.

Adler-Baeder may be best known for championing the creation of the Alabama Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education Initiative in 2002, a partnership of Auburn, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, a state agency consortium and the Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers.

The initiative is designed to address Alabama’s persistent history of marital and family instability and its negative consequences on individual and community health and well-being by providing educational resources and community classes on healthy relationships for youth and adults. It has become one of the nation’s most successful projects on promoting and strengthening stable relationships and positive family functioning, evidenced by an extensive evaluation study.

“This award is an acknowledgement of the passionate hard work of several of my Auburn colleagues, hundreds of Auburn students and our state and community partners who have poured their hearts into jointly creating, implementing, fine-tuning, and evaluating this unique, large-scale, coordinated program focused on promoting relational health in our state,” she said.

Adler-Baeder also credits the more than 30,000 youth and adults throughout Alabama who have participated in the educational programs over the past decade and provided feedback and evidence of effectiveness. “To see the achievements and contributions of all these individuals recognized and honored is incredibly meaningful,” she said.

Beyond her roles at Auburn, Adler-Baeder serves as the director of the National Extension Relationship and Marriage Education Network and the National Stepfamily Resource Center, and on the advisory board of the Military Family Research Institute. She has given more than 150 presentations at conferences and meetings and has more than 50 academic publications.

In 2009, Adler-Baeder and a community partner were invited to participate as one of only five speakers for a White House Roundtable on Innovative Community Partnerships.

She notes that the White House Roundtable provided an opportunity to share information about the land-grant institution mission and its vital responsibility for promoting access to research-based information that promotes quality of life in our communities. “It was a pinnacle moment to have the national spotlight on an Auburn homegrown initiative,” she said.

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.

Rick Steves

Continued from Page 1

Steves, who has traveled to Europe every year since 1973, is the best-selling author of more than 50 European travel books. His research and discoveries result in advice to make European travel fun, affordable and culturally enlightening.

His travel skills book, “Europe Through the Back Door,” has been updated every year since it was first published in 1980. For several years, “Rick Steves’ Italy” has been the best-selling international guidebook sold in the United States. His advice also can be found in a weekly column syndicated by the Chicago Tribune and at www.ricksteves.com.

Steves is also known as host of the popular public television series, “Rick Steves’ Europe,” and the weekly public radio program, “Travel with Rick Steves.”

Steves lives and works in his hometown of Edmonds, Wash. The city is also the headquarters of Rick Steves’ Europe Through the Back Door, a travel information business started in 1976.

Anne Rivers Siddons

Continued from Page 2

Anne Rivers Siddons and aspirations to be an illustrator and layout designer. Instead, she has enjoyed an illustrious career as a writer and has published 21 novels, most of which are set in Atlanta or surrounding areas.

Baker and other CLA professors are holding several lectures and open discussions about “Heartbreak Hotel” throughout the semester.

“I expect students to identify themselves, their parents, and their grandparents and come to an understanding of how our community developed — what the Auburn family was and how it became what it is,” Baker said. “Siddons herself is an outstanding role model for our students because of the national acclaim she has achieved, and it is important for them to know about the successful graduates that came before them.”

The Women’s Leadership Institute in partnership with CLA will host the tribute to Siddons at the 2013 Auburn Writers Conference.

— Vicky Santos
Undergraduate teaching honors
The Auburn Alumni Association honored three faculty members on Sept. 17 for excellence in undergraduate teaching. From left, Vice President for Alumni Affairs Debbie Shaw is shown with award recipients Jill Crystal of the College of Liberal Arts, Sang-Eun Byun of the College of Human Sciences and Christy L. Bratcher of the College of Agriculture.

Tops in faculty outreach
Francesca Adler-Baeder of the College of Human Sciences received Auburn University’s 2013 Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach at the recent Faculty Awards Celebrating Excellence ceremony. Adler-Baeder is congratulated by Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for university outreach.

UAB authority on nutrition, obesity to discuss those topics in CVM’s Joy Goodwin Lectures

David B. Allison, a Birmingham-based nationally recognized authority on obesity and nutrition, will discuss research and issues on the subject on Oct. 10 as the Joy Goodwin Distinguished Lecturer at Auburn University’s College of Veterinary Medicine.

Allison, director of the NIH-funded Nutrition Obesity Research Center at the University of Alabama-Birmingham, will give two presentations. The first, at 11 a.m., will be on “Myths, Presumptions, and the Need for Probative Research in Obesity” in 101 Overton Educational Wing on the College of Veterinary Medicine campus.

A second address will be at 4 p.m. on “From Evolution to Ecology to Economics: Some Curious Conjectures Connecting Social Dominance, Energetics, Perceptions, Adiposity, and Lifespan” in Overton Auditorium.

Allison, who is Quetelet Endowed Professor of Public Health and associate dean for science at UAB, has authored more than 450 scientific publications and edited five books. He has won several awards, most recently the Alabama Academy of Science’s Wright A. Gardner Award and the American Society of Nutrition’s Dannon Institute Mentorship Award.

In 2009, he received the Centrum Award from The Obesity Society; three years earlier he won the National Science Foundation-administered Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring.

In 2002, he garnered the Lilly Scientific Achievement Award from The Obesity Society and the Andre Mayer Award from the International Association for the Study of Obesity. Allison is a Fellow of the American Statistical Association, the American Psychological Association and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In 2012, he was elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies.

Allison’s research interests include obesity, quantitative genetics, clinical trials, and statistical and research methodology. He also serves as a frequent consultant and expert witness in the legal setting.

The Joy Goodwin Lecture Series was established in 1984 by donor Joy Goodwin, to bring visiting scholars in support of the research and teaching interests of the faculty and students of the College of Veterinary Medicine. To date, this endowed program has sponsored 116 seminars covering a wide range of topics. The speakers are chosen on the basis of their documented leadership in a particular discipline of interest to the college.

Fostering undergraduate research
Provost Timothy Boosinger, above right, congratulates Saad Biaz of the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, winner of the 2013 Provost Award for Excellence in Fostering Undergraduate Research and Creative Scholarship. The award recognizes sustained efforts to promote excellence in undergraduate scholarship through research.
Researchers see potential in 3-D for growing artificial tissue in laboratories

A team of Auburn University researchers is engineering artificial breast cancer tissue that they expect will provide fellow cancer researchers with a 3-D model on which cancer-fighting drugs can be tested.

The project by Assistant Professor Elizabeth Lipke and doctoral student Shantanu Pradhan in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering’s Department of Chemical Engineering is part of a growing focus worldwide on engineering cancer tissue in a 3-D format, rather than the traditional 2-D format for growing cancer cells.

The research in Lipke’s lab has historically focused on engineering cardiac tissue and developing cardiac regeneration techniques, but Pradhan found a link between that research and cancer-related angiogenesis, which is the growth of new blood vessels.

“Cancer is an area that biomedical engineers, and in particular tissue engineers, are just starting to get into modeling, but people have been working on tissue engineering for cardiac and other applications for a lot longer,” Lipke said. “In terms of understanding cancer biology, we’re really at the beginning of applying the things we know from other organ systems to understanding cancer in three dimensions.”

The researchers say modeling the cancer tissue in a 3-D format is important because it simulates how cancer grows in the human body. Certain cancer drugs may kill cancer cells grown in a 2-D format, “but when the same drug is applied to a tumor growing in a 3-D format in the human body, it might not have the same effect,” Pradhan said. “It might be much weaker. It might not be able to kill off all the cells as it did in the 2-D format.”

The researchers create the cancer tissue using a biomaterial called PEG-fibrinogen, which is made of the synthetic polymer poly(ethylene glycol) and fibrinogen, a protein produced by the liver that is critical to the blood-clotting process. After combining the cancer cells with the PEG-fibrinogen biomaterial in a substance called a hydrogel, they keep the sample at a temperature similar to that of the human body and observe over a period of time that the cancer cells have grow, much like a cancerous tumor in the human body.

Remote blood test cited as medical breakthrough

Two Auburn University professors have developed a disease-detection technology that could be the beginning of handheld, point-of-care devices – a breakthrough that would let health care professionals, first responders and even individuals quickly do blood tests for a variety of illnesses and conditions.

Associate Professor Christopher Easley and Professor Curtis Shannon, both in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry in the College of Sciences and Mathematics, led the research team that published its results in the March 27 issue of the Journal of the American Chemical Society.

“This new technique is rapid and accurate,” Easley said. “We can get results in three minutes compared to current lab technology which takes six hours. Our technique is also very flexible in that it should require relatively minor adjustments to detect hundreds of other proteins that are biomarkers for diseases.”

Easley engineers DNA strands and uses chemistry to attach them to two standard antibodies already known to bind to a specific protein in blood. When the two antibodies attach to the protein in the blood sample, the DNA strands on each antibody come together onto a metal electrode to produce an electrochemical signal. The magnitude of the signal indicates the protein level in the blood, a process they termed electrochemical proximity assay, or ECPA.

Easley’s lab attaches the DNA to the antibodies while Shannon works with the electrochemical process. “We detected the insulin protein level in mouse serum in three minutes,” said Easley, who began conducting the research in late 2011. “We can apply this to many proteins that are biomarkers for diseases. The technique is

See Breakthrough in blood tests, Page 6

Spirit of Excellence

Auburn University Human Resources has announced recipients of Spirit of Excellence awards for July. The awards are presented monthly to members of the Administrative and Professional Assembly and the University Staff Council employee groups in recognition of outstanding service to Auburn University. The winners for July, above from left, are Sherry Smith of the Department of Civil Engineering, Adam Williams of the Raymond J. Harbert College of Business and Sherry Compton of the Scott-Ritchey Center.
New Alumni Professors

Auburn University recognized five new Alumni Professors for 2013 on Sept. 17 at the eighth annual Faculty Awards Celebrating Excellence ceremony. From left, Debbie Shaw, vice president for alumni affairs, is shown with new Alumni Professors Nannan Liu of the College of Agriculture, Yu Lin of the College of Sciences and Mathematics, Art Chappelka of the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, Haroldo Toro of the College of Veterinary Medicine and Daniel Kim of the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering. Alumni professorships are awarded for five years, and the current recipients join 20 others who were appointed during the previous four years.

Breakthrough in blood tests

continued from Page 5

very sensitive, too. We can detect 5,000 times lower than the normal amount of insulin in blood.”

The researchers also performed normal laboratory tests using current technology and found the new technique detected a much wider range of protein levels and at much lower concentrations. Since the technique involves an electrical measurement, Shannon says it could be miniaturized like any electronic device, such as a glucose meter.

“Electrochemistry’s advantage over other types of detection technology is that it is relatively low cost and it can be miniaturized,” Shannon said. “We have no handheld device now, but our technology could be the foundation for a device that a health care company could commercialize for point-of-care analysis. They would need to do clinical trials on human blood first.”

The Auburn researchers can target different protein-based biomarkers by changing the two antibodies to target other diseases. Potential applications could include tests for liver disease, cancer, inflammation of the heart, Alzheimer’s disease, tuberculosis, pancreatitis, diabetes, kidney disease and numerous others, Easley said.

“You could get a sample of blood and determine if a person has a disease with a predefined biomarker,” he said. “A single device could be used for diagnosis of multiple diseases by simply switching out the antibodies on the metal surface.

“The technology could have an impact on biomedical research as well, such as understanding how a person’s insulin spikes when he or she drinks a soft drink. As far as I know, there is no other way to so rapidly detect insulin now.”

The research is funded by the National Science Foundation, the USDA and the National Institutes of Health and is supported by Auburn’s Office of the Vice President for Research and the Office of Technology Transfer. The university has applied for a U.S. patent on the new technique and is considering licensing the technology to an external company for further development.

“We are really excited about the potential for this technology,” Easley said. “This technique works really well and is consistent. It can be miniaturized and it gives quantitative measurements.”

– Charles Martin