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NEWS RELEASE

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PRESIDENTIAL FINALISTS NAMED FOR ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

ATLANTA — (April 27) – Regent Julie Ewing Hunt, chair of the **Special Regents’ Committee** for the presidential search at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC), in Tifton, and **University System of Georgia Chancellor Erroll B. Davis Jr.** today announced the names of the three finalists for the college’s presidency.

“The finalists we are recommending to the full Board of Regents are well qualified to help continue Abraham Baldwin’s long tradition of excellence,” Regent Hunt said. “We are pleased with the caliber of candidates this search has produced.”

“An impressive group of administrators were attracted to this presidency,” Chancellor Davis stated. “I feel very confident of each candidate’s ability to provide outstanding leadership for the college.”

The finalists, in alphabetical order, are as follows:

Dr. Elazer J. Barnette, former dean and professor of technology education in the School of Technology at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NCATSU), in Greensboro. Barnette is currently a protégé in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities’ (AASCU) Millennium Leadership Institute, mentoring with the president of Middle Tennessee State University, in Murfreesboro. He spent 15 years at NCATSU, beginning his tenure there in 1990 as a full-time assistant professor in the Department of Graphic Communication Systems and Technological Studies. By 1996, Barnette had been promoted to associate professor of technology education, received tenure and was named chair of the department. He was appointed interim dean of the School of Technology in 1998, became a full professor in 1999, and received a permanent appointment as dean in 2000. Barnette held this title until he was accepted into the AASCU Leadership Institute in 2005.

Prior to his career in higher education, Barnette served as a state supervisor and educational consultant in technology education for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction’s Division of Vocational Education. He served in that capacity from 1983 to 1990. Before that, Barnette held a variety of teaching positions in North Carolina and Ohio public schools.

Barnette earned an Ed.D. in 1990 from North Carolina State University (NCSU), in Raleigh, where he majored in education (industrial arts/technology) and minored in adult and community college education. He also earned an M.Ed. in occupational education from NCSU in 1983. Barnette received his undergraduate degree in industrial arts education from West Virginia State University in 1971.

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Dr. David C. Bridges, assistant dean and professor in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at the University of Georgia, in Athens. Bridges – the son of a South Georgia farmer and a teacher – accepted the position of assistant dean in 2001. He holds administrative responsibility for the Tifton campus of UGA's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Bridges' research and teaching career at UGA dates back to 1987, when he was hired as an assistant professor by the university's Department of Crop and Soil Sciences. By 1997, he had been made a full professor. Bridges' research is in the area of weed and vegetation management, and he has published extensively on topics related to weeds and crop losses due to weeds. He is recognized as an expert on herbicides.

In addition to his teaching duties at UGA, Bridges has served as a lecturer at Purdue University, in Indiana, since 1995. During the last three years, he also has lectured at the State University of New York and at Jealot's Hill Research Center, in England,.

Bridges earned a Ph.D. in agronomy (weed science) from Texas A & M University in 1987. He also holds a master's (1983) and a bachelor's degree (1980) in agronomy from Auburn University, in Auburn, Ala., and an associate degree in agricultural science from ABAC (1978).

Dr. Amelia Reid Pearson, provost and dean of instruction at Central Alabama Community College (CACC), in Alexander City, Ala. Pearson, who has served as the college's chief academic officer since 1999, has held a variety of administrative positions at CACC since 1990, including dean of students (1996-1999), associate dean of students (1994-1996), and chair of the Liberal Arts Division (1990-1994). During the latter period, she also served as chair of the Faculty Senate and led the college through its reaffirmation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. From 1982 to 1994, Pearson taught psychology at CACC.

Pearson began her career at Auburn University, where she rose from a position as a counselor and mental health therapist (1975-1976) to director of student programming (1978-1980) and psychometrist, counselor and coordinator in Career Development Services (1980-1982). During her tenure at Auburn, Pearson also served as a psychometric consultant to various school systems in Alabama, and as an adjunct instructor at Southern Union Junior College and Alexander City State Junior College, both in Alabama. She later spent eight years as a consultant to the Russell Corporation of Alexander City, Ala.

Pearson holds an Ed.D. in college student development (1999) and an M.Ed. in counseling from Auburn University (1975), as well as an undergraduate degree in psychology from the University of Tennessee, in Knoxville (1973).

The Board of Regents expects to name the next president of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in May.

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