



FOCUS

Vollmer To Become Leader For State Technical Colleges

Mike Vollmer, one of the most active presidents in the history of Abraham Baldwin, will leave his position Oct. 1 to become the Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education.

"I hope in some small way these past three years can be viewed as continuing to move the college ahead in a number of ways," Vollmer said. "Any positive things which happened over this period were due to the efforts of the entire campus."

Since assuming the post as ABAC's ninth president on July 1, 2001, Vollmer built a legacy of unparalleled construction and growth on the 421-acre campus.

The ABAC enrollment reached an alltime high of 3,407 students in the fall of 2003, and indications are that record may be broken when classes begin for the 2004 fall semester on Aug. 23.

Construction sites have become commonplace over the campus over the past three years as the college opened the \$1 million Red Hill Athletic Center, the \$3.2 million Environmental Horticulture Building, the \$7.1 million Agricultural Sciences Building, and the \$1.5 million Pedestrian Mall. Howard Auditorium also received a \$1.2 million renovation.

Perhaps the most significant achievement of the Vollmer era is the \$32 million ABAC Place apartments complex, which is the largest housing project at a two-year college in the United States. Most of the units in the massive project are four-bedroom, two-bath apartments, and all 835 private rooms are filled for the fall term. The ABAC Foundation supported the project.

Vollmer has already laid the groundwork for the \$6.2 million Health Sciences building, a combination public/private funded venture. The groundbreaking should occur later this year.

During his time at ABAC, the college also received a \$500,000 Goizueta Foundation grant and a \$1 million gift of the Forest Lakes Golf Course from Dr. Larry Moorman and his wife, Debra.

Anxious to keep ABAC up to date with technology, Vollmer encouraged a project in which ABAC students used hand-held computers, called Personal Digital Assistants in their classes. He also put ABAC in a position for a new technologically advanced phone system which is about to be used for the first time this fall.

Four-year college classes from the University of Georgia, Valdosta State University, Georgia Southwestern State University, Macon State College, and Albany State University are now available at ABAC. Vollmer wanted local students to be able to take two years at ABAC and then two years from the other units of the University System to complete their four-year degrees without ever leaving the area.

Vollmer has plans for ABAC to become a four-year state college. Those plans are going forward. "There's no reason why ABAC can't have a four-year degree here," Vollmer said. "I'm going to talk to the Chancellor and the Governor about that."

Vollmer set the stage with the University System for a \$200,000 study to create a new Master Plan for ABAC. That new plan should be unveiled in February, 2005. The Board of Regents



Mike Vollmer, trademarked by his suspenders, has changed the face of ABAC with many construction and renovation projects during his presidency.

met on the campus for the first time in 20 years because of Vollmer's invitation.

Active in the community, Vollmer is now serving as chair of the Tifton-Tift County Chamber of Commerce. He has also been named to the Georgia Humanities Council.

"Lennie and I love Tifton," Vollmer said. "Our three years here have been a tremendous time. I was anticipating spending at least seven years here."

Vollmer replaces Ken Breeden, who retired as the DTAE Commissioner on June 30.

"It's a once in a lifetime opportunity," Vollmer said. "It gives me a chance to really have an impact on education."



Diane Kilgore, Regent Julie Hunt, Wanda Golden, and President Mike Vollmer were on hand for the recent nursing presentation at the Regents' meeting.

University System Boosts ABAC Nursing Program

One of the most innovative nursing programs in the nation at ABAC should continue to produce quality healthcare workers in an extraordinary fashion thanks to a \$303,680 grant from the University System of Georgia.

Funded by the Board of Regents' Intellectual Capital Partnership Program® (ICAPP®), the two-year grant assists in the funding of salaries for faculty members in ABAC's highly successful Fast Track Nursing Program, which is part of a statewide University System ICAPP® Health Professionals Initiative.

"Our area hospitals are very satisfied with the results of this program," Wanda Golden, Division Chair for Nursing and Health Services, said. "Thanks to the new funding, we'll be able to offer advanced placement status to respiratory therapists and surgical technicians."

In its first two years of operation, the Health Professionals Initiative gave paramedics and licensed practical nurses who qualified the opportunity to take nursing classes every Wednesday from 8 a.m.-10 p.m. for one year to gain skills necessary to take the Registered Nurse (R.N.) licensing exam.

Tift Regional Medical Center and Colquitt Regional Medical Center proved to be valuable corporate partners in Phase One of the ICAPP® Health Professionals Initiative by assisting with equipment, supplies, and financial reimbursement for instructors. South Georgia Medical Center

will join Phase Two as a corporate partner.

Golden said 46 students entered the job market as a result of Phase One funding, and 23 additional jobs are guaranteed in Phase Two. Applications for the 2006 class are due Feb. 15, 2005.

"All these students still have fulltime jobs," Golden said. "It's a lot easier to work with your employer to get off one day a week. We have had students from Atlanta, Florida, and Louisiana in the program. Since we already had our Fast Track underway, we were the first of the ICAPP®-funded schools to turn out graduates."

Phase One of the Healthcare Initiative represented a \$6.75 million public/private partnership between Georgia health-care providers and included 13 University System colleges and universities. The initial program resulted in 632 new licensed healthcare professionals being produced through customized University System "fast-track programs" – far exceeding the original goal of 500 new graduates.

Phase Two of the Health Professionals Initiative will use the same structure as Phase One, leveraging the \$2.05 million state commitment with \$1.75 million from 26 private-employer partners charged with guaranteeing the program graduates jobs. Twelve colleges and universities will be on board for the project, which is expected to produce an additional 721 health-care professionals over the next two years.

Brogdon, Brannen Named High Five Weekly Winners

The winner of the High Five Award drawing for the week ending Aug. 6 was Margaret Brogdon, and the winner for the week ending Aug. 13 was Nancy Brannen.



Brogdon is Director of Procurement. Her nomination says, in part, "Margaret's primary duty is to purchase anything that the college needs. However, she has been called on countless times to do interior decorating all over campus. She has also directed the Miss ABAC Pageant since she came to work at ABAC. Most recently she has been asked to be the advisor for the newly formed ABAC Cheerleaders. Margaret put in many extra hours to ensure this was successful while at the same time she was involved in year-end closeout. Margaret is a very positive person and her enthusiasm and excitement always show. Because of her many endeavors for ABAC she is an excellent choice for the High Five Award."

Brannen is the Senior Secretary of the Science/Math Division. She and the rest of the members of the search committee for the Student Development Senior Secretary position were nominated with the following words, "Ms. Nancy Brannen served as chair and went 'the extra mile' to run the committee in the most timely, professional and thorough fashion. The committee members took their responsibilities seriously and were highly professional throughout the whole process. Thanks to each of them for a job well done!"

Brogdon and Brannen each received a certificate of appreciation and a T-shirt from the ABAC Bookstore. Their names will also go into the monthly drawing from the August weekly winners. The monthly winner will receive a gift certificate for \$50, which can be used at a number of local merchants.

Submit your nominations for the faculty and staff members who have gone above and beyond the call of duty for this week's High Five winner. Nomination forms are available on the Human Resources page of the ABAC website.



Counting Down The Hours!

With time drawing nigh for 835 students to begin moving in on Wednesday, construction workers at ABAC Place were swarming over the project on a cloudy Friday afternoon. Third floor residents of ABAC Place will begin moving in Wednesday. Second floor residents will move in Thursday, and first floor residents move in Friday. All rooms at ABAC Place are filled. Some students will also be housed in Comer Hall for the fall term.

Fall Term To Begin August 23



The last registration session for new freshmen students at ABAC will be held Thursday beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the J. Lamar Branch Student Center. Those who have already paid registration fees can report at 9:30 a.m.

Registration for other new and returning students will take place on Friday beginning at 9 a.m. There is an orientation fee of \$35, and pre-registration is encouraged. Fall term classes begin Aug. 23.

Students who need assistance paying for their college education can still apply for financial aid, but they must be prepared to pay initially and be reimbursed for the aid that they qualify for at a later date. Contact Financial Aid at 386-3235 for more information.

Fee payment deadline for students who had already pre-registered for fall semester was Aug. 11. If payment was not made by that time, students lost their classes and will have to register again.

For additional info, contact Enrollment Services at 386-3230, or visit the ABAC web site at www.abac.edu.

ABAC/VSU Offer New Graduate Degree on ABAC Campus

A Master of Education degree through Valdosta State University will be available beginning today on the Abraham Baldwin campus. The Interrelated Special Education/Early Childhood Education Program will feature classes taught by both VSU and ABAC faculty.

"In the fall of 2002, Valdosta State began offering a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education classes on the campus of ABAC," said Dr. Gail Dillard, ABAC's Director of Evening and Off-Campus Programs. "This summer, that program was expanded to provide for both the Early Childhood Education classes and Special Education classes in a five-year program resulting in a graduate degree combining Special Education and Early Childhood Education. This is a great new opportunity for ABAC students."

Entering freshmen can attend ABAC to obtain an Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education and then proceed into the program offered in conjunction with VSU. Students will



Dr. Gail Dillard

then be able to move into the inter-related education courses. Dillard said the decision to convert this program was based on two factors. The first is that today's elementary classrooms include a diverse population of children. General education teachers must be prepared to deliver individually referenced instruction to a variety of students.

Second, there is a great need for teachers who can help meet the needs of students with disabilities. This program will help to meet these needs. "This preparation will provide the skills and knowledge to make them more effective teachers," Dillard said.

After completion of the first four years of this program, students will receive their Bachelor's degree in Special Education. At that time, students

can apply for graduate school, the fifth year. "Student teaching will also take place during this year," Dillard said. Financial aid is available through the HOPE Scholarship for Critical Shortage Fields at this time.

Upon completion of 24 hours of coursework and 12 hours of student teaching and successful completion of the PRAXIS II Exam, students will receive their Master's degree in Education with certification in Interrelated Special Education/Early Childhood.

"This also entitles students who work in the state of Georgia to be hired at the T-5 level, which in many districts is \$4,000-\$5,000 higher per year," Dillard said.

"This program gives students many job opportunities, as well as being a benefit to people in our area to attend classes without having to commute to Valdosta State," Dillard said. For more information, contact the Evening and Off-Campus Program Office at (229) 386-7154 or visit the ABAC web site at www.abac.edu.

New Sports Coming to ABAC in 2005



Alan Kramer

Two new sports will be phased in at Abraham Baldwin over the next two years. In the fall of 2005, the college will bring back the Men's Golf program, and in the fall of 2006, a Women's Soccer team will be added to the growing list of sports offered on campus.

Alan Kramer, Athletics' Director and Men's Tennis Coach said, "We wanted to take a hard look in the mirror at the programs we were offering looking ahead toward ABAC's 100-year anniversary (in 2008)."

Kramer said Herb Hendrix will be coaching golf starting in the fall of 2005. Hendrix is presently the intramurals director at the college. Women can play on the golf team but must hit from the same tees as the men.

"Golf will be the perfect fit, having our own golf course (Forest Lakes) and the popularity of our own Golf Turf

Management program," Kramer said.

Before being eliminated because of a lack of statewide competition, men's golf fared well at ABAC, producing several top flight golfers, including Sonny Skinner from Sylvester.

A national search for a full-time instructor of Health, Physical Education and Recreation and soccer coach begins this fall. The position will be available in the fall of 2005. "The interest in soccer locally and nationally has soared over the years. Almost everyone is playing soccer," Kramer said.

Kramer said one women's program will be phased out. Women's tennis will not be available after spring 2006. The incoming freshmen players will have every opportunity to play for two years before the program is dissolved.

"ABAC has taken the position of building a reputation, not resting on one. And the addition of these programs only strengthens the entire ABAC Athletics Department. That is why we've added these new sports to the list of athletics," Kramer said.



Fall Social Tuesday 6 p.m. Dining Hall

The annual social for the entire ABAC faculty and staff and their families will take place Tuesday at 6 p.m. in the Donaldson Dining Hall. The cost is \$3 per person. If you haven't made a reservation, you need to do so immediately with Mandy Vassey at 3267 or mvassey@abac.edu.

Children five and under will be admitted free. Payment in advance is appreciated.

The Team ABAC Olympic-themed social precedes a full day of the Fall Planning Conference on Wednesday beginning with coffee and juice at 8 a.m. in the rotunda area of Gressette Gym and Howard Auditorium.

President Mike Vollmer will address the entire faculty and staff at 8:15 a.m. Wednesday in Howard Auditorium. Local financial institutions will provide a 9:30 a.m. refreshment time in the rotunda. Other sessions follow throughout the day.

Two Grants Funded for ABAC Arts Connection Program



The Arts Connection at Abraham Baldwin has been awarded two grants totaling over \$25,000. The Grassroots Grant was given by the Governor's Office, and the Arts Residency Program Grant came from the Georgia Council for the Arts.

The Grassroots Grant involves 12-15 agencies in eight counties, including Tift, Turner, Irwin, Ben Hill, Cook, Berrien, Worth and Wilcox counties.

"Each agency will have its own project, so 12-15 projects will be going on at the same time," said Polly Huff, Assistant Director of the Arts Connection, Agency Director of Grassroots, and Coordinator of Arts in Schools Program.

The program is meant to benefit arts agencies which can provide quality grassroots arts programming to the entire community, and which need "a boost" to get going. Each agency is

given up to three years of Grassroots funds for their project.

After the third year, they can either apply with a different project, or choose to fund the project on their own. Many agencies develop strong relationships in the community and are ready to venture on their own after the third year of Grassroots funding.

The projects will start in September and finish in May. This is the 11th year the Grassroots Arts Program has been in the community. Approximately \$18,286 was awarded to the eight counties this year, with each one receiving \$1,500 - \$2,000.

"With local merchants' donations and help, some counties have actually had \$5,000-\$10,000 to work with in the past," Huff said. "The goal for this program is to present an arts program that benefits the entire community."

The second grant to be awarded was the Arts Residency Program Grant. This program was also fully funded and is meant to benefit one entity in an entire service region. The grant is limited to small groups and is based on need and quality of the proposed activity.

Only in its second year, this program

allows an artist to come in for an eight-week period to work with a group of students from that area. The first two weeks of this program will deal with planning the project, five weeks with the host creating the project, and a one week period for post-planning. At the end of the project, the artist will host a community showcase and will present a piece of permanent art to the school, in this case a quilt containing essays written by the students.

This year's artist is William Wilder, a "Historyteller" from South Carolina who will work with one full grade from Worth County Elementary.

"Worth County Elementary does not participate in our Arts in Schools Series, which made them a perfect candidate," Huff said. "We were able to provide the funding, and Worth County's Superintendent, Gary Russell, was gracious enough to allow us to bring the program to one of his schools."

Planning for this event began in May with \$7,000 in funds.

For more information on either of these programs, contact Huff at (229) 386-3478 or visit the website at www.abac.edu/arts/gap

ABAC Public Relations

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Barton Gets New Job in Enrollment Services

Michelle Barton is the new Office Manager in Enrollment Services. She began her duties on Aug. 3. She has been employed at ABAC in admissions since July 1, 1996.



Barton

Barton received her bachelor's degree in business from Valdosta State University in 1990 and her associate's degree in business from ABAC in 1987.



Ambassadors' Deadline August 31

The deadline for applications for the ABAC Ambassadors' program is noon on Aug. 31. Applications are available in the Public Relations Office on the second floor of Tift Hall. Please send great students our way. The Ambassadors represent the college in a variety of situations including Dollars for ABAC Scholars, Homecoming, Open Campus Day, the Sunbelt Expo, Cordell Lectures, First Tuesday Concerts, high school recruiting fairs, and much more.

FOCUS Goes Weekly

Beginning with this week's edition, the FOCUS will be a weekly publication throughout the fall term. All submissions for the FOCUS should be sent to Pam Leonard in the Public Relations Office at pleonard@abac.edu by noon on Thursdays. This prized publication will again appear on your e-mail on Mondays.

Regular Hours Resume

The campus returns today to regular office hours of 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Also, regular office attire resumes today with Fridays still set aside for business casual.



Positions Open

ABAC:

- Director of Procurement
Salary: Commensurate with experience (deadline 8/16)
- Records Coordinator II (2 openings)
Enrollment Services Office
Salary: \$18,000-20,000
(deadline 8/19)

[Contact Human Resources for details.](#)

Note of Sympathy

The ABAC Family expresses sympathy to Melissa Webb whose sister, Mandy, was killed in a car accident on Aug. 8. Please keep her family in your thoughts and prayers.

ABAC Family

Darby Sewell and seven students in the Family and Consumer Sciences Club attended the annual meeting of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences in San Diego, Calif., in June. The students presented a program on Table Etiquette during the Life After School session. The Georgia delegation included students from UGA, GSU, and ABAC. The Georgia group received the 2004 National Progress Award for membership growth and member involvement over the past three years.

Calendar of Events

Monday, August 16

- 8:30 a.m.-New Faculty Orientation (Cordell Conf. Room-A)
- Noon-New Faculty Luncheon (Magnolia Room)
- 4 p.m.-Evening New Student Orientation (Ag Sciences Building)

Tuesday, August 17

- 8:30 a.m.-New Faculty Orientation (Cordell Conf. Room)
- 9 a.m.-Institutional SAT
- 6 p.m.-Fall Faculty/Staff Social (Dining Hall)

Wednesday, August 18

- 8 a.m.-Faculty/Staff Fall Conference (Howard Auditorium)

Thursday, August 19

- Today-New Student Orientation

Friday, August 20

- Today-Registration
- 7 p.m.-Bethune/Hall Wedding Rehearsal (Chapel)

Saturday, August 21

- 4 p.m.-Bethune/Hall Wedding (Chapel)

Sunday, August 22

- Noon-Bridal Luncheon (Magnolia Room)

Monday, August 23

- Today-Fall Semester Classes Begin
- 5:30 p.m.-Hunter Safety Education (Cordell Conf. Room A)

Celebrating Birthdays



August

- 17 Brenda Keller
- 17 Donnie Stone
- 18 Bobbie Baldree
- 21 Javier Gonzalez
- 21 Alan Kramer
- 22 Rod Brown
- 22 Rita Wade