Dining Hall Renovation Will Improve Atmosphere for Students

Students at ABAC will enjoy a new dining experience this fall semester with the completion of a summer-long renovation project in the Donaldson Dining Hall.

John Clemens, vice president for planning and operations at ABAC, said “considerable student input” went into the new look for the 500-seat dining hall, which is named after former ABAC President George P. Donaldson.

“We tried to incorporate the best of the ideas from the students into the renovation,” Clemens said. “We also looked at dining operations at the University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, Kennesaw State, North Georgia, and Middle Georgia.”

Clemens said students told campus planners that they wanted the dining hall to be more than just one flat area where everyone is seated in an open space.

“I think the concept of zonal dining is really going to be popular,” Clemens said. “The new look will have two raised areas with a two-step rise. There will also be other areas which lend themselves to students congregating, talking, and eating together.”

For the students, it’s all about atmosphere.

“Studies show that because student trends change colleges should update their dining facilities about once every five or six years,” Clemens said. “We are right on track with that. I think the students are going to like the atmosphere in the dining hall, and it is really important to us to give the students an area to hang out on campus.”

High definition televisions showing news and sports will be a part of the new concept. They can also be used to share ABAC information. Existing restrooms will be made larger, and a stage will be added.

Clemens said the project will be funded by dollars specifically set aside from dining hall revenue over the past five years.

“We are not using funds that could have been used for academic programs or for any other activity at the college,” Clemens said. “These funds are restricted to this project and can’t be used for anything else.”

Clemens said the dining hall will be closed for the summer and will re-open for the fall semester, which begins on Aug. 13. Summer term students and students attending various camps during the summer will eat their meals in another part of campus.

Fillies Host ‘Strike Out Cancer’

Coach Donna Campbell and the ABAC Fillies softball team hosted ‘Strike Out Cancer’ at Fillie Field Friday afternoon. The event raised money for Relay for Life. The fillies presented Gulf Coast players with pink wrist bands prior to the first pitch. Alton Hudgins (back row center) and other cancer survivors were honored before the game.
The top faculty member, staff member, administrator, academic advisor, and student for the 2011-2012 academic year were recognized during Wednesday’s Honors Day ceremony at ABAC.

Dr. Sandra Giles, Associate Professor of English, received the W. Bruce and Rosalyn Ray Donaldson Award for Teaching Excellence. Nancy Brannen, Senior Administrative Assistant for the School of Science and Mathematics, was honored with the Roy R. Jackson, Sr., Award for Staff Excellence. Alan Kramer, Athletics Director and Assistant Professor of Health and Physical Education, received the E. Lanier Carson Leadership Award for College Administrators, and Amanda Urquhart, Instructor of Mathematics, received the W. Bruce and Rosalyn Ray Donaldson Excellence in Advising Award. Brenda Doss, a Rural Studies—Writing and Communication major from Tifton, received the J. G. Woodroof Scholar Award, presented annually to the top academic student at the institution.

Giles, earned her associate’s degree in English from ABAC and was awarded the Donaldson Award, a prestigious award given to the most outstanding graduate. She then attended Valdosta State University for her bachelor’s degree in English and her master’s degree in English. She then earned her Ph.D. in creative writing and composition/rhetoric from Florida State University.

An ABAC faculty member since 1997, Giles has brought numerous guest speakers to enrich the classroom experiences of her students, is a long time member of the Blackwater Writing Project, and worked for three years developing the then fledgling Writing Center on campus. She received a plaque and a check for $2,500 from the ABAC Foundation.

Brannen has served as the senior administrative assistant in the School of Science and Mathematics for over 13 years. She earned an A. S. degree in Business Administration from ABAC and holds a Certified Administrative Professional designation from the International Association for Administrative Professionals (IAAP).

Always on the move, Brannen might be found at a meeting of the IAAP, attending a campus event, or exploring her creativity with her home decorations. She received a plaque and a check for $1,250 from the ABAC Foundation.

Kramer earned his bachelor’s degree in exercise science from Northeast Missouri State University and his Master’s of Science in Education from Baylor University. At ABAC, he is the athletics director as well as men’s and women’s tennis coach.

Urquhart obtained her bachelor’s degree in mathematics and anthropology from Mercer University in 2005 and her master’s degree in mathematics from Colorado State University in 2007. She came to ABAC in 2008 as a part-time instructor and was hired full-time a year later.

Urquhart serves as the chief advisor for allied health majors at ABAC for the School of Science and Mathematics. She has served as the faculty advisor to the Student Government Association, coach a Living/Learning Community, and has accompanied advisees on prospective campus tours. Urquhart received a plaque and a check for $1,250 from the ABAC Foundation.

Doss has maintained a perfect 4.0 grade point average as a student while holding a full-time position as the administrative associate in the ABAC Office of Academic Affairs. She has been a part of the ABAC staff since 1998. She is the second member of her family to be recognized as a Woodroof Scholar. Her daughter, Christina Norton, won the award in 2008.

English Discipline Award

Rebecca Huffman, a sophomore English major from Reynolds, was the recipient of the Discipline Award for English at Honors Day Wednesday. Dr. Billy Reynolds (left), associate professor of English presented her with the $300 stipend that accompanies the award at the School of Liberal Arts graduation celebration Thursday afternoon. Also on hand for the presentation were Dr. Brian Ray (second from right, associate Professor of English, and Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Niles Reddick (right).
CCHS Near Peer Students Visit ABAC

The Colquitt County High School Near Peer group visited ABAC in Tifton Thursday for a tour of campus and an informational session on the college search process. ABAC students have been meeting with this group of 11th graders at CCHS during their advisory period since January to focus on topics including how to select a college, expectations for college...

Music begins at 10:25 a.m. in the Meadows on the ABAC campus, with free performances from high school jazz bands from throughout the state and will last until 4 p.m.

In addition to the jazz band performances, there will be giveaways, spotlights on club activities, art displays, and great food. Spectators can bring their own lunch or just come and listen to the music.

To culminate the Jazz Festival, the ABAC Jazz Ensemble will perform with Harry Watters in Howard Auditorium at 7 p.m. All tickets have been sold for this event, which is the final one in the “ABAC Presents!” series from the Arts Connection. For more information contact the ABAC Music program office at 229-391-4945.

Retirement Reception

The Schools of Business and Science & Mathematics held a reception honoring Dr. Jeff Gibbs, Ms. Joy Shurley and Dr. Ray Barber on Thursday afternoon. In their years of service at ABAC, 77 years in total, they have been teachers, mentors & friends to ABAC’s students, faculty and staff.

George Scott Day Thursday!

The image contains a photograph of a group of people, likely from the CCHS Near Peer group, visiting ABAC.
The FOCUS is a weekly electronic publication produced by the ABAC Public Relations Office. Please submit information by Thursday at noon to Ashley Mock at amock@abac.edu for inclusion in the next FOCUS.

ABAC Birthdays

16 James Galt-Brown
17 Anthony Fitzgerald
17 Brooke Jernigan
17 Christine Roan
19 Maggie Martin

Moultrie Rock-A-Thon
Students involved in the Leadership Society at ABAC on the Square will host a Rock-a-Thon on Thursday from 2:30-4 p.m. on the courthouse square. The event will benefit the homeless veterans’ project at the Lake City Veterans Hospital in Lake City, Fla.

Tifton-Tift Co. Relay for Life
April 27 at EB Hamilton
Contact Donna Webb at dwebb@abac.edu if you are interested in joining the ABAC Team!

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Upcoming Campus Events

George Scott Day April 19 in the Meadows
George Scott Jazz Concert April 19 Howard Aud
Student Leadership Banquet April 25 at UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center
Late Night Pancake Breakfast April 30 Donaldson Dining Hall
Graduation May 4 Gressette Gymnasium

The Cattleman’s Association and the School of Agriculture and Natural Resources hosted the first ABAC Agricultural Awareness Day Friday in The Meadows. Students, Faculty and Staff were invited to come out and learn more about the origins of their food, fiber, and fuel. Kalie Hall (left) discusses various types of peppers with a fellow ABAC student.

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