



# FOCUS

## ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

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### Jasper Student Wins Donaldson Award at ABAC Commencement

David L. "Junior" Chapman, an agricultural education major from Jasper, received the prestigious George P. Donaldson award at the spring commencement ceremony on Friday at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College.

Chapman, a member of the Student Government Association where he served as freshman class president in 2008, was selected for the award based on a combination of academics and extracurricular activities. The award included a plaque and a check for \$500 from the ABAC Alumni Association. Donaldson served as president of ABAC from 1947-61.

Chapman added the Donaldson Award to his already impressive collection of achievements including the J. G. Woodroof Scholar Award, signifying



the top academic student at the college, and being named as Mr. ABAC in 2009.

The son of David and Sonia Chapman of Jasper, he has been an active member in ABAC's FFA, served as a Community Assistant at ABAC Lakeside, worked 15 hours a week as a tutor in the Student Success Center, was chosen to serve as a Welcome Week leader, and participated in intramural flag football, softball, and bowling.

Chapman also worked to help start a colony of Alpha Gamma Rho, one of the first Greek organizations implemented in the history of the college.

"This has allowed me to share in fellowship with many other guys who all

have the same interest in agriculture," said Chapman. "I believe that one day this will be a great part of ABAC, and I will look back at it with pride."

Academically, Chapman made the Dean's List for the fall of 2008 and the President's List for the fall and spring of 2009. He also earned the Divisional Discipline award in agricultural education during the 2010 Honors Day ceremony.

His involvement outside of ABAC includes being selected by the National FFA as one of the Top 25 Leaders in America in 2009. He is a former Georgia FFA state president and plans to run for a national office this year. Chapman also served as a volunteer for "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition."

A total of 185 graduates participated in the ceremony. Ten students received bachelor's degrees. The guest speaker at the event was Dr. Greg Anderson, a Tifton urologist, who graduated from ABAC in 1978.

### Art From ABAC

Kelly Cooksey, a sophomore art major from Tifton, was one of the students who participated in the spring art exhibit at the new Bowen Hall exhibit area on Wednesday.



## Kramer Named To NJCAA Hall of Fame

Alan Kramer, coach of the tennis teams at ABAC, has been selected for induction into the National Junior College Athletic Association Women's Tennis Hall of Fame.

The selection came as a complete surprise to Kramer, when it was announced at the annual banquet at last week's NJCAA women's tournament in Tucson, Ariz.

"I had no idea," said Kramer. "It was a surprising experience to be honored in front of all the student athletes and coaches. It's also very humbling to be recognized among your peers."

Kramer is not a newcomer when it comes to recognition. He was named ITA/Wilson National Intercollegiate



Women's Coach of the Year in 1998 and 2007. He has also been named Region XVII Coach of the year 10 times since he began coaching at ABAC. The ABAC Fillies have won 17 consecutive Region XVII championships. In 1999, ABAC finished as national runner-up. The team has been ranked in the top 10 in the country for a decade. Kramer has coached a total of 22 All-Americans and two national champions in his coaching career. Two of this year's Fillies were also honored at the banquet. Bia Miranda was named Rookie of the Year, and Marley Myers was selected as the ITA Region IV Arthur Ashe Award recipient. The Fillies finished 17th in the tournament. The Stallions are in tourney action this week.



## Ray Selected As Site Director in London

Dr. Brian Ray, Associate Professor of English at ABAC, has been selected to serve as a site director in London for the England Study Abroad Consortium for the University System of Georgia in 2011.

Ray was a part of the England Summer Abroad program as a faculty member in 2008. Based on his experience with the program, he was asked to serve as a site director by the University System European Council. Ray represents ABAC on that Council.

"I am most excited about this because the Council asked for me," said Ray. "This is not something I applied for. It was a personal positive that they recognized me and the previous experience I have had with London and its program."

Ray will serve as a liaison between the program participants and local situations as a point of contact.

"I think of my position as a local parent or surrogate dad to run interference in a foreign or strange situation," said Ray. "I'll help with medical issues, working with housing groups, and notifying parents. Essentially I will be a troubleshooter for students and the London community."

Ray will leave for London and his new role in June of 2011. He will return to ABAC for the 2011 fall semester, but hopes to get the opportunity to serve in his role again in the summer of 2012.

"This is a one-time opportunity as of right now," Ray said. "The faculty positions and the site directors are selected each year for the following year's offerings."

Ray said that ABAC offers several study abroad opportunities for its students. Interested persons can contact Dr. Su Senapati, Study Abroad Coordinator, at (229) 391-4970 or by e-mail at [ssenapati@abac.edu](mailto:ssenapati@abac.edu).

## Liebegott New Student Activities Director

If laughter is indeed the best medicine, Kris Liebegott should have the right prescription for the students at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in his new role as Director of Student Activities.

Between his undergraduate and graduate work in college, Liebegott took a year off to try his hand at stand-up comedy.

"My advisor said I should do what I was passionate about, and I love making people laugh," said Liebegott. "So I decided to try stand-up comedy. I was glad to go back to school after that."

Born in Lithia Springs, Ga., but raised primarily in Scranton, Pa., Liebegott comes to ABAC with six years of experience in higher education.

He spent four years as a part of the executive board of student activities at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College and two years at Marywood (Pa.) University as a graduate assistant in student activities.

Liebegott received his bachelor's degree in Marketing Communication



from Elizabethtown College and his master's degree in Higher Education from Marywood University.

His first impressions of the ABAC campus have been positive.

"It has been great," said Liebegott. "I have already attended a residence life meeting and the pancake breakfast.

The people are welcoming, and it seems like a close campus community, which I find very impressive."

Liebegott will reside on campus in the ABAC Place apartments, where he will have some responsibilities with residence life, as well as with the clubs and organizations at the college.

"I want to make student activities as fun and creative as possible," said Liebegott. "I believe my personal goals coincide with those of ABAC's, and there's a lot I hope to implement. I am excited about working very heavily to make ABAC's student activities the best in the state."

## Faculty and Staff Hard at Work for Students



Donna Webb, Keith Barber, and Lee Ann Taylor are hard at work during the annual late night pancake supper for the students. The event is a fun time for students to get a late night snack while studying for finals and to see the faculty and staff in a different capacity.

## Blackmarr Receives Achievement Award

Syd Blackmarr received the prestigious Lifetime Achievement in the Arts Award May 4 from the Georgia Assembly of Community Arts Agencies.

“Developing and guiding outstanding community arts experiences for at least 10 years, building partnerships and collaborations with numerous city and county groups and providing arts leadership throughout the state” are key criteria for the award, according to

GACAA President Brenda Durant of Augusta.

Blackmarr qualifies three times over with her work as executive director of the Arts Experiment Station, now

the Arts Connection, at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College and volunteer service for at least 12 years.

Key among Blackmarr’s accomplishments noted in the award ceremonies are the development of eight community arts councils and the South Georgia Arts Alliance, the Arts and Entertainment performance series plus the creation of three enduring festivals: The Love Affair, Arts in Black and Fiesta del Pueblo.

The Love Affair Fine Arts Festival just completed its 30<sup>th</sup> annual multi-day event.



Syd Blackmarr (middle) receives the Lifetime Achievement award from Wayne Jones and Brenda Durant.

## Tuition Grants Available For Natural Resources Camp

Twenty tuition grants will be available to high school students who want to participate in the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Natural Resources Conservation Workshop on June 13-17 at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. These tuition grants are for rising 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students from Georgia. The deadline for applications for the grants is June 4.

The Natural Resources workshop gives students a rare, one-of-a-kind chance to learn about Georgia’s natural resources. Professionals in a variety of different fields will utilize classroom and field trip activities to help students learn the fundamentals and the responsible use of Georgia’s natural resources.

The 2010 workshop tuition is \$150 per student. That cost covers room and board for the workshop. This year the ABAC Ag Alumni Council will provide funding for 20 students. Other students will have their tuition covered by local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, local businesses, and individuals.

“This year, the ABAC Ag Alumni Council will award 20 tuition grants of \$150 each to students who would like to

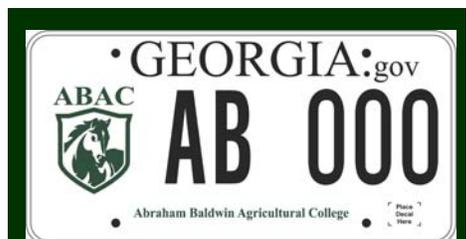
attend the workshop,” said Vonda Fenn, Program Coordinator of the ABAC Public Service and Business Outreach Center. “This will support ABAC and get the best students on the campus. This is a great way to recruit high school students who might later return as ABAC students because of their summer experiences at the college.”

Students who wish to apply for the Natural Resources Conservation

Workshop tuition grants from ABAC should contact Fenn at [vfenn@abac.edu](mailto:vfenn@abac.edu) or call her at (229) 391-5070. For more information about the Workshop, visit [www.abac.edu/psbo/nrcw](http://www.abac.edu/psbo/nrcw).

On the last day of the workshop, campers will be eligible to receive college scholarships by making the highest test scores on the exit exam.

“We will award over \$17,000 in scholarships for ABAC and other schools all over the state,” said Fenn. “The scholarships range from \$250 - \$6,000. This is an opportunity for these students to have a wonderful week at the camp and then go home with a college scholarship.”



**Sign up today for your ABAC License Plate. For more information visit the tag website at [www.abac.edu/tag](http://www.abac.edu/tag). We must have 500 applicants by July 31!**

## A Hug Before the Big Moment

Graduates and faculty members exchanged hugs and enjoyed refreshments prior to the commencement ceremony on Friday night under the rotunda. The reception was sponsored by the ABAC Alumni Association.



## Renewed Funding For AAMI

Wesley Daniels (right) and Project Director Don Parks discuss Wesley's application to be a Student Mentor for the Leaders Evolving and Developing (LEAD) Community Living/Learning Experience. Daniels is a nursing major from Fitzgerald. The 2010 and 2011 programs were funded by grants from the University System of Georgia African-American Male (AAM) Initiative, which focuses on improving retention and graduation rates. ABAC personnel contributing to both grant applications beside Parks included Dr. Gail Dillard, Donna Webb, Shirley Criscillis, Wasdon Graydon, Clayton Riehle, Amy Howell, and Betty McCorvey. The 2011 program adds a grant-funded recruiting program in anticipation of a summer 2011 bridge program and a third LEAD cohort in 2012.



## ABAC Family

Dr. Darby Sewell attended the Georgia Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Meeting April 14-17 where she presented two sessions.

Dr. Eddie Seagle received a Commendation for his service and impact on the Turf industry at 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Southeastern Turfgrass Conference.

## ABAC Birthdays

- 10 Gwendolyn Bullard
- 12 Carlos Howard
- 13 Debra McCrary
- 16 John Franklin

## Relay For Life Update

ABAC received the Best Decorated Campsite and Spirit Award for the 2009-2010 Relay for Life at the Relay Team Captain Wrap-up Celebration. The ABAC team has also raised \$7,597.53, which exceeds the goal of \$6,000!

The FOCUS is a weekly electronic publication produced by the ABAC Public Relations Office.

Ashley Williamson Writer and Layout Mike Chason Writer & Editor

Please submit any information to Ashley Williamson at [awilliamson@abac.edu](mailto:awilliamson@abac.edu) by **Thursday at noon**

## ABAC Job Opportunities

- Comptroller
- Director of Human Resources
- Coordinator of Residence Life
- Part-time Clinical Instructor
- Assistant/Associate Professor of Crop Science
- Full-time Faculty Positions
- Part-time Credentialed Faculty

For full listings visit the ABAC Human Resources website at:

[www.abac.edu/hr](http://www.abac.edu/hr)