



FOCUS

ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

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ABAC Takes Reins Of State Museum of Agriculture On July 1

The Georgia Agrirama Development Authority has turned over control of the State Museum of Agriculture to ABAC, effective July 1. On that day, the 95-acre Agrirama site on I-75 becomes a part of the now 516-acre ABAC campus.

"We have been working hard on this transition since January," ABAC

President David Bridges said. "Our transition team has been on the move, and it will continue to be an important part of the process in days to come."

Bridges said that ABAC Director of College Enrichment Paul Willis will lead the transition team and will be the director of the museum.

"Paul is a visionary leader and a seasoned manager, just what is required to move the museum forward," Bridges said. "He understands the expectation and has the strong support of the College's senior leadership. He will succeed."

The change of control from the Georgia Agrirama Development Authority to ABAC has been in the works since Jan. 14 when the Office of Planning and



Budget and the Governor's Office requested that Bridges work with legislators, local elected officials, and members of the Authority to move management and operations to ABAC.

Georgia lawmakers passed House Bill 1090 on April 12 which paved the way to move all assets of

the Museum to the University System of Georgia (USG). The bill was introduced by Representatives Austin Scott (153rd) and Jay Roberts (154th) with the support of other area representatives. The legislation was carried in the Senate by Senator John Crosby (13th District) and Senator John Bulloch (11th District).

The USG Board of Regents took action on May 12 to facilitate the transfer of assets, including land and buildings, from the Georgia Agrirama Development Authority to the USG. Governor Sonny Perdue signed the bill on May 20.

Since the Georgia Agrirama Development Authority will cease to exist after June 30, the Authority issued letters to all full-time and part-time employees on June 1, informing them that

they will no longer be employed by the Authority after June 30.

Bridges said all the employees had been told this would happen in group and individual meetings in recent weeks. He said that ABAC will decide what positions will be needed as the College takes over the operation of the museum on July 1. He said existing employees can apply for these positions.

"While much has been accomplished, much remains to be done," Bridges said. "I want to assure employees, supporters and the community that ABAC intends to operate a successful museum. ABAC will not only continue the educational outreach program, it will expand and improve it. The facility will remain open to the public. In short, we see this new venture as an opportunity for the College to better serve the people."

The Agrirama opened on July 4, 1976. In addition to the museum and numerous historic buildings, it includes a traditional 1870s farm community and an 1890s progressive farmstead. Features include a sawmill, blacksmith shop, schoolhouse, feed and seed store, print shop, grist mill, and turpentine still.

Painting the Sky with ABAC

ABAC is grabbing the attention of thousands of travelers with two billboards on Interstate 75. One billboard is northbound at mile marker 32 and another southbound at mile marker 82.



Olphie Named Grants & Contracts Accountant

Ann Olphie has been named as the Grants and Contracts Accountant in the Office of College Advancement at ABAC.



Before joining ABAC on June 1, Olphie worked for the U.S Air Force at the Alabama Department of Defense for 15 years and most recently at Fresh Beginnings in Valdosta.

She has also been employed with Ambling Companies, Inc., and Griffin, LLC.

Olphie received a bachelor's degree in business from Faulkner University.

"I'm very excited about working at ABAC," said Olphie. "It's very nice, and everyone is so friendly."

She is also excited about her work.

"I'd like to get my feet wet, and then begin setting goals that I would like to accomplish in my new position," said Olphie.

When she is not working, Olphie is an advocate for the Valdosta Humane Society, fostering pets and working closely with its animal cruelty task force. She also loves to read.

She is married to Richard Olphie, a retired special education teacher at Lowndes High School, who now works part-time for the Georgia Sheriffs' Boys Ranch in Hahira as a tutor.

Dining Hall Open For Summer Term

The dining hall will serve breakfast from 7:15 – 8:45 a.m. Monday through Friday; lunch from 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Monday through Friday; and dinner from 5 – 6:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday during the summer term.

Fried chicken will be served every other Thursday, beginning this week.

Sub Connection and Pizza Hut will remain closed until fall term.

ABAC Summer Job Fair Tuesday at 5 p.m.

A Summer Job and Internship workshop will be held on Tuesday from 5 – 6 p.m. at the John Hunt Town Center classroom. Free food will be provided. There is no charge for this event.

This job fair is hosted by the Student Development Center and the Student Life and Housing offices at ABAC.

The purpose of the fair is to inform students of the opportunities available for summer employment and internships that are available upon degree completion. Students will get an idea of what career opportunities are available within each program area.

For more information on this job fair, contact Annie Sims at (229) 391-5135.

Watch Out For Runners Tuesday Morning

The Methodist Conference will be having a 5-K run and a one-mile run on the ABAC campus on Tuesday, beginning at 7:30 a.m. at the Red Hill Athletic Center. Both races should be finished by 8:30 a.m. Please be wary of these runners as you enter the campus on Tuesday morning. Alton Hudgins and the ABAC Police Department will help to coordinate the event.

Summer Classes Begin Today

The summer term begins today and continues through July 28. Final examinations will be held on July 29-30. The only holiday during the term is on July 5. The entire college will be closed on that day for the Independence Day holiday.

ABAC Birthdays

- 8 Howard McCrary
- 8 Chrystle Ross
- 12 Brian Ray
- 12 Earl Denham
- 13 John Joyce
- 13 Larry McGruder
- 13 Vicki Walker

Underwood Balances Singing Career And Classes At ABAC

Kirsten Underwood's jam-packed schedule away from the campus sets her apart from the average college student. Besides attending classes at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College and working at the Georgia Peanut Commission, the freshman agricultural communications major also maintains a successful singing career.

"It's very hard to keep a balance between school, work, and music," said Underwood. "I have to remember to keep things separate. I have band practice once a week, and then I spend time studying every day after work or practice. The teachers have been great about my traveling for singing."

The Ty Ty native has loved ABAC since she was a little girl. She grew up attending all the basketball games, where her father, Kerry, was the public address announcer.

"I sang the National Anthem for the first time at an ABAC basketball game," said Underwood.

College has always been a priority

for Underwood and her family. She plans to earn her associate's degree in agricultural communications not just for herself, but for her mom, Natalie.

"She wants me to attain my associate's degree before I pursue my music career full-force," said Underwood. "I have always loved agriculture and writing and would love to do agricultural promotions or be involved in 4-H if music isn't in my future."

That doesn't mean Underwood has put a halt to her singing. In fact, she and her band have been performing every weekend all around Georgia. She travels once a month to Nashville, Tenn., and will perform there tonight as part of the Country Music Association's Music Fest.

On top of that honor, Underwood has been named Teen Songwriter of the



Year, Teen Entertainer of the Year and received Video of the Year in 2009 from the Georgia Country Music Association. She was also awarded Most Promising Entertainer, Songwriter of the Year, and Most Promising Video accolades from the North America Country Music Association for the 2010 year.

Underwood's further education will depend on her music career. If it takes off, she would like to relocate to Nashville, Tenn., while continuing to take classes online to receive her bachelor's degree.

"I hope to be an established country artist and a member of the Grand 'Ol Opry, but I would be happy as long as I am performing," said Underwood. "I know God will let me do what He has planned for me."