Clara Grace Coker, an English major from Ashburn at ABAC, was one of 90 students nationwide selected to receive a 2015 Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation.

“Students like Clara Grace don’t come along very often,” said Rebecca Cofer, Coordinator of the Academic Achievement Center. “She’s respectful, committed, goal-oriented, and kind. I am going to miss her but I know she is off to do great things.”

Scholars were selected based on high academic ability and achievements, persistence, leadership, and financial need. This year marks the largest number of scholarships given to undergraduate transfer students since the Cooke Foundation began the program 14 years ago. To date, there have been 735 recipients.

Clara Grace Coker (center) is congratulated by Dr. Cyndy Hall, Director of the Honors Program (right) and President David Bridges.

“Community colleges hold some of best untapped talent in the nation, but often these students need financial resources, guidance, and support in order to take the next step and earn bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral degrees,” explained Foundation Executive Director Harold O. Levy. “The Cooke Foundation has always been committed to identifying the best of the best in community colleges across the country, and this year we have an extraordinary group.”

This year 2,061 community college students applied for this scholarship, representing 540 community colleges in all 50 states, one U.S. territory, and the District of Columbia. The selection committee consisted of 18 admissions professionals, including representatives from the most selective four-year colleges and universities in the country.

“More needs to be done to encourage gifted community college students to continue their studies at prestigious four-year colleges and universities,” Levy said. “We believe our program makes a difference, but we’d also like to see more and better

Continued on page 3

Marlee Mathis, a nursing major from Nashville, has been selected as the first recipient of the Christie Ann Vickers Murphy Scholarship in nursing at ABAC Mathis is the reigning Miss ABAC.

“We are honored to have a scholarship in memory of Christie on our campus,” said Troy Spicer, Dean of the ABAC School of Nursing. “She was a special young woman and a proud graduate of our nursing program. Marlee Mathis shares Christie’s passion for the nursing profession and is an excellent choice as the first recipient of this scholarship.”

The scholarship is named in memory of the late Christie Ann Vickers Murphy. She was an Irwin County High School graduate who earned her associate degree in nursing from ABAC in 2009. She was an avid competition dancer and a devoted wife to her husband, Kyle. Murphy was a registered nurse working in telemetry and pre-op with St. Joseph’s Hospital in Bryan, Texas before she passed away in 2013.

Additional contributions to the Christie Ann Vickers Murphy Scholarship fund can be made by contacting Deidre Martin in the ABAC Office of College Advancement at dmartin@abac.edu or by calling her at (229) 391-4907.

Pictured (l-r): Dean of the School of Nursing Troy Spicer, scholarship recipient Marlee Mathis, Kyle Murphy, and Don Vickers.
Senior Mail clerk, Randy Carter retires after 30 years of service to ABAC. Colleagues wished him a wonderful retirement at a small reception recently. Pictured (l-r) Nancy Kinsley (left) wishes predecessor Randy Carter well on retirement. Kisley has recently been named senior mail clerk.
ABAC President David Bridges congratulated ABAC Alumnus Matt Bentley at a recent event in McDonald, Tennessee. Bentley is a 1986 ABAC graduate who is the Manager of Bendabout Properties. In honor of his successful career at Bendabout, the Tucker Foundation recently created the Matt Bentley Endowed Scholarship at ABAC and surprised Matt with the news on June 2.

Once only accessible to family, Bendabout Farm is a hunting and fishing retreat with exceptional accommodations. The primary objective of The Tucker Foundation is to provide financial support to non-profit organizations to produce in young people the character and skills required to live a productive and happy life, along with organizations that conserve essential elements of our natural environment forever.

Cooke Scholarship  continued from page 1
partnerships between community colleges and four-year schools, particularly selective institutions, as well as resources before, during, and after transfer."

The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship is the largest private scholarship for students transferring from two-year community colleges to four-year baccalaureate institutions in the country. The Cooke Foundation provides up to $40,000 a year for up to three years and is a gateway to the Cooke Foundation’s graduate scholarship program and its new Oxford and Cambridge scholarships.

The next application cycle for the Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship Program will run from late September to early December. Rising sophomores and recent community college graduates (within the last five years) are eligible to apply for this scholarship.

Cohran Named Stafford School of Business Coordinator
Kristoff Cohran loved his time at ABAC that when it came time to graduate in May he chose to work here. Cohran accepted a position with the Stafford School of Business as the Business Coordinator. In May he received his Bachelor of Science in Business and Economic Development. Being very active on campus, he was the President of Brother 2 Brother, a trumpet player in the Jazz Band and Brass Ensemble and a Stafford Hall resident. Cohran is thrilled to be working with the professors he came to love as a student and he is looking forward to an exciting year. Cohran can be reached at kcohran@abac.edu or 229.391.4832

Fletcher Named Conference Facilities Coordinator and Marketing Assistant
Heather Gilman Fletcher recently joined the ABAC family as the Conference Facilities Coordinator and Marketing Assistant for the Georgia Museum of Agriculture and Historic Village. Fletcher attended ABAC from 2006-07 before transferring to Valdosta State University where she received her Bachelor’s degree. She then attended the University of Georgia and received a Master of Arts from Grady College in 2013. She is excited to once again be a part of the ABAC family. Fletcher can be contacted at hfletcher@abac.edu or 229.391.5204. Stop by and say hello or call for any facility rentals.

Smith Named Office of College Advancement Coordinator
Josie Smith joined the ABAC family as the Advancement Coordinator for the Office of College Advancement. She attended ABAC from 2009-10 and went on to graduate from Georgia College and State University in 2013 with a Bachelor of Science in Health Education and a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies. Smith also directs The Watermelon Crawl 5k which funds the Jerry Moore Memorial ABAC Scholarship. She is excited to be a part of the team at ABAC. Smith can be reached at jsmith@abac.edu or 229.391.4900.
Independence Day Celebration

Friday
July 3, 2015
6:30PM - 9:00PM

Enjoy Good Food, a Spectacular Fireworks Show and a Celebration of our Veterans in a Family-Oriented Environment!

Featuring
The Plath Family Band

For more information, call (229) 391-5205 or visit our website at www.abac.edu/museum
The Upward Bound Program at ABAC announces the sponsorship of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Summer Food Service Program. This year’s program is being administered by the Office of Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.

The Summer Food Service Program is designed to take the place of the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program during the summer. The meals will be served at the Donaldson Dining Hall on the campus of ABAC.

Meals will be available at no charge to eligible children and will be provided without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap, or national origin. Children who are members of food stamp households or AFDC assistance units are automatically eligible for benefits at eligible program sites. To be eligible to receive free meals at a residential camp, children must meet the income guidelines for reduced price meals in the National School Lunch Program.

Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any USDA-related activity should write or call immediately to: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-6382, (800) 795-3272, or (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

For more information, contact Upward Bound Program Associate Director James Lewis at (229) 391-5144.

Register Now for June 26 ‘Bottles and Brushes’ Art Class

The Georgia Museum of Agriculture will host the “Bottles and Brushes” art class from 6 - 8 p.m. on June 26. Participants will paint “Summer Night” by Brenda Rose, a local artist. Registration for the class is on a first come, first served basis upon payment of the fee. Space is limited so early registration is important. To register, contact Polly Huff at phuff@abac.edu. The class fee, which includes supplies and instruction, is $25 per person or $40 for couples.

Pre-register Players for ABAC Tennis Camp July 20-23

Middle and high school tennis players who want to improve their games should pre-register for the summer tennis camp on July 20-23 at ABAC. The camp runs from 9 a.m.–4 p.m. each day at a total cost of $199 per camper. The cost includes lunch each day and a t-shirt.

Directed by ABAC Tennis Coach Dale White, the camp will focus on technical, tactical and mental components of tennis to help players in competitive play. Former ABAC tennis players will serve as instructors.

A waiver form must be received prior to the camp or completed on the first morning of the camp. All checks should be made payable to ABAC Foundation/Tennis Camp. To pre-register for this camp, call (229) 391-4937 or visit abac.edu/athletics/tennis-camp.

Interested Students can Attend Nursing Information Sessions June 16 or July 16

Two information sessions on nursing degrees at ABAC will be held in the Health Sciences building on June 16 and July 16 from 8 - 9 a.m. and again at 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. New students, transfer students and practicing nurses, respiratory therapists and paramedics are encouraged to attend one of these sessions. For more information, call 229.391.5020.

ABAC Employees Participate in Georgia Academy for Economic Development

Stafford School of Business Instructor, Franzelle Pertilla (first row second from right) and Museum Director, Garrett Boone (first row left) took part in the Region 11 class of the Georgia Academy for Economic Development. Georgia Academy’s mission is to assist Georgia leaders in their economic development efforts by providing an understanding of the critical processes, strategies and components involved in improving local and regional economies and achieving economic success.

ABAC Birthdays

12 Earl Denham
12 Brian Ray
18 David Bridges
19 John Shugart
20 Johnny Evans
21 Amy Warren