



FOCUS

ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

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New State Budget Includes \$4.75 Million for Front Campus Project

Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue cast a bright light on the future of the three oldest buildings at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College on June 8 when he signed the FY2011 state budget, which contains \$4.75 million toward the rehabilitation of the ABAC front campus.

"The Governor's signature means that we can continue the renovation work on the three original buildings and the historic front of campus," ABAC President David Bridges said. "There are a lot of people who helped us secure this funding but a special thanks must go to the Governor, Senator John Crosby, and Representatives Austin Scott, Jay Roberts, and Penny Houston."

ABAC received an allocation of \$6 million in the FY 2009 budget to begin work on the mammoth project, which will completely restore Tift Hall, Her-



Architectural rendering of the Tift Hall interior.

ring Hall, and Lewis Hall, the three buildings on the campus when it opened as the Second District A&M School on Feb. 20, 1908. Tift Hall was the classroom and

administration building, and Herring Hall and Lewis Hall were dormitories. ABAC College Advancement Officer Melvin Merrill said much work has already been done on the buildings including abatement and selective interior demolition. Infrastructure upgrades featuring new electrical, heating, air conditioning, water, sewer, and data lines are now in the process of being completed to all three buildings.

"Just this week we set our first new window in Tift Hall," Merrill said. "It looks like a 1908 window but it has all the energy efficient components to bring it into the modern day."

Merrill said the original \$6 million

allocation will finish Tift Hall as well as the preliminary work and infrastructure upgrades to all three buildings. He said the new \$4.75 million allocation will go a long way toward the completion of Herring, Lewis and the front lawn landscape and hardscape (driveway, sidewalk and parking areas).

"We want to get as much usable facility as we can out of this funding," Merrill said. "Our first goal is to finish Tift Hall, and then we'll work on the exterior of Herring and Lewis."

The renovated Tift Hall will include a welcome center, history museum, a large reception area, the public relations office, and the president's office. The lawn in front of Tift Hall will return to the original open space of 1908.

Herring Hall will be devoted to enrollment services and administrative offices. Tentative plans for Lewis Hall include space for the college's arts programs including the Arts Connection, gallery space, and possibly the ABAC Honors Program.

Greenline Architecture and J.T. Turner Construction, both from Savannah, are handling the design and construction work on the project.

Jordan Cofer To Lecture On Flannery O'Connor On June 28

Dr. Jordan Cofer, assistant professor of English at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, will be the featured speaker for the faculty colloquium on Georgia author Flannery O'Connor on June 28 from 4 – 5 p.m. in the Carlton Center, Room 202. This event is open to the public at no charge.

Cofer, an award-winning O'Connor Fellow, will discuss "Flannery O'Connor and the Gospel of Irony", which focuses on O'Connor's use of the Bible as source material for her stories. A question and answer session will follow the discussion.

"I will be talking about how her stories take Biblical examples and incorporate them into the South by the use of irony or twisting of the examples," said Cofer.

Cofer's "Flannery's Bible" won the Outstanding Dissertation Award in 2009 at Texas Tech University. He also won the Sarah Gordon Award for Best Essay by a Graduate Student for the 2007 – 2008 academic year. The essay was then published in the "Flannery O'Connor Review".

Cofer received his bachelor's degree in English from Southwest Baptist

University in 2003. He then earned his master's degree in English from Virginia Tech in 2006 and his Ph.D. in English from Texas Tech in 2009. He also did additional studies at Harvard University.



Daugharty Chosen as Writer-In-Residence at ABAC

Pulitzer Prize-nominated author Janice Daugharty will join Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College as the Writer-in-Residence for the campus on July 1.

"I think this is a great accomplishment for ABAC to secure the services of an author of this magnitude," ABAC President David Bridges said. "Janice knows the people of south Georgia and will relate well to our students."

Daugharty is a familiar face to ABAC since she has lectured on several occasions and was the speaker at the Tom M. Cordell Lecture Series in 1996 for her novel, "Pawpaw Patch."

Dr. Niles Reddick, Vice President of Academic Affairs at ABAC, is also excited about the addition of Daugharty to the campus.

"I first met Janice in 1994 when I interviewed her for my dissertation work at Florida State University," said Reddick. "She has been extremely helpful to me in my own writing career. She is a prolific author who is already being

noted as one of the great Southern writers."

As a part time Writer-in-Residence at ABAC, Daugharty will be active in campus events, including Celebrate ABAC, the college's Homecoming; and George Scott Day, the annual celebration of the arts. She will also serve as a consultant and participant in conferences, guest lecture in ABAC classes through the School of Liberal Arts, and do public readings and book signings in conjunction with the Department of Literature and Language, as well as with student literary organizations at the college.

"I'm excited about representing ABAC as its first Writer-in-Residence, but even more excited about being part of a team with such innovative ideas, especially ABAC's one-of-a-kind Rural Studies Program," said Daugharty. "I'm looking forward to interacting with students, particularly those interested in a



career in writing." She also hopes to inspire students to stay within their communities after their education is complete.

"I'm interested in helping to establish a spirit of pride in our rural communities," said Daugharty. "I grew up in an era of thinking 'if it ain't New York, it's nothing'. As I've gotten older I've become enamored with the idea of God placing most of us

where we should stay and give back what we've been given. Some seem to feel that the rural South is just dirt that holds the larger, more sophisticated world together. I've written hundreds of stories, and maybe fifty novels, set in rural South Georgia, so I know my place inside and out. And I love it!"

Daugharty has established a nationwide following as a storyteller of life and people in South Georgia and is one of the state's most admired and creative present-day authors. "Pawpaw Patch" and "Earl in the Yellow Shirt", her 1997 novel, were both listed in "Best Books of the Nineties." She was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in Fiction in 1997 for "Earl in the Yellow Shirt." The film rights to "Dark of the Moon", her 1994 novel, were purchased by the Hallmark Corp., in 1994 and were optioned by Rose Film Productions in 2005.

Jackson Named ABAC Comptroller

Deidra Jackson has been named as the Comptroller in the Business Office at ABAC, effective June 7. Because of the complicated nature of the next scheduled audit, Jackson will assist acting comptroller Shirley Criscillis as the entire staff prepares for this event.



Jackson previously worked with the Georgia Department of Audits in the Educational Division for over five years in Douglas.

She attended ABAC before transferring to Auburn University, where she received her bachelor's degree in accounting. The Tifton native is currently taking Valdosta State classes with the goal of attaining an MBA.

"I'm glad to be back in Tifton . . . my hometown," said Jackson. "I'm looking forward to all of the opportunities ABAC has to offer me, and I'm anxious to meet all the faculty and staff."

Jackson loves the outdoors, especially when it is water-related.

"I love the beach, and I love to go kayaking," said Jackson. "But right now, school is my only hobby."

She and her husband, Rollins, have been married for three years. He is the vice president of Tifton Machine Works and a reserve deputy with the Tifton Sheriff's Office.

Natural Resources Camp At ABAC This Week

ABAC will host 160 high school students this week for the Natural Resources Conservation Workshop. In its 49th year, the Workshop has been housed at ABAC almost every summer. Vonda Fenn, Kip Hall, Dr. Tim Marshall, and many others on campus are assisting in the coordination of the camp.

ABAC Officer Honored at Optimist Club Event

Dawn Tillman of the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College Police Department was recently honored at the Optimist Club of Tifton's annual Respect for Law Enforcement Banquet. The banquet acknowledges officers from each law enforcement department in the area.



Tillman was presented with an award for her service to the campus of ABAC. The award was presented by ABAC Police Chief Bryan Golden. Tillman has been a member of the ABAC Police force since Sept. 25, 2007.

ABAC Birthdays

- 15 James May
- 16 Dustin Bass
- 16 Cynthia Thompson
- 17 Van McGriff
- 17 Kim Hicks
- 18 David Bridges
- 20 Vicki Martin
- 21 Charles Harvey
- 21 Cassandra Thomas
- 21 Amy Warren

ABAC Family

Bonnie Asselin presented a paper titled "Coaxing, Needling, and Scaring: Literary Tactics of the Late 19th and Early 20th Century Bird Conservation Movement," at a conference at SUNY Oneonta in NY on June 7.

Mike Chason was the guest speaker for the Tifton Sertoma Club on Thursday and for the Tifton Kiwanis Club on Friday. He gave an update on ABAC.