



FOCUS

ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

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Highest ABAC Freshman Academic Average Ever

The 2010 freshman class has the highest grade point average of any freshman class in the history of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College.

ABAC President David Bridges said the 1,341 freshmen who began classes at ABAC on Aug. 16 had a cumulative grade point average of 2.97 on a 4.0 academic scale when they enrolled at ABAC. That compares to a 2.84 grade point average of entering freshmen in 2009.

"To my knowledge, this is the highest," Bridges said. "Academic preparation for college is more important than ever before, and, according to these figures, this is the best prepared class we have ever had."

Since he became president of ABAC on July 1, 2006, Bridges has stressed the importance of enrolling well prepared students committed to receiving a quality education.

"I think we're headed in the right direction," Bridges, a 1978 ABAC graduate, said. "This class has set the standard. This is something we can build on. In fact, we're making plans right now that might put the 2011 class a step ahead of this one. We'll see."

The total enrollment figure has not been determined for the fall term but Bridges believes it will settle out close to the 3,326 students who enrolled in the 2009 fall semester.

One factor which has boosted the overall GPA of the incoming students is the fact there are more high school stu-

dents enrolled in the joint enrollment program where high school students take college classes from ABAC. ABAC has 52 ACCEL students this year as compared to 34 last year.

"These are very bright students who are motivated to take college classes during their final days of high school,"

Bridges said. "We are happy to have them." These students are taking core curriculum classes which could lead to enrollment in the bachelor's degree programs at ABAC. Enrollment in these programs has quadrupled since ABAC began offering the four-year degrees on Jan. 7, 2008.

As a state college of the University System of Georgia, ABAC offers bachelor's degrees in Rural Studies, Diversified Agriculture, and Turfgrass and Golf Course Management. Through Georgia Southwestern, bachelor's degrees are also offered in their entirety on the ABAC campus in Early Childhood Education, Accounting, and Management.

"Our goal is to offer additional baccalaureate programs in the future," Bridges said. "As 'Georgia's State College of Choice,' we want to create a challenging academic environment so that prepared and committed students choose ABAC as a place to begin their college experience."

Applications are now being accepted for the ABAC spring term. The application deadline is Dec. 1. Spring semester classes begin Jan. 10, 2011.



Hispanic Heritage Celebration Thursday

Constitution Day will be observed at The annual Hispanic Heritage Celebration will take place at ABAC on Thursday from 12:30-2:30 p.m. at the ABAC Meadows.

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Estela R. Lopez, Senior Program Advisor at "Excelencia in Education." She has held senior administrative roles at the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Northeastern Illinois State University, and the Connecticut State University System as well as positions with leading national higher education associations. She leads the new "Growing What Works" initiative supported by the Wal-Mart Foundation at "Excelencia."

Lopez is the recipient of honors that include the Illinois Latino Council in Higher Education Distinguished Service Award and the 2006 Latina Citizen of the Year, as chosen by the Connecticut General Assembly's Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission.

Tifton Mayor Jamie Cater will present a proclamation at the event. Performances will take place by Cultura Latina and Rhythm De Ja Vue. The presentation of the flags will be conducted by Mike Chason, Director of Public Relations. Traditional Hispanic dishes will be available for tasting. The entire campus and community is invited to attend the celebration.

Hispanic Heritage Month begins on Sept. 15, the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico declared its independence on Sept. 16 and Chile on Sept. 18. The national celebration ends on Oct. 12 with the observation of the date that Christopher Columbus discovered America.



Flu Shots Available Now in Health Center

Flu shots are available now in limited quantities in the Student Health Center. The cost is \$15. Vaccines are available from 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. on Friday while supplies last. Students, faculty, staff, retirees, and families of faculty and staff 18 or older are eligible.

ABAC Ag Classic Golf Tournament October 4

The 10th Annual Ag Classic Golf Tournament at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College will be held on Oct. 4 at ABAC's Forest Lakes Golf Club. There will be an 8 a.m. morning flight and a 1 p.m. afternoon flight with a complimentary lunch served between the flights.

The event is hosted by the ABAC Ag Alumni Council and the School of Agriculture and Natural Resources to provide scholarships for students in that area of study.

Sponsorship levels range from \$125 to \$5,000, which include a designated

number of golfer fees per sponsorship. A Century Level sponsorship is available at \$100 which does not include player fees. The tournament is open to the first 100 golfers who register.

The event is a four-man scramble. The \$125 fee per golfer includes lunch, cart, greens fees, and a premium golf shirt embroidered with the tournament logo.

Prizes will be awarded to the first, second, and third place teams in each flight. Prizes will also be awarded for

the longest drive, hole-in-one, and closest shot to the pin on designated holes.

A silent auction will take place throughout the day. Items available for bid include outings to prestigious courses throughout the state.

For more information, interested persons can contact tournament coordinator Nate Carney at (229) 391-4908, via e-mail at ncarney@abac.edu or by visiting the website at www.abac.edu/alumni/agclassic.

ABAC Instructor, Student Spend Summer Term in Greece

An instructor and a student at ABAC gained a whole new perspective on international education this summer when they spent the entire summer term in Greece.

Dustin Bass, Instructor of Agribusiness at ABAC, and Jonathan Cassaday, a Rural Studies major from Loganville, spent seven weeks at Perrotis College in Thessaloniki, Greece. Bass taught a marketing management class while participating in a cultural studies class the college offered. Cassaday took two classes, Greek Culture and Agricultural Marketing.

"In the cultural studies class, we spent a lot of time learning how to cook traditional food and learning Greek dances," said Bass. "We also took a lot of trips to various places in Greece."

From a student's point of view, Cassaday saw Perrotis College as a European ABAC.

"The college was very similar to ABAC in principle and size," said Cassaday. "The mission of Perrotis meshes well with ABAC's own mission."

Cassaday mounted a trip one weekend to Athens with two of his classmates. The trio arranged the flight, stayed in a hostel and spent the weekend touring the city.

"The scenery Greece offers is amazing," said Cassaday. "There are points in the landscape where the mountains meet the ocean."

Bass saw the ancient city of Dion at the town of Mt. Olympus before climbing the fabled peak. He also visited the burial sites of Alexander the Great's father and son in Vergina, traveled to the monasteries on top of monoliths in Meteora, and saw the wineries in Chalkidiki.



Jonathan Cassaday (left) and Dustin Bass spent their summer at Perrotis College in Thessaloniki, Greece. They marveled at the history of the country and its customs. They posed beside an olive tree which is found growing all over the countryside in Greece.

Bass said Greece had a laid back and relaxed culture, vastly different from that of the United States. Where work is the main focus in the U.S., Greece takes a more leisurely approach to life.

"It is a very siesta-style of culture," said Bass. "They have established coffee breaks and live life to the fullest where as in America it is all about success. Living life is the priority in Greece."

The family dynamic is also quite different compared to the American way.

"Family is even more prevalent in the Greek culture than it is in the States," said Bass. "It is nothing to live in the family home well into your twenties or until you get married."

He found that the best aspect about the trip was helping to break the stereotypes the Greek culture has of America.

"I really got to know some of the Greek people very well, and we talked openly about our cultures," said Bass. "They had a lot of stereotypes in regards to us. For example, they thought everyone was overweight due to all the

fast food restaurants in the U.S., and they were convinced that America is only concerned with itself, not the world view."

Bass also explained to them that while Greece is very culturally similar, America is a melting pot with people of different background, religions, values and morals.

The Greek people are not immune to just how historic their country is.

"They take so much pride in their heritage, but it is always just assumed," said Bass. "There is no flag-waving or patriotism, it is just inherent."

And knowing how old the civilization of Greece is can also be a nuisance to the people of Greece.

"Every time someone wants to build a new structure, the historical society has to be involved," said Bass. "They always end up finding an artifact or something that hinders the progress of the country."

Before teaching in Greece, Bass thought he had some concept of the history of the country, but his perspective changed after this experience.

"You really can't imagine just how ancient Greece is until you have been there," Bass said.

Cassaday added, "It's one thing to learn about these places in a classroom setting, but it is another thing entirely to see it. The vast array of educational opportunities and social life a trip like this provides is fun. But just experiencing a different culture that has such roots was the best benefit."

Cassaday will graduate this spring with the first group of Rural Studies students who are receiving their bachelor's degrees. His concentration is in arts and culture, and he hopes to attend a college that has a graduate program focusing on public history or museum studies.



The ABAC Fillies soccer team will play Darton at home Wednesday at 4 p.m.

ABAC Birthdays

- 20 Susan Roe
- 20 Billy Kimbrough
- 24 Cathy Rogers

Alumni Award Winner

To Speak On Wednesday

Rodney McDonald, ABAC Class of 1985 and ABAC Alumni Association recipient of the 2010 Outstanding Business Leader award, will speak Wednesday at 2 p.m. in Bowen 213. McDonald is a former Peace Corps volunteer and now heads Emergency Response Services for Latin America (ERSLA), based in Nicaragua. You are invited to attend his discussion on international opportunities and services.

Alumni Award

Nominations Due Dec. 1

Nominations are now being accepted for awards to be presented by the ABAC Alumni Association at the Celebrate ABAC alumni weekend on March 4 - 5, 2011 at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. Nominations are due by Dec. 1, 2010.

Awards are based on professional achievement, community service, and service to the college. Anyone who has attended ABAC for one full year and has 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours of credit is eligible for nomination.

Nomination forms may be obtained by logging onto www.abac.edu/alumni and clicking on the "Alumni Awards" link. Completed nominations may be mailed to the ABAC Alumni Office, ABAC 13, 2802 Moore Highway, Tifton, GA 31793-2601, or returned as an e-mail attachment to Vonda Fenn at vfenn@abac.edu no later than Dec. 1.

Nominations should provide specific details about the person being nominated. Nominations may be made by alumni, friends, family members, or ABAC faculty and staff.

For more information about the nomination process, contact Fenn at (229) 391-5070, or via e-mail at vfenn@abac.edu.



ABAC Celebrates Constitution Day

Hans Schmeisser, Instructor of Political Science and History, directs activities during a Constitution Day ceremony at ABAC on Thursday. The day included a reading of the Declaration of Independence by Associate Professor of Humanities John Galyean, a reading of the Constitution by ABAC students, speeches by Rusty Simpson and John Tibbetts, and a formal retirement of an American flag by Boy Scouts Troop 321 and the local chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. ABAC is named for Abraham Baldwin, a Georgia signer of the Constitution. The U.S. Constitution is the world's oldest working Constitution. It was completed and signed by a majority of the delegates attending the Constitutional Convention on Sept. 17, 1787.

Dress For Success Fashion Fair Sept. 28 at Noon

The Student Development Center will host a Dress for Success: Cracking the Interview Dress Code Fashion Fair on Sept. 28 from noon - 1p.m. in Bowen 100. This is an excellent opportunity for students to gain more information about appropriate interview attire that will create a positive first impression to place them ahead of the competition. WALB's Yolanda Amadeo will be featured as one of the Dress Code models.

Faculty and staff are also invited to attend this informative and fun event! Please encourage your students to attend! Come hungry and bring a friend for free food and door prizes.



Museum of Agriculture Hosts BBQ Competition

Barbecue teams from around the southeast gathered at the Museum this weekend, aiming to represent Tifton in the Memphis BBQ cook off in May. Bubba Grills of Haddock won the top prize of Grand Champion. The event also featured activities for the whole family, including inflatables, food, arts and crafts, and local entertainment.