Johnson Named New Dean of Stafford School of Business

Helping students “be all they can be and providing them with real world business experience” will be the mantra for the new dean of the Stafford School of Business at ABAC.

Perry Johnson, a former chief investment officer and chief executive officer of BME Investment Partners in Atlanta, has been selected for the position to lead the Stafford School of Business.

“I’ve always wanted to come home and help young people discover their true gifts and talents,” Johnson said. “I was looking for a place where I could give back to the next generation.”

Johnson and his wife, Lucinda, are both from Pearson. He is a 1975 graduate of Atkinson County High School who came to ABAC with a definite purpose in mind.

“When I came to ABAC, I was basically illiterate,” Johnson said. “I had a 1.14 GPA at the end of my junior year in high school. My days as a student here were a tremendous blessing to me. Dr. Harold Loyd and the professors at ABAC put me on a life-long path of learning. A little bit of encouragement can have a meaningful impact on students.”

ABAC President David Bridges believes Johnson is a good fit for the position.

“He’s an alumnus, and he understands the Stafford School of Business and its mission,” Bridges said. “I believe he has the dedication and commitment to move the school forward. He also has a clear understanding of the skills necessary for our graduates to succeed when they enter the real world of business.”

After receiving his business degree from ABAC, Johnson completed his bachelor’s degree...

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Jones to Speak at ABAC Commencement Thursday

Keri Jones, named the ABAC Alumni Association’s 2015 Outstanding Business Leader, will be the featured speaker at the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College fall commencement ceremony on Thursday at 10 a.m. in Gressette Gym.

Now a Certified Public Accountant at Allen, Pritchett, and Bassett LLP in Tifton, Jones attended ABAC from 1997-99, earning her associate degree in business. She received her bachelor of business administration degree in marketing from Valdosta State University and her bachelor of business administration degree in accounting from Georgia Southwestern. She is a member of the ABAC Alumni Association and the ABAC Business Education Advisory Committee.

After working as the marketing director for Public Health Home Health from 2002-2007, Jones joined the Allen, Pritchett and Bassett accounting firm. She received the J. Lamar Branch Service Award from the Tifton-Tift County Chamber of Commerce in 2012; was designated as one of “40 under 40” from Georgia Trend magazine in 2014; and was part of the “10 under 40” recognized by Tifton Scene Magazine in 2014.

Jones has served on the board of directors for the Tifton Rotary Club, the Tift County Foundation for Educational Excellence, the Tifton-Tift County Chamber of Commerce, Ruth’s Cottage/Patticake House, Tiftarea Young Professionals, Tiftarea Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Tift County Commission on Children and Youth, the Tifton-Tift County Salvation Army, and the Tiftarea Foundation for Women’s Health.

A 2009 graduate of the Tifton-Tift County Chamber of Commerce Emerging Leaders Program, Jones is a 2012 graduate of the Georgia Academy for Economic Leadership Development and a 2013 graduate of Leadership Georgia.

A total of 164 students are scheduled to receive their diplomas at the fall commencement ceremony.
Richardson Speaker for ABAC Nursing Ceremony Thursday

William T. Richardson, Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and President and Chief Executive Officer of Tift Regional Health System (TRHS), will be the keynote speaker for the pinning ceremony on Thursday at 4 p.m. in Howard Auditorium for graduates of the School of Nursing and Health Sciences at ABAC.

Since 1988, Richardson has served as president and CEO of TRHS, which includes Tift Regional Medical Center (TRMC), a 181-bed regional referral hospital located in Tifton. TRHS also comprises the TRMC West Campus in Tifton, Cook Medical Center in Adel and Tift Regional Physician Group with clinic locations throughout South Central Georgia. TRHS has been the most important clinical partner of ABAC’s nursing program since its inception in 1966.

During Richardson’s tenure, he has been at the helm of the hospital system’s largest expansion period. Major services developed under his leadership, including medical oncology and radiation therapy; cardiovascular care; expanded surgical specialties; a dialysis center; a women’s center; and a rural outreach clinic. Over the past 15 years, TRMC has completed multi-million dollar construction projects, including a new hospital tower and lobby; a surgery center; a heart and vascular center, a new laboratory and more. The TRMC Anita Stewart Oncology Center is currently undergoing an expansion, and a new musculoskeletal center is in the planning stage.

In 1998, Richardson worked with the Tift County Board of Commissioners to develop the Tift Community Health Center clinic, which opened in 1999. It is designed to help economically-disadvantaged patients manage chronic diseases. He also teamed up with the Tift County Development Authority to build a new occupational health facility, providing an effective recruitment and retention tool for area business and industry.

Richardson is past chairman of the Georgia Hospital Association (GHA) and the Georgia Alliance of Community Hospitals (GACH). In 2005, GACH named him “CEO of the Year” for his accomplishments at TRMC. He serves on the Board of Trustees of the GHA as a Regional Policy Board Delegate to the American Hospital Association (AHA). He is also the co-founder and chairman of Stratus Healthcare, a collaboration of Georgia hospitals, physicians and other healthcare entities aligned to form a clinically-integrated network of care.

Prior to serving as TRHS’s president and CEO, Richardson was the administrator of Bulloch Memorial Hospital in Statesboro from 1985-1988. He was the associate administrator of West Georgia Medical Center in LaGrange from 1977-1985.

Richardson holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of South Alabama in Mobile, Ala. He received a Master of Science in Hospital and Health Administration from the University of Alabama and completed residency training in hospital and health care administration at The Baptist Medical Centers in Birmingham, Ala.

Approximately 42 ABAC nursing students are expected to graduate during fall commencement.

ABAC Supports Tifton Parade

Different groups from all over campus participated in the 17th Annual Hometown Holidays Christmas Parade on Saturday. The ABAC Grounds Department dazzled the crowd with their ornate float, the Georgia Museum of Agriculture took people back in time with their Rolling Store, Ms. ABAC Madison Lynn and Thunder waved to all the children and the Bass Fishing Team wowed in their shiny bass boat. Great job to all that participated!
Johnson continued from page 1

from the University of Georgia. He went to work with Hercules, Inc., in Savannah as a corporate controller in the paper chemicals division.

Johnson then entered the financial planning field with stops at Prudential Bache Securities in Savannah, Investment Performance Services in Savannah, Brinson Partners in Chicago, Watson Wyatt in Atlanta, Invesco in Atlanta, and then at BME Investment Partners. Perry is also a CPA and a Chartered Financial Analyst.

“I have worked in every phase of business from public accounting to investment consulting,” Johnson said. “The investment business allowed me to teach my clients how to reach financial goals and objectives. Then I reached the point where I felt like the investment business was robbing me of my true passion; to help others find their true identity and become all they can be.”

Johnson said his two “hot buttons” are leadership and providing people with economic and financial market perspectives. He wants to take the relatively new ABAC bachelor’s degree in business and economic development to greater heights.

“I look forward to building on what’s already here,” Johnson said. “Reaching and teaching young people is my passion. The classroom must always be an enthusiastic, encouraging environment. Students should be comfortable when they share their thoughts and ideas.

“A proper educational environment is one that encourages students to learn on their own, as well as to effectively collaborate and communicate with others. These are skills that are necessary for them to continue to learn, grow, and solve problems in their educational and professional careers.”

Johnson replaces Dill and Susan Driscoll, who are returning to private business. Dill Driscoll will continue to mentor ABAC students on a part time basis.

RSVP for the ABAC Christmas and Holiday Luncheon Dec. 16

You are cordially invited to the ABAC Christmas and Holiday Luncheon on December 16, at 12 p.m. in the Nickelodeon. Please disregard the previous email about assigned categories for different departments and bring whatever your specialty is. The President’s Office is providing the meat (Boston butt, ham, and turkey). The Office of College Advancement is providing paper products: plates, napkins, cups, and cutlery. Be sure to RSVP at the link below and let us know what you will bring and if you will be able to help with set-up before or clean-up after. https://iweb.abac.edu/fs/luncheon/Holiday/RSVP.cfm If you have any questions, contact Sue Mastrario at smastrario@abac.edu.

Come Celebrate with the

Stafford School of Business

Wednesday, 10-11 a.m.
Lewis Hall

Wishing...

Happy Trails to Earl Denham

Continued relationship with Dill Driscoll

Warm Welcome to Dean Perry Johnson

ABAC Alumni Awards Nominations Due on December 15

The deadline is Dec. 15 for alumni awards nominations for the ABAC Alumni Association. The awards will be presented during the Homecoming awards dinner in April, 2016. Nominations should provide specific details about the person being nominated. Nominations can be from alumni, friends, family members, ABAC faculty and staff, or the general public. Nominees must have attended ABAC but graduating from the college is not a mandate for the nomination. Anyone who attended ABAC and has obtained educational credit is eligible for nomination. Once nominated, the application is valid for two years. Awards are based on professional achievement, community service, and service to the college. Visit the ABAC website at www.abac.edu to complete the nomination form. ABAC personnel will then reach out to those nominated to get any additional information needed for consideration.

ABAC Birthdays

7 Jordan Cofer 7 Nancy Kinsley
7 Jess Usher 9 James McCrimmon
10 Andrea Caicedo Pena 12 Jason Scott