



# FOCUS

## ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

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### Commerce Student Wins Top Award at ABAC Commencement

Sara C. Ervin, a Rural Studies major from Commerce, received the prestigious George P. Donaldson award at the ABAC fall commencement ceremony on Friday.

Ervin completed all requirements for her Associate of Science degree in Agriculture, while she continues her education for an ABAC bachelor's degree in Rural Studies.

A total of 136 graduates participated in the ceremony. Fourteen students received Bachelor of Applied Science degrees in Diversified Agriculture and Turfgrass and Golf Course Management, the most in the history of the college.

Commencement speaker Javier Gonzalez told the graduates that "on your career journeys you may find it necessary to change directions several times. Like any journey, you will need to carefully create a good map to help you chart the course that will carry you effectively and efficiently toward your defined goal," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez, Director of the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) and the High School Equivalency (HEP) program at ABAC, said he grew up in a family of nine children. His parents were migrant farm workers, and he had to drop out of high school to help his family financially. He later received his GED en route to a bachelor's degree and a master's degree.

"My journey from an undereducated farm worker to a commencement speaker has not been an easy one," Gonzalez said. "I challenge you to use your diploma as a springboard to success. You must be prepared to meet the



Javier Gonzalez was the guest speaker at the ABAC fall commencement ceremony on Friday. A total of 136 graduates participated.

challenges and remove the obstacles that could stand in your way." Ervin, President Pro Tempore and a senator in the Student Government Association, was selected for the Donaldson Award based on a combination of academics and extra-curricular activities. The award included a plaque and a check for \$500 from the ABAC Alumni Association. Donaldson served as

president of ABAC from 1947-61.

The daughter of James and Sandra Ervin of Commerce, Ervin was the co-founder and President of the Rural Studies Club. She is a past state FFA Vice-President and served as the President of the ABAC collegiate FFA chapter in 2008. She will serve as the first ABAC/Staplcotn intern on Capitol Hill with United States Senator Saxby Chambliss during the spring semester.

### Chancellor Says ABAC Has Developed 'Statewide Brand'

University System of Georgia Chancellor Erroll B. Davis, Jr., says ABAC has a "statewide brand" that sets it apart from other state colleges in the System.

"Unlike most of the other access sector colleges in the System, ABAC has a unique statewide brand," Davis, who visited the ABAC campus on Dec. 7, said. "ABAC graduates have gone out and done well in a variety of different fields."

ABAC attracts over 3,300 students from 152 of Georgia's 159 counties, 17 other

states, and 11 countries. Over 1,100 students live on campus. Davis visited with ABAC student leaders as well as faculty members, administrators, and community leaders during his day-long visit.



ABAC President David Bridges (right) gave Chancellor Erroll B. Davis, Jr., a driving tour of the campus during his visit.

"I try to get out of Atlanta at least three times a month for the specific purpose of visiting the campuses in the System," Davis said.

Davis said he expects the number of students in the System to continue to climb.

"In spite of diminishing resources, we have had explosive growth," Davis said.

"The University System is an investment for this state. Educated people provide value to the State of Georgia. Through our colleges and universities, we are providing for the future of this state."

Davis predicts an additional 100,000 students in the System by 2020. He hopes many of them enter the System through institutions such as ABAC.

"We want students to go to the access sector of the System," Davis said. "That's why we have to make an institution such as ABAC as attractive as possible to students."

Davis said the System can educate a student for approximately one-third of the cost at an access institution in comparison to the University of Georgia.

"The access sector is the fastest growing sector as far as the number of credit hours," Davis said.

## Serviceman/Student Honors Faculty Member



Keith Perry presents Dr. Doug Waid with a flag that was flown over Camp Mike Span in Afghanistan.

Brock Ward, a sergeant in the US Army National Guard and student at ABAC, recently honored one of his instructors, Dr. Doug Waid, associate professor of forestry/wildlife in the School of Agriculture and Natural Resources, with a flag that was flown over Camp Mike Span in Afghanistan. Ward is currently deployed there.

The flag was presented to Waid by Keith Perry, assistant professor of communication in the School of Liberal Arts, during the annual Veterans Day event held on the ABAC campus. Ward sent the flag along with a letter that was read at the ceremony.

"I was overwhelmed by the honor – especially coming from Brock," said Waid. "Quite honestly, he is the one who deserved the recognition. It was definitely a surprise, but anyone who is a veteran deserves the same recognition I received."

"Brock felt that Doug was due thanks for his service in Guam, as well as for the continual help he gives to those in the service," said Perry. "He also wanted to thank Doug for helping him adjust to being home again."

"Brock is the kind of individual who we want representing ABAC and will be just as great of a representative in his civilian life," said Waid.

Ward has also served in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Iraq during his military career. He is a resident of Adel majoring in diversified agriculture.



## Students Display Their Art

The art students at ABAC displayed their work on Thursday at the annual Fall Art Show in Bowen Hall.

## ABAC Faculty Member Receives Award From SEAFWA

Dr. William Moore, assistant professor of wildlife technology at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, was recently honored with an award for Best Wildlife Paper Presentation by the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA).

Moore presented his research dissertation for his Ph. D. on wild turkeys at the annual convention held in Corpus Christi, TX in October, 2008. All awards from the previous conference are awarded the following year. This was Moore's first time presenting for the SEAFWA.

"I had no idea that I had received the award," Moore said. "When the plaque came in the mail, I was trying to figure out what might be in the box. I was shocked and surprised to see that it was an award from SEAFWA."



Moore

The Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies is made up of federal and state agencies, along with the Wildlife Society, the international professional organization devoted to wildlife conservation and education.

"I have been more active with the Wildlife Society and have presented at the National Wildlife Society conferences in Arizona in 2007 and in California in 2009," Moore said.

The Wildlife Society is a national organization that is divided by region and is part of the SEAFWA conference.

Moore's educational background includes an Associate of Science degree from ABAC; his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Forest Resources from the University of Georgia; and his Ph.D. in Forest Resources from Clemson University. He is also the current president of the Georgia Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

**Mark Your Calendar**  
**Stallion Day**  
**Feb. 13 at 8 a.m.**

## **ABAC Closed Dec. 24 – Jan. 4**

ABAC will close at 5 p.m. on Dec. 23 for the holidays and will reopen at 8 a.m. on Jan. 5, 2010. Dec. 24 and Jan. 4 will be taken as the fifth and sixth furlough days for ABAC faculty and staff of the 2009-10 academic year. ABAC President David Bridges said taking the furlough days at that time will allow faculty and staff extra time with their families during the holidays. It will also allow the college to save on energy consumption by delaying the return of employees until Jan. 5, 2010. Beginning on Jan. 5, 2010, ABAC will return to an 8 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. schedule on a Monday through Thursday basis and an 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. on Fridays.

## **ABAC Birthdays**

- 14 John Bailey, Jr.
- 17 Stephanie Holcombe
- 18 Bam Pirkle
- 19 Doris Roundtree
- 19 Ana Becerra
- 20 Donna Webb
- 20 Maria Aguilar

**Fee Payment Deadline  
for Spring 2010 is  
TODAY at 4:30 p.m.**

## **Nominations for Alumni Awards Due January 15**

Nominations are now being accepted for the awards to be presented by the ABAC Alumni Association at the Celebrate ABAC alumni weekend on March 6, 2010 at ABAC. Nominations are due by Jan. 15, 2010.

All 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 contacting the Office of College Advancement at (229) 391-4900 or by logging onto [www.abac.edu/alumni](http://www.abac.edu/alumni) and clicking on the "Alumni Awards" link. Completed nominations can be mailed to the ABAC Alumni Office, ABAC 13, 2802 Moore Highway, Tifton, GA 31793-2601, or returned as an e-mail attachment to [kbarber@abac.edu](mailto:kbarber@abac.edu) no later than Jan. 15.

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 ABAC Vice President for External Affairs and Advancement Keith Barber at (229) 391-4900, or e-mail him at [kbarber@abac.edu](mailto:kbarber@abac.edu).

## **ABAC Family**

Paul Willis spoke to the Fitzgerald Rotary club on Dec. 1 about the new Rural Studies degree program.

## **January 7**

Spring Advising  
& Registration  
Check-in will begin at  
8:30 a.m. in the  
Branch Student Center

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Please submit any information to Ashley at [awilliamson@abac.edu](mailto:awilliamson@abac.edu) by Thursday at noon for inclusion in the next FOCUS.

## **Job Opportunities**

- ABAC Police Officer
- Part-time Clinical Instructor, School of Nursing & Health Sciences
- Part-time Credentialed Faculty



## **ABAC Ambassadors Are Working Hard for College**

Nineteen students at ABAC are participating in one of the most prestigious organizations on campus, the ABAC Ambassadors. Collectively the group worked over 915 hours during the fall term, promoting Georgia's State College of Choice. Pictured (l-r) 1st row: Courtney Collins, Tom Lanier, Brandi Bishop, Laurel Higginbotham, Thomas Turcotte, and Elizabeth Dukes; 2nd row: Savannah Brown, Colton Farrow, Andrew Kicklighter, Katie Thigpen; 3rd row: Kim Jacobs, Cain Thurmond, Meagan Williams; 4th row: Drew Richardson, Felipe Pedraza, Jessica Kalina, Whitney Mitchell, Bernard Green, and John Grist.