



FOCUS

ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

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Two Students Win Top Award At Commencement

For the first time in the history of ABAC, two academic awards were presented to the most outstanding graduates during Thursday's fall commencement ceremony.

Retha Martin, a business major from Moultrie, received the George P. Donaldson award for associate

degree graduates, and Andrea Smith, a biology major from Fitzgerald, was named the recipient of the first ever ABAC Alumni Association Award for bachelor's degree graduates.

Each recipient was selected through an application and interview process. Both recipients received a plaque and a check for \$500 from the ABAC Alumni Association.

Martin began her ABAC career by taking classes at ABAC on the Square in Moultrie. ABAC faculty members had high words of praise for her in their recommendation letters.

"Two words that best describe Ms. Martin are conscientious and tenacious," Kathy Moreno, who teaches in the Stafford School of Business, said.

A self-described multi-tasker, Martin worked at a full-time job in Moultrie while taking time to complete her classes at the Tifton campus of ABAC. She was one of the founding members of Enactus.



Retha Martin (r) and Andrea Smith win top awards at commencement.

Between her work, commuting to class each day, and her academic course load, she maintained a grade point average of 3.47.

The daughter of Teretha Bailey and Trevino Martin, Martin was also active in her community by

volunteering with the American Heart Association, Culbertson Head Start program, Special Olympics and various food and blood drives. She also participated in the Veteran's Unmet Needs program and served as a helper at the Moultrie Chamber of Commerce.

Martin plans to continue her ABAC education by studying for her bachelor's degree in business and economic development.

Smith started taking ABAC classes when she was a senior at Fitzgerald High School through the ACCEL program. Her goal was to attain her bachelor's degree in biology. That goal was accomplished Thursday morning when she walked across the stage at Gressette Gymnasium.

Smith has worked as a dental assistant with Colony Dental Care in Fitzgerald since 2010. Between her studies and her job she also found time to be an assistant coach for the Fitzgerald Fins Swim Team and spent two

summers as a life guard at the ABAC swimming pool.

A Distinguished Honor Student with a grade point average of 3.78, Smith received numerous scholarships and has been a member of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society where she served as vice president for community service. For her exemplary on-campus service, Smith received a Pacesetter Award from ABAC's student newspaper.

Dr. Johnny Evans, Dean of the School of Science and Mathematics at ABAC, said, "Andrea paid her own way through school. Yes, she had scholarships but she was responsible for her own bills and expenses beyond her scholarships. There are few students who can carry such responsibility, pay for school and expenses without their grades suffering or without taking out many loans. Andrea has done this successfully. It speaks volumes to her work ethic."

At ABAC, Smith took the opportunity to be involved in many different activities including playing intramural soccer, serving as vice-president of the STEM Affiliates Club, traveling to Belize on an international studies program, and serving as a team captain with Stafford Hall. She also tutored in science and math through the Academic Achievement Center.

ABAC HOLIDAY HOURS

The College will close December 23 at 5:30 p.m. and reopen for normal business hours January 5 at 8 a.m.

Museum Holiday Hours

The Georgia Museum of Agriculture and Historic Village will be closed from Dec. 24, 2014 through Jan. 2, 2015 for the holidays. The Country Store will be open for holiday shoppers through Dec. 23 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Hours of operation from Jan. 3-31, 2015 will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesday-Thursday for the Museum and Gallery only and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday – Saturday for the Country Store. Admission is reduced to \$4 per person. Children four and under are free.

On Saturdays in January, the Museum, Gallery, Historic Village, and Vulcan Steam Train will be open from 10 a.m.– 3 p.m. Admission is \$8 for seniors, \$10 for adults, \$5 for children five years of age and older, and free for children four years old and under. The Museum will resume normal operating hours on Feb. 3, 2015.

Christmas Luncheon

When: Tuesday at noon

Where: The Nickelodeon

Join Staff Forum for the Annual Employee Christmas Luncheon.

ABAC will provide the meats, and employees are asked to bring a covered

dish. All ABAC faculty, staff and Sodexo employees are invited to attend. RSVP at <https://iweb.abac.edu/luncheon/Holiday/RSVP.cfm>



Final Day to Join ABAC Shared Leave Pool is Friday

The ABAC Shared Leave Pool is a great way that we can come together as employees, and provide a safety net in the event a fellow employee or immediate family member is faced with a serious medical situation.

Please remember it only takes 8 hours either sick or annual leave to join the ABAC Shared Leave Pool - your choice.

Friday is the last day to join for the new calendar year. Contact Richard Spancake at rspancake@abac.edu with questions.

You can access the membership form at the following link <http://www.abac.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/ABACSHAREDLEAVEFORM1.pdf>

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

The FOCUS will return on January 5, 2015

ABAC BIRTHDAYS

16 Larry Byrnes 20 Maria Aguilar 20 Donna Webb 23 Ray Lundy
24 Kip Hall 24 Susan Thompson 25 Gwendolyn Anderson
25 Shubha Chatterjee 27 Roy Alejandro 30 Avijit Kar
Jan. 2 Mark Richardson 2 Abul Sheikh 3 Gina Wilson