



# FOCUS

## ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

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### Rural Studies Students Present Ideas to Telfair County

Students involved in the new bachelor's degree program in Rural Studies at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College presented three plans for economic development to leadership from Telfair County on Dec. 3. The students developed plans on downtown development, tourism, and auditorium renovation as a part of their Introduction to Rural Studies class.

"Our mission in developing the Rural Studies program is to educate young people on the uniqueness, value and opportunities of the rural communities,"

community leaders with resources for successful grant writing in order to get funding for future projects.

The Taste of Telfair tourism group suggested a Telfair County Travel Guide including maps, history, amenities, and important phone numbers for each city in the county. This would allow community businesses to display for travelers to pick up. These guides could also be sent out as promotional pieces to organizations to plan trips to Telfair County. The group members suggested selling advertisements in the book to

Dr. Niles Reddick, Vice President of Academic Affairs, co-teaches the Rural Studies introductory class with Dr. Bobbie Robinson, Dean of the ABAC School of Liberal Arts. For more information about the ABAC Bachelor's degree in Rural Studies, prospective students can contact Paul Willis at (229) 391-4906 or visit [www.abac.edu/ruralstudies](http://www.abac.edu/ruralstudies).



Telfair County officials and the ABAC Rural Studies students gathered for a picture after the presentations on projects which could help the county.

ABAC President David Bridges said. "We want to see each of these projects through; hopefully through internships and future class projects. This is not the end of the partnership."

The 14 students divided into three groups and not only developed ideas for the plans, but also funding resources available for these types of projects. Each group spoke to the Telfair County leadership about its ideas, and provided binders with more information and contacts to get the projects up and running.

The downtown development group suggested conducting two surveys, one for business owners on what would bring them to a downtown area and another for community members about what they want to see in a downtown area. These surveys would give Telfair County officials some data to build a plan to work toward for the downtown McRae area. The group also provided

local businesses to cover the costs of printing the guides.

McRae has a beautiful auditorium; however it is not functional in its current state. New seats are currently being installed, but there is much more that needs to be done. The auditorium group developed ideas for its use including the obvious performance hall in addition to an art studio for displaying local artists' work. The group also provided several fundraising ideas such as movie in the park, a haunted theatre, and reverse raffles to raise money for the renovations.

"I appreciate all the work these students put into this project," said Paula Rogers, President of the Telfair Chamber of Commerce. "I look forward to seeing these projects come to fruition and the relationship between ABAC and Telfair County to develop into a long lasting partnership."

### PSBOC Open House Jan. 7 in Dining Hall

The Public Service and Business Outreach Center at ABAC will hold an Open House on Jan. 7 from 3:30 – 5:30 p.m. in the Donaldson Dining Hall.

The open house will feature a preview of this spring's 2010 programs, and instructors will be on hand to meet and answer questions about classes. Participants will have the chance to win door prizes, and light refreshments will be served.

Those interested in PSBOC classes can register at the open house and receive a 10 percent discount.

For more information, contact the PSBOC office at (229) 391-5070.

### ABAC Will Be Closed Dec. 24 Through Jan. 4

ABAC will close at 5 p.m. on Wednesday for the holidays and will reopen at 8 a.m. on Jan. 5, 2010. Thursday 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 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. on Fridays.

# Memorable Events For ABAC In 2009 Calendar Year

In the calendar year 2009, ABAC sent students and faculty to China, Brazil and all points in between. ABAC transitioned its academic divisions into schools of study in the first year of its second century of service. Those stories were just the tip of the iceberg as ABAC embraced its status as a bachelor's degree granting institution.

Here are some of the highlights of 2009 at ABAC:

- President David Bridges announced that the ABAC academic curriculum will be divided into six schools of study and that Deans would be appointed for each school.
- Dr. Gerald Williams, Jr., became the new Director of Student Support Services on Feb. 1.
- Paul Willis became the Director of College Enrichment on Feb. 13.
- New inductees into the Athletics Hall of Fame included Ellen Vickers, Dorsey Brooks, P.W. Bryan, Jr., Cook Holliday, Newell "Sarge" Dorsey, and the 1984 men's tennis team which won the national championship.
- The ABAC student newspaper, "The Stallion," claimed 17 awards at the annual Georgia College Press Association contest, including first place in the General Excellence category. The newspaper also received top statewide honors from the Southern Regional Press Institute.
- Junior Chapman, an agriculture education major from Jasper, won the title in the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Mr. ABAC competition.
- ABAC Police Chief Bryan Golden was appointed to the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council by Governor Sonny Perdue.
- ABAC student Tanya Rafferty was featured in a Georgia Public Television video as the winner of a Regents' Scholarship. She became the first four-year scholarship winner in the history of ABAC.
- Gene Ragan received the Distinguished Alumnus award from the ABAC Alumni Association during the Celebrate ABAC weekend.
- Amanda Bridges was appointed to the position of Chief Financial Officer of the ABAC Foundation.
- Dr. Eddie Seagle and eight students from the bachelor's degree program in Turfgrass and Golf Course Management attended and taught classes on a visit to China on March 12-27.
- Deans were appointed for the six different schools of study. They included Dr. Tim Marshall, Agriculture and Natural Resources; Dr. Jeff Gibbs, Business; Wanda Golden, Nursing and Health Sciences; Dr. Darby Sewell

(Interim), Human Sciences; Dr. Bobbie Robinson, Liberal Arts; and Dr. Ray Barber, Science and Mathematics.

- Laura Tucker (Class of '88) from Ocilla was selected as the new President of the ABAC Alumni Association.
- Dr. Larry Moorman and his wife, Debra, transitioned ownership of the clubhouse at Forest Lakes Golf Club to the ABAC Foundation. The Moormans donated the 91-acre Forest Lakes Golf Club to the Foundation in 2002.
- On March 23, ABAC unveiled its newest bachelor's degree program in Rural Studies. Classes in the program began during the fall semester.
- The Student Affairs area completed a Rapid Process Improvement (RPI) initiative from the Governor's Office of Customer Service. The result was improved service in enrollment services including admissions and financial aid. Diane Kilgore and Dr. Chrystle Ross headed up the project.
- Students from ABAC finished third in the Southeastern Wildlife Student Conclave in Little Rock, Ark. ABAC finished ahead of Auburn, Florida, Clemson, North Carolina State, Louisiana State, Tennessee, and other major universities.
- At Honors Day, Hector Olguin, an engineering major from Ty Ty, received the J.G. Woodroof Scholar award, representing the top academic student at ABAC. Faculty/staff award winners included Geoff Clement, W. Bruce and Rosalyn Ray Donaldson Award for Teaching Excellence; Shirley Wilson, Roy R. Jackson, Sr., Award for Staff Excellence; Dr. Jeff Gibbs, E. Lanier Carson Leadership Award; and Dr. Jewrell Rivers, W. Bruce and Rosalyn Ray Donaldson Excellence in Advising Award.
- The ABAC women's tennis team won its 16<sup>th</sup> consecutive NJCAA Region XVII title behind the play of MVP Monika Lalewicz. The Stallions also won the men's championship led by MVP Rasid Winklaar. Lalewicz was later named Player of the Year in the entire NJCAA for the second consecutive season. She finished second in her bid for back-to-back national titles. Assistant

Coach Dale White was named NJCAA Assistant Coach of the Year.

- Dr. Eddie Seagle and Diane Kilgore were selected as recipients of the 2009



Dr. Eddie Seagle and eight ABAC students stand atop the Great Wall of China during their visit.

Governor's Commendation for Excellence in Customer Service quarterly award.

• Edwin Glover, Richard Irvin, Garrett Jones, and Joshua Lanier became the first bachelor's degree recipients in the history of

ABAC at the spring commencement ceremony. Keith Lee received the prestigious Donaldson Award. Jim Sparks was the guest speaker.

- Assistant Chief of Police Billy Purcell received a Raymond B. Merritt Officer of the Year award from the Tifton Optimist Club.
- Matt Holland won the national championship at #6 singles for the Stallions' tennis team, which finished in third place overall in the national tourney..
- Dr. Jeff Gibbs, Alan Kramer, Lorie Felton, and Dr. Brian Ray led a group of 15 educators on a month-long trip to Brazil as the result of a \$76,425 Fulbright-Hays Grant from the U.S. Department of Education.
- Enrollment Services Director Donna Webb said ABAC recorded its highest spring semester enrollment ever with 3,234 students.
- Amy King Howell was selected as the new Director of Institutional Research.
- ABAC student Dorminey McCrae was selected for the National Association of Police Organization's "Top Cop" award for his heroism in a Tifton grocery store robbery. President Barack Obama presented McCrae with the award at the White House.
- Dr. Mary Ellen Hicks was selected to participate in the National Cattlemen's Beef Association 30<sup>th</sup> annual Young Cattlemen's Conference.
- The U.S. Department of Education awarded a \$411,354 federal grant to ABAC for the College Assistance Migrant Program.
- ABAC golfer Kenneth Bragg received Academic All-America status from the NJCAA.

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•ABAC initiated a new alumni-based student recruitment effort called the Alumni Connecting To Involved and Outstanding New Students (ACTIONS) team.

•Work began on the historic Front of Campus project on Sept. 8. The project begins with the renovation of Tift Hall.

•ABAC President David Bridges received the Gold Outstanding Customer Service Leadership Award from University System of Georgia Chancellor Erroll B. Davis, Jr.

•A State of Georgia Employee Satisfaction Research report showed that employees of ABAC gave the institution top marks in regard to quality of the workplace and employee satisfaction. In a comparison with five other state agencies, ABAC earned the highest score.

•Javier Gonzalez and Dr. Billy Reynolds were selected for the University System of Georgia Leadership Institute.

•Keith Barber was named Vice President of External Affairs and Advancement by ABAC President David Bridges.

•Governor Sonny Perdue visited the ABAC campus on Oct. 13. He also stopped by the ABAC exhibit at the Sunbelt Expo on Oct. 20.



During an October visit, Governor Sonny Perdue took time out for a picture with ABAC Ambassadors (l-r) Bernard Green, Savannah Brown, Elizabeth Dukes, and Drew Richardson.

•Student Development Specialist Rebecca Cofer was named one of five Outstanding New Advisors by the National Academic Advising Association.

•ABAC President David Bridges received the Honorary American FFA degree from the National FFA Organization at the annual convention in Indianapolis, Ind.

•Dr. Jordan Cofer was named as the Emerging Scholar for the 2009 fall semester by his

alma mater, Virginia Tech.

•The ABAC Foundation received a \$48,297 grant from AT&T to expand the use of video instruction and communication at ABAC.

•In a campus visit Dec. 7, Chancellor Erroll B. Davis Jr., commended ABAC for having its own "statewide brand."

•The United States Poultry Foundation awarded ABAC a \$5,800 grant.

•Javier Gonzalez was the fall commencement speaker. Sara Ervin won the Donaldson Award.

## A Note of Sympathy

Dottie Anderson, wife of former ABAC President Stanley Anderson, passed away on Dec. 11 in Norwalk, Ohio. She was 85. Dr. Anderson served as president of ABAC from 1975-85. See more information at [www.norwalkfuneral.com/obituaries](http://www.norwalkfuneral.com/obituaries). Please keep this family in your thoughts and prayers.

## Plethora of Events In 2010 for Students

When spring term classes begin on the campus of ABAC on Jan. 11, students will have plenty of activities to choose from.

Campus events abound during the spring semester including the Winter Stallion Day for prospective students on Feb. 13, the Mr. ABAC competition on Feb. 18, the regional science fair on Feb. 19, the Celebrate ABAC alumni weekend on March 5-6, Honors Day on April 14, and the Spring Stallion Day for juniors on April 17.

There will also be First Tuesday Concerts on Feb. 2, March 2 and April 6. The spring choral concert is April 8, and the

spring band concert is April 13. April 22 has been set aside for George Scott Day and the Arts and Entertainment

Series performance Michael Philip Mossman. Athletic events include softball and baseball games, tennis matches, and golf tournaments as five of the six intercollegiate sports teams at ABAC swing into action.

The ABAC Public Service and Business Outreach Center offers a variety of continuing education classes during the term at a very low cost as well as a number of trips. Interested persons can call 391-5070 for more information.

Classes will continue until May 2 with final exams set for May 4-7. Graduation will be held at 6 p.m. on May 7. The only time during the term when the entire campus will be closed is on Jan. 18 for the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. Faculty and students will be away for spring break on March 15-19.



## 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 Keith Barber.

## ABAC Birthdays

- 22 Roger Smith
- 23 Ray Lundy
- 24 Kip Hall
- 24 Susan Thompson
- 27 Whitney Lightfoot
- 28 Alton Hudgins
- 30 Linda Truman
- 30 Avijit Kar

### January

- 1 Abul Sheikh
- 3 Vickie Wilson
- 5 Bobby Mathis
- 5 Ray Barber
- 6 Brian Burdett
- 9 Bryan Golden
- 9 Donna Hatcher
- 10 Amanda Lundy
- 10 Wayne Jones

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**Ashley Williamson** Writer and Layout  
**Mike Chason** Writer & Editor

Please submit any information to Ashley at [awilliamson@abac.edu](mailto:awilliamson@abac.edu) by Thursday at noon for inclusion in the next FOCUS. **The next edition will be January 11.**