



# FOCUS

## ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

VOLUME L

ISSUE 42

MAY 27, 2014

### ABAC Alpha Beta Gamma Chapter Wins National Title

The Alpha Beta Gamma (ABG) Sigma Chapter at ABAC attended the 2014 Alpha Beta Gamma National Leadership Conference in San Antonio, Texas and came home with the national title in the presentation competition. ABG is a business honors society that requires student members to have a minimum of 15 credit hours completed and a grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

ABAC students who participated in the convention included Melody Harper, a business administration major from Pelham; Colleen Leu, a business administration major from Chula; Lindsay Partridge, a business and economic development major from Bushnell, Fla.; Eliceo Soto, a business and economic development major from Moultrie; and Lexi Spradley, a business administration major from Tifton.

The ABAC students gave a presentation on how to deal with conflict in business, titled "Golden." Out of the 15 national level presentations that were presented, the ABAC chapter was named the national winner in the division of presentation. The presentation

was written by Harper and then revised by the whole team. The students have been practicing the 15-minute presentation that included props and visual aids since February.

Three of ABAC's ABG students were also elected to hold positions on the five-seat National Executive Board. Partridge was elected as National President, Leu was elected as National Marketing Director, and Harper was elected as National Secretary of the organization.

Kathy Moreno and Elisabeth O'Quinn, advisors to the ABAC chapter, received the highest honors in the adult presentation division. Moreno is an



Pictured (front, l-r): Alpha Beta Gamma Scholarship Chair Pamela Donahue, Lexi Spradley, Lindsay Partridge, Alpha Beta Gamma Chief Executive Officer Dr. John Christesen, Colleen Leu, Sigma Chapter Co-Advisor Elisabeth O'Quinn; (back row, l-r): Eliceo Soto, Immediate Past National Student President Wayne Martin, Melody Harper, and Kathy Moreno, adviser to National Alpha Beta Gamma student officers.

assistant professor of business at ABAC, and O'Quinn is the business apprentice in the Stafford School of Business.

ABAC students majoring in business who are interested in the Alpha Beta Gamma business honors society can contact the Stafford School of Business at (229) 391-4830.

### Josh Page From ABAC Wins National Tennis Championship

Fighting off excruciating pain from a blister on his foot, Josh Page from ABAC won the national championship at number one singles on May 16 at the National Junior College Athletic Association men's tennis tournament in Plano, Texas.

Page, an ABAC freshman from the United Kingdom, won 6-4, 7-6 over Harry Busby from Cowley (Kans.) College for the first national title at number one singles for the Stallions since Richard Evans led ABAC to the national championship in



1999. "I feel really good," Page said minutes after the match. "This is the best year of tennis I have had in my entire life. With the pressure I felt on the court today, I can't imagine what it must be like in a Grand Slam match." After winning the first set, Page fell behind 4-1 in the second and had to take an injury timeout for a blister on his left foot.

"I felt like he was in command of the match, and I was already thinking about the third set," Page said. "Then I kind of loosened up, and he got a little tight. Finally at the end, I hit three really good backhands, and he returned every one of them. I'm thinking he is just not going to go away."

On the final point, Page did indeed smash three backhand shots before turning the momentum his way with four forehand shots including a long shot deep in the right corner, which proved to be the key that unlocked a national championship.

"It was such a good feeling when his return went into the net," Page said.

The ABAC team immediately rushed onto the court and surrounded their

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new national titlist. First year head coach Dale White couldn't have been happier.

"Josh has been playing fantastic all week," White said. "He has handled the emotional and physical grind really well. It's so great to see someone from ABAC win a title. He had to work hard all year and improve in some areas. And he did."

The Stallions finished fifth in the team standings by playing what White called "our best tennis all season out here this week. I am really proud of these guys

and the way they responded."

Page, named the International Tennis Association Region IV Rookie of the Year earlier in the week, knocked off Spartak Rahachou from Johnson County (Kans.) 3-6, 6-3, 6-2 in Thursday's national semifinal. Page was the Most Valuable Player of the NJCAA Region XVII tournament when the Stallions claimed that state title in April at the Red Hill Athletic Center on the ABAC campus. Page also won the ITA Small College Regional championship last October.

Now he has a chance to do what only one other player in the history of the much heralded ABAC men's tennis program has done, win back-to-back national titles. ABAC Athletics Hall of Fame selection Jean Francoise Lagloire did it in 1989-90.

"That would be the next step wouldn't it?" Page said.

The ABAC women's team, also under the direction of White, finished 12th in last week's national tournament in Tyler, Texas. The Fillies wound up second in the NJCAA Region XVII tournament.

Orientation Begins Friday at 8 a.m. Other dates include:

June 6      June 20      July 11      July 18      August 8

For more info visit: [www.abac.edu/future-students/orientation](http://www.abac.edu/future-students/orientation)

## Galt-Brown Speaks at Wal-Mart Headquarters on Rural America

New and different are often words that provide the key to success for corporate America. That's why one of the best known companies in the world reached out to Dr. James Galt-Brown, Associate Professor of History at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, to speak on Rural America from his expertise as a lecturer in the one-of-a-kind Rural Studies bachelor's degree at ABAC.

Galt-Brown spoke to employees of Wal-Mart during the corporation's recent Rural Customer Immersion Symposium at the Wal-Mart headquarters in Bentonville, Ark. He used background material from one of his classes in the ABAC Rural Studies program, the only degree of its kind in the country.

Wal-Mart Project Manager Shannon Dilday put the entire symposium together. She found Galt-Brown from the ABAC Rural Studies program webpage and selected him because he "looked fun in the classroom."

"At first, I thought 'who would be playing this kind of a practical joke,' but they were serious," Galt-Brown said.

So serious, in fact, that he was the only speaker from the academic world invited to address the symposium audience.

"What I find most pleasing, gratifying and flattering about this opportunity is that when a Fortune 10 company needed accurate, up-to-date information on Rural America they came to ABAC," Galt-Brown said. "That says a lot for our Rural Studies program and



how relevant rural studies are to the American marketplace."

Wal-Mart does 75 billion dollars in gross sales annually in Rural America. The corporation wanted to know the reality of rural customers, the challenges they face, the rural population's concerns, and if the stereotypes of that segment of the population were accurate.

"The company wants to expand markets in rural areas in the United States, and they wanted an academic perspective," Galt-Brown said. "I did some research and used some materials from my History of Rural America class to put together a presentation."

The final result of his work, "Understanding Rural Customers – Rural America 101," was not only seen by the 400 Wal-Mart employees at the corporate office but by many others when it was transmitted to other locations in North America and parts of South America and Europe as well.

"One of Wal-Mart's executives was traveling during the symposium and requested that it be telecommunicated," Galt-Brown said.

When the ABAC faculty member arrived at the corporate office, he was impressed with how every employee, whether they had been working for Wal-Mart for a month or 30 years, had a welcome attitude to every outsider and no one seemed to have a bad day.

"I noticed that Wal-Mart had printed out posters promoting the event so the first chance I had I asked if I could have one," Galt-Brown said. "That was a big

deal for me."

Galt-Brown admitted he was a bit concerned about his speaking engagement because it was his first time doing a presentation in the corporate world.

"The turnout was bigger than I expected but smaller than what it could have been," Galt-Brown said. "Within the headquarters there were about 400 employees at the symposium, and the venue held around 500."

Galt-Brown spoke for 40 minutes during the two and a one-half hour symposium. He spent the remainder of his time answering questions long after the event had ended.

"No question surprised me because what I found in doing research for this presentation was that the academic perspective meshed seamlessly with what Wal-Mart's researchers had concluded," Galt-Brown said.

But he is still floored that the biggest retail chain in the world contacted him to talk about rural customers as they pertain to the American marketplace.

"It just goes to show that rural environments play a pivotal role not just on a community or local level, but as part of our world view," Galt-Brown said. "The fact that Wal-Mart recognized that ABAC and its Rural Studies program is trying to broaden that world view is humbling."

Galt-Brown received his B.A. in History from the University of South Carolina; his M.A. in History from Murray State University; and his Ph.D. in Modern European History from Mississippi State University. He has been a faculty member in the ABAC School of Liberal Arts since 2003.

## Three ABAC Students Pass Crop Advisor Certification Exam

Three students at ABAC recently took a giant step forward in their careers in agriculture by passing the Certified Crop Advisor certification examination.

Seth Dale from Tifton, B.T. Lee from Millwood, and Alejandro Ramos from Lake Placid, Fla., completed The Certified Crop Advisor program of the American Society of Agronomy. All three students are majoring in the Diversified Agriculture bachelor's degree program at ABAC.

Dr. Ray Smith, an ABAC associate professor who is Head of the Department of Agriculture, said the three students strengthened their resumes considerably by passing the 250-question examination.

"The certification testifies to the students' agronomic and pest management knowledge," Smith said. "Many companies in the crop production side of agriculture encourage and/or require their employees to obtain Certified Crop Advisor status.



ABAC Agronomy Club members and advisors gathered to congratulate three members of the club after they passed the Crop Advisor Certification exam. Those pictured include (l-r): Dr. Ray Smith, Agronomy Club President Wesley Pope, Alejandro Ramos, Seth Dale, B. T. Lee, Dr. Justin Ng, and Trey Davis.

"We felt it would benefit our students if they could pass the tests prior to entering the job market. Although the exams are only a part of the certification process, they represent the biggest hurdle for most individuals."

According to the Certified Crop Advisor website, the certification was established in 1992 to provide a benchmark for practicing agronomy professionals in the United States and Canada. Farmers and employers prefer to work

with Certified Crop Advisors because they have demonstrated they have the commitment, education, expertise, and experience to make a difference.

"Employers have told us that a prospective employee who is already a Certified Crop Advisor would have a definite advantage over non-certified applicants," Smith said. "The students also have to have job experience before they can become fully certified."

Smith advises the ABAC Agronomy Club along with Dr. Justin Ng and Trey Davis. Dale, Lee, and Ramos are all members of the organization, which promotes the certification as one of its focal points.

The three ABAC students join more than 13,000 professionals in the largest, most recognized agriculturally-oriented certification program in North America. The program's professional standards are widely respected by industry, academia, and government.

The Dining Hall will open on June 2 with limited serving hours. Breakfast will be served from 7:30 a.m. until 8:45 a.m., lunch will be from 11 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. and dinner from 5 p.m. until 6 p.m. The Aggie C-store will also open June 2 Monday-Thursday 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. and Friday from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m.

## Military Personnel & Family Get Free Admission to Museum

The Georgia Museum of Agriculture (GMA) will offer free admission to all military personnel and

their families from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The offer is supported by Blue Star Museums, the collaboration between the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, and the Department of Defense. This is the second year the GMA has participated in the Blue Star Museums program. The Museum will officially launch the program on May 27.

"The Blue Star Museums program offers an excellent opportunity to introduce the rich, rural heritage of South Georgia to the military and their families," GMA Assistant Director Garrett Boone said.

"Blue Star Museums has grown into a nationally recognized program that service members and their families look forward to each year," said Blue Star Families Chief Executive Officer Kathy Roth-Douquet. "It helps bring our local military and civilian communities



together, and offers families fun and enriching activities in their home towns. We are thrilled with the

continued growth of the program and the unparalleled opportunities it offers."

GMA is one of 2,000 museums across America to offer free admission to the nation's active duty military personnel including National Guard and Reserve and their families from Memorial Day through Labor Day 2014. Leadership support has been provided by MetLife Foundation through Blue Star Families. The program provides families an opportunity to enjoy the nation's cultural heritage and learn more about their new communities after a military move.

The free admission program is available to any bearer of a Geneva Convention common access card (CAC), a DD Form 1173 ID card (dependent ID), or a DD Form 1173-1 ID card, which includes active duty U.S. military - Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, as well as members of the Na-

tional Guard and Reserve, U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, NOAA Commissioned Corps - and up to five family members. For a complete list of participating museums visit [www.arts.gov/national/blue-star-museums](http://www.arts.gov/national/blue-star-museums). Museums that wish to participate in Blue Star Museums may contact [bluestarmuseums@arts.gov](mailto:bluestarmuseums@arts.gov) or Wendy Clark at 202-682-5451.

GMA in Tifton resides on over 96 acres and includes a Country Store, Museum Hall, Art Gallery, Historic Village, Peanut Museum, and conference facilities. Admission Tuesday thru Friday is \$7 for adults, \$6 for seniors, \$4 for children 5-16 years of age, and free for children under five. Saturday admission is \$8 for seniors, \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 5-16 years of age, and free for children under five. Active duty military personnel including National Guard and Reserve and their families are admitted free of charge.

For more information, interested persons can contact the Country Store at (229) 391-5205 or email Garrett Boone

# Carry The Load Culminates in Dallas After 2,000 Miles



Over the course of 27 days, seven ABAC students walked a life changing 2,000 miles from West Point, New York to Dallas, Texas for the Carry The Load National Relay. Matt Fryman, Kristoff Cohran, Demarcus Bateman, John Driscoll and Rodney Troupe served as leg captains through out the Relay and Matthew Reid and Jo-Leigh Warren served as the media crew. The National Relay culminated in Reverchon Park in downtown Dallas on Sunday where these students and a group of nearly 300 Relay participants walked in to the applause of thousands. The flag, which had traveled the 2,000 miles with them, was presented to the color guard and the group was honored by everyone in attendance. This and many other Carry The Load programs provide an interactive way for Americans to remember, honor and celebrate Memorial Day in dedication to those who sacrifice for us daily.

## Save The Date — More Information to Come

Freshman Move-in  
Aug. 9

Welcome Week  
Aug. 10-14

Convocation  
Aug. 14

## ABAC Birthdays

27 Troy Spicer	June	5 Theresa Ryan
29 Tami Dennis	2 Stoney Hart	8 Howard McCrary
31 Donnie Thompson	5 Trey Davis	
	5 Elisabeth O-Quinn	

The FOCUS is an electronic publication produced by the ABAC Public Relations Office. Please submit information by **Thursday at noon** to Ashley Mock at [amock@abac.edu](mailto:amock@abac.edu) for inclusion in the next FOCUS.