The top administrator, faculty member, staff member, and academic advisor for the 2014-2015 academic year were recognized during Wednesday’s Honors Day ceremony at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. Pictured (left to right) Rebecca Cofer, Javier Gonzalez, Dr. Hans Schmeisser and Sherin Nixon.
ABAC HONORS TOP FACULTY, STAFF, ADMINISTRATOR, ADVISOR

TIFTON—The top faculty member, staff member, administrator, and academic advisor for the 2014-2015 academic year were recognized during Wednesday’s Honors Day ceremony at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College.

Dr. Hans Schmeisser, Assistant Professor of Political Science, received the W. Bruce and Rosalyn Ray Donaldson Award for Teaching Excellence. Sherin Nixon, Credentials Data Processor in the Office of Enterprise Data Services, was honored with the Roy R. Jackson, Sr., Award for Staff Excellence. Javier Gonzalez, Director of Multicultural Education Programs, received the E. Lanier Carson Leadership Award for College Administrators, and Rebecca Daly Cofer, Coordinator of the Academic Achievement Center, received the W. Bruce and Rosalyn Ray Donaldson Excellence in Advising Award.

Schmeisser earned his bachelor’s degree in political science from Mercer University, graduating magna cum laude in 2002. He then attained both his master’s degree and doctorate in political science from the University of Florida. A member of the ABAC faculty since 2009, Schmeisser serves as the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning.

An advisor for the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and the Political Science Club, Schmeisser received the Impact Award from the Student Government Association in 2010. In the Tifton community, he is a member of Kiwanis Club and attends St. Anne’s Episcopal Church where he teaches Sunday School.

Nixon retired from ABAC last month after serving the college for over 29 years. She worked in the Office of Enterprise Data Services as a Credentials Data Processor, but her time at ABAC was not strictly served in an office. She could be found on campus giving a financial aid
presentation to Upward Bound and CAMP students, administering the SAT/ACT on a Saturday, or advising members of the Christian Student Fellowship Club.

One of Nixon’s colleagues said, “She was never too busy to help me with any problem I faced while I was a student at ABAC. Now that I am an employee, she has never said no to me when I call her asking for assistance with a student.”

An administrator at ABAC since 2003, Gonzalez was selected for the Executive Leadership Institute of the University System of Georgia in 2009. He was also the guest speaker at the 2009 ABAC fall commencement ceremony. In 2010, Gonzalez was named as the president of the National HEP-CAMP Association.

Gonzalez began his educational career by receiving his GED certificate from the Heart of Georgia Technical Institute. He earned his bachelor’s degree in Spanish from Georgia Southern and his master’s degree in education leadership from Columbus State. In the last three years, he has worked successfully to obtain grants in excess of $6 million for ABAC.

Cofer received her bachelor’s degrees in English and history in 2004 and her master’s degree in English Literature in 2006, all from Virginia Tech. She joined the ABAC faculty in 2009. At ABAC, she serves as the coordinator of the Academic Achievement Center, advises pre-nursing students and is the Study Abroad Coordinator. She also currently serves as an academic support counselor.

Cofer was named Outstanding New Advisor by the National Academic Advising Association in 2009 and served as a mentor to the organization’s Emerging Leader Program class of 2012-2014. She has also published extensively on tutoring for the College Reading Learning Association.

###