For IMMEDIATE Release

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Clara Grace Coker (center) is congratulated by the Director of ABAC’s Honors Program Dr. Cyndy Hall and ABAC President David Bridges. Coker was one of 90 students from across the country to receive an Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation.

ABAC Student from Ashburn Receives Scholarship from Cooke Foundation
TIFTON – Clara Grace Coker, an English major from Ashburn at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, was one of 90 students nationwide selected to receive a 2015 Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation.

“Students like Clara Grace don’t come along very often,” said Rebecca Cofer, Coordinator of the Academic Achievement Center. “She’s respectful, committed, goal-oriented, and kind. I am going to miss her but I know she is off to do great things.”

Scholars were selected based on high academic ability and achievements, persistence, leadership, and financial need. This year marks the largest number of scholarships given to undergraduate transfer students since the Cooke Foundation began the program 14 years ago. To date, there have been 735 recipients.

“Community colleges hold some of best untapped talent in the nation, but often these students need financial resources, guidance, and support in order to take the next step and earn bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral degrees,” explained Foundation Executive Director Harold O. Levy. “The Cooke Foundation has always been committed to identifying the best of the best in community colleges across the country, and this year we have an extraordinary group.”

This year 2,061 community college students applied for this scholarship, representing 540 community colleges in all 50 states, one U.S. territory, and the District of Columbia. The selection committee consisted of 18 admissions professionals, including representatives from the most selective four-year colleges and universities in the country.

“More needs to be done to encourage gifted community college students to continue their studies at prestigious four-year colleges and universities,” Levy said. “We believe our program makes a difference, but we’d also like to see more and better partnerships between community colleges and four-year schools, particularly selective institutions, as well as resources before,
during, and after transfer. As President Obama has said, we need to change the way we think about community colleges as they will be critical to developing the leaders and innovators of tomorrow.”

The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship is the largest private scholarship for students transferring from two-year community colleges to four-year baccalaureate institutions in the country. The Cooke Foundation provides up to $40,000 a year for up to three years and is a gateway to the Cooke Foundation’s graduate scholarship program and its new Oxford and Cambridge scholarships.

The next application cycle for the Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship Program will run from late September to early December. Rising sophomores and recent community college graduates (within the last five years) are eligible to apply for this scholarship.

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