

Auburn Magazine, Letter from the President, Winter 2018

Efforts of collaboration and transformation are alive and well at our beloved university

At Auburn, we are focused on discovering solutions that make a meaningful impact on our communities, state and beyond, and we remain committed to becoming an even more powerful driver of our state and region's economy. To accomplish our goals, we are partnering with a growing list of private and public partners on bold, life-changing initiatives to solve real-world challenges.

Just two of the many examples include partnerships in the field of additive manufacturing, commonly known as 3D printing. In August, U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby announced Auburn was awarded a \$3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology, or NIST. The funding will enable Auburn researchers to advance the additive manufacturing industry by improving techniques and increasing knowledge of this revolutionary technology.

Additive manufacturing is transforming industries ranging from aviation to medical instruments to automotive, and Auburn is recognized as a leader on the national stage for our efforts. Thanks to Sen. Shelby, the state of Alabama is providing national leadership in developing and refining these technologies that foster economic opportunity, improve quality of life and strengthen our country's infrastructure. Auburn has also partnered with NASA to advance additive manufacturing for uses toward space travel, and we have a strong partnership with GE Aviation, which uses additive manufacturing to make jet engine nozzles at its facility near the university.

Auburn is making a significant impact in other areas that stand to boost our economy, including our state's booming aviation and aerospace industry. Through the newly launched Delta Propel Pilot Career Path Program, we are working together with industry leader Delta Air Lines to address a nationwide pilot shortage. The initiative pairs Auburn aviation students with a Delta pilot mentor, and students receive a Qualified Job Offer from the company, detailing a defined path and an accelerated timeline to become a Delta pilot.

With a recent \$6.2 million grant from Delta, the Delta Air Lines Foundation and the Jacobson Family Foundation, a new Delta Air Lines Aviation Education Building will open this fall at Auburn, featuring an

Air Bus 320 airliner simulator. The gift is also providing funding for the university's Radio-Frequency Identification, or RFID, Lab. It will also create endowed faculty professorships within Auburn's Department of Aviation, home of one of the longest standing public flight programs in the country — and the only one in the state.

Beyond that, Auburn's Huntsville Research Center connects our research capabilities with the needs of Huntsville's government agencies and industries. And as we broaden our scope of collaboration, we seek to join others in the pursuit of game-changing technologies that serve the greater good in areas such as cyber security, health sciences, military defense, additive manufacturing, agriculture and bioscience systems and robotics.

Auburn has a proven record when it comes to contributing to the state, adding \$5.4 billion to Alabama's economy in 2016-2017. From an entrepreneurial standpoint, Auburn is kick-starting breakthroughs with a LAUNCH innovation program that advances the commercial potential of technologies and other intellectual properties developed at Auburn.

To sum it up, Auburn is on the move! We are open for business and ready to team up as a collaborative partner. To join Auburn and learn more about our drive to inspire, visit www.auburn.edu/auburninspires. Also, I invite you to connect with me @AuburnPrez on Twitter and on LinkedIn.

Thank you for your continued support, and War Eagle!

President Steven Leath