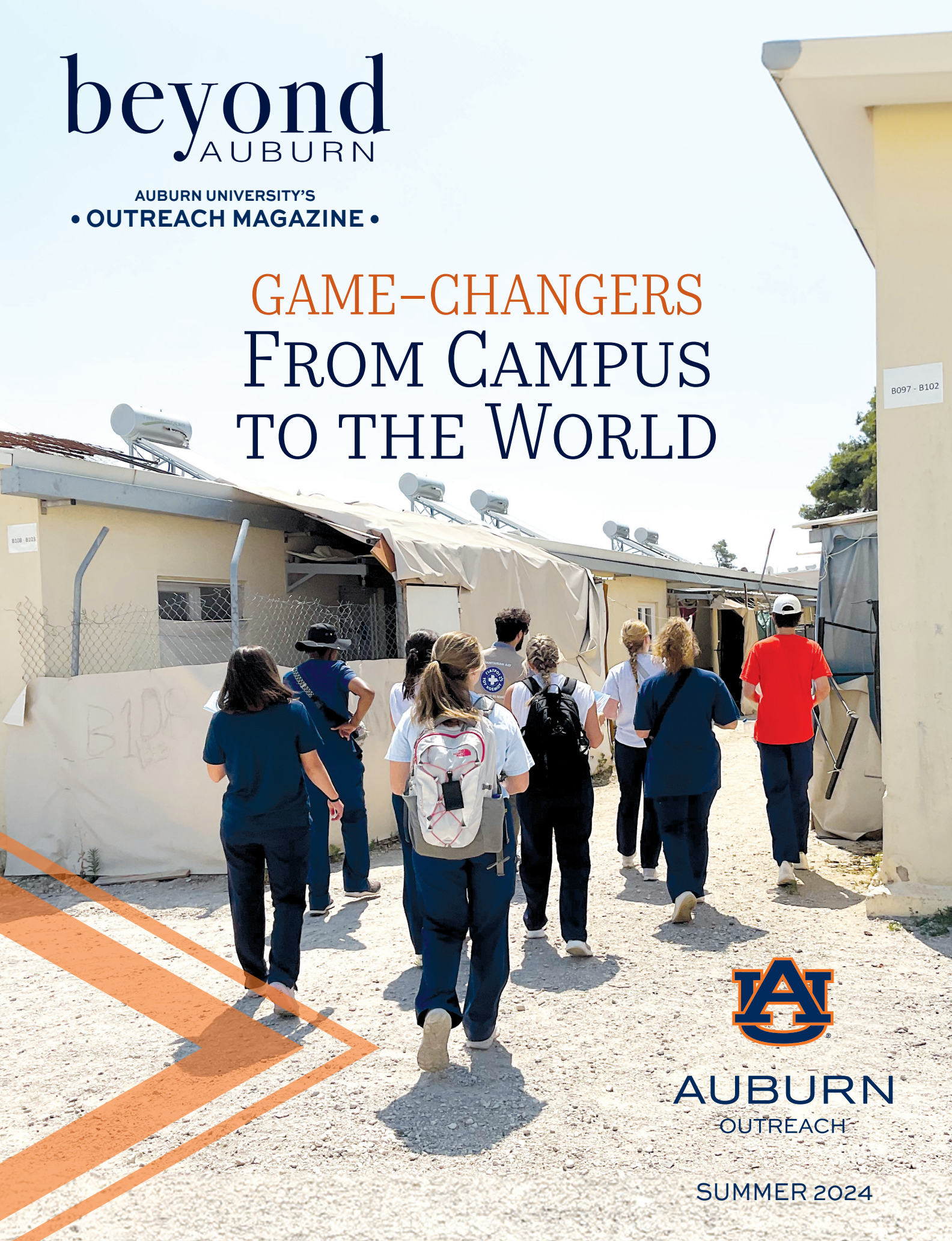


beyond AUBURN

AUBURN UNIVERSITY'S
• OUTREACH MAGAZINE •

GAME-CHANGERS FROM CAMPUS TO THE WORLD



AUBURN
OUTREACH

SUMMER 2024



ON THE COVER

Community Outreach Service-Learning Program in Athens, Greece, with the Office of Outreach Global. Auburn University students conducted street work, went to refugee camps and assisted in a clinic with the Doctors of the World organization.

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message from the vice president

Game-changers

Throughout the year, we constantly follow the progress of outreach programs across campus, looking for examples of impact. In other words, how are we making a difference in the lives of the people we engage across Alabama?

There is a vast array of programs offered by our colleagues in Auburn's academic departments, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, and through the units in University Outreach, serving communities and people throughout the state. For example, Auburn offered more than 1,000 outreach-related professional and job skill non-credit programs last year, providing much-needed training and certifications that enhance the workforce capacity in our state.

Measuring the collective impact of these programs in the long term is a big task indeed. But inside of that very big picture, we see "game-changers" in our community engagement work – outreach programs



that have made such an immediate and profound change in the lives of the people, that the impact is clear to see.

One such game-changer is the Rural Health Initiative. Originally engaging some 23 faculty, the initiative is now a robust collaboration of more than 105 faculty affiliates from colleges of Nursing, Pharmacy, Education/ Kinesiology, Liberal Arts, Veterinary Medicine, Human Sciences and Alabama Extension. From the vision of establishing an accessible health service for an area of critical need, there is now the Chambers County Community Health and Wellness

Center with a cutting-edge OnMed® telehealth station.

In 2023, more than 592 patients were treated at this new center. More than 560 community members participated in health-related programs offered through the center by Auburn faculty and students. These amazing results have drawn major funding support from the state of Alabama to establish similar



Royrickers Cook (center) Chippewa Thomas (far right), and Elizabeth Quansah (far left) meet with a group of students for a Service-Learning Informational Session to plan a visit to Tanzania in East Africa. Partners for the Outreach Global trip include the U.S. Embassy, TMarc, University of Dar es Salaam, and Ernest Gibson along with 20 students and five faculty/staff members. The trip provided an opportunity for students to travel internationally while enhancing their education through experiential learning. The Tanzania experience is sponsored, making this trip possible for students who ordinarily would not be able to study abroad.

health and wellness centers in other counties in need. This initiative has also received one of Auburn's highest institutional recognitions, the President's Outstanding Collaborative Units Award for 2023 and national recognition from the National Academies of Practice in March 2024.

However, the real impact is the life-change for more than 1,000 residents who once had no access to health care but now have a dedicated health and wellness center. For them, the Rural Health Initiative is a real game-changer.

Another tremendous outreach initiative is Campus Kitchen. Supported by the Office of Public Service in collaboration with AU Dining, campus partners, and community agencies, this student-led project engages some 368 volunteers. During the year, Campus Kitchens collected more than 34,000 pounds of food to distribute as 26,270 healthy meals to community partners serving residents in need. That need exists on campus too, and Campus Kitchen served more than 400 fellow students in need through its Auburn Family Meals program. For those thousands of residents and students facing food insecurity, a healthy and delicious meal from Campus Kitchen is surely a game-changer.

Our cover stories in this issue outline how outreach engagement globally in countries like Ghana, Tanzania and Greece are changing the game as well. In addition to providing significant aid and relief to vulnerable

populations, faculty and students gained invaluable educational and professional experience in addition to opportunities to build their cultural awareness abroad. As one student reported of her experience working with refugees in Athens, Greece, the experience allowed her to "practice nursing with a different perspective and lots of new knowledge."

These are just a few examples of high-quality, high-impact engagement that clearly makes a difference in the lives of the people they serve, as well as in those faculty and students engaged in these transformative projects. We will always count numbers of programs, registrations, completion rates and many other performance measures in our efforts to assess our strategic outcomes and discern impact. But foremost, we must always look to see the game-changing difference our engagement is making in the lives of the people we serve and in the quality of life of their communities.

You can be an engaged game-changer too. Join me in making a difference!



Royrickers Cook, Ph.D.

Vice President for University Outreach
and Associate Provost



AU's Campus Kitchen serves meal for more than 70 EASE House residents



Campus Kitchen at Auburn University, in partnership with AU Dining Services, provided a Thanksgiving-themed meal for more than 70 residents at East Alabama Services for the Elderly, also known as EASE House. EASE House is a 100-unit low-income independent living housing facility for seniors 62 and older who qualify for an accessible unit. Students ate with the residents, but most importantly engaged in various forms of conversations.

Campus Kitchen at Auburn University earned the Most Exceptional Campus Organization through Sponsored Student Organizations at the Involvement Awards on April 9. Campus Kitchen received the award for being "an organization that most exemplified the traits of an excellent Auburn student organization and that best empowered its members to be impactful Auburn University students as a group." Campus Kitchen continues to serve throughout the community by fighting food insecurity and waste. In addition, they installed their first tiny mobile food pantry at Timothy Manor senior apartments in Opelika on April 24. Campus Kitchen partnered with boy scout, Ethan McCulloch, who designed and built their first mobile food pantry for his Eagle Scout project. To learn more about Campus Kitchen at Auburn visit: www.ckau.org.

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“For me, seeing the dedication, joy, and satisfaction of our students, faculty, and staff after serving patients in need of health care, knocking on doors in refugee camps, caring for wounds in homeless shelters, training underserved youth, women and global partners around the world and bringing the global experience to domestic audiences is an impactful service that the AU Office of Outreach Global provides to our community and the world.”

**– Elizabeth I. Quansah, Ph.D., MBA
Founding Director, Outreach Global**



AU cohort and University of Dar es Salaam representatives at the program's Welcome Dinner in Tanzania.



GAME-CHANGERS

Outreach Global is transforming lives locally and abroad

For more than a century, Auburn University has had an outreach and engagement mission to partner with communities, businesses, schools and government to help people meet their educational goals and improve quality of life across the state and beyond. One unit of University Outreach accomplishes this goal on a global stage.

Outreach Global, founded in 2016, creates opportunities for global engagement, cultural immersion experiences and community development across the globe. In partnership with multiple schools and colleges, Outreach Global engages in a wide range of programming to create a significant shift in the lives of people locally and abroad.

Using educational and cultural immersion programs, Outreach Global exposes students, faculty, staff and non-university participants to diverse perspectives, promotes critical thinking, enhances educational, historical and social awareness and increases

understanding as related to culture, customs, traditions, religion, politics and the world economy. To achieve these means, Outreach Global, under the direction of Elizabeth Quansah, executes numerous game-changing programs and service-learning opportunities annually.

Ghana service-learning programs

The flagship service-learning programs in Outreach Global are the Ghana Education and Health programs. Although on hiatus this summer, these two programs will return in 2025. The programs, which began in 2017, are designed to offer opportunities for Auburn University students, faculty, staff and members of the Alabama community to volunteer and share their expertise with the low-income communities in Accra and Sekondi metropolitan cities respectively in Ghana. The programs provide opportunities for participants to learn about the education and healthcare needs and systems of Ghana, West Africa. In addition, participants are exposed to cultural, social and



The AU cohort visiting the U.S. Embassy Tanzania, meeting with Ambassador Battle and the USAID team.

educational perspectives of the African continent. In addition to providing transformative experiences for Auburn students and faculty, the programs have had a significant impact on thousands of residents of Ghana by providing much-needed medical intervention. Quansah, has witnessed firsthand the impact of the program.

“I am amazed at the real-time impact we have on people. There was a situation during one of the healthcare programs, where a patient had a long-term issue with his ears. After examination, the diagnosis came out as excessive earwax. He was taken to receive some over-the-counter ear drops from the Auburn University pharmacy table. Whilst he was standing in the line and still dealing with pain, one of the nursing professors removed the ear wax and added a few drops of the over-the-counter eardrops to this patient’s ears. He found instant relief and started smiling. The expression on this patient’s face was just priceless. He was overjoyed that he no longer had to deal with the excruciating pains he’d been dealing with all these years,” said Quansah. “These are some of the real-time impacts we have experienced by providing education and health care services to our global communities.” Quansah is grateful to the many partners who make these programs possible.

“Special thanks to the AU Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, State of Alabama Department of Finance Division of Risk Management, Auburn United Methodist Church United Women in Faith and Crawford United Women’s Fellowship for the generous donations of medical supplies, over-the-counter medications, financial support and stuffed animals. We truly appreciate your support!”

Fulbright In the classroom

Another program, Fulbright in the Classroom (FIC), brings international experience to underserved local schools in Alabama. Through FIC, past and current Fulbrighters share their experiences with K12 through college students.

By sharing these stories, FIC introduces students to new places, cultures and people. The goal is to inspire these students to learn more about global engagement, to travel and have fun while doing these activities.

Since the program’s inception in 2022, over 211 students from Valley High School, LaFayette High School and the Lee County Youth Development Center in Opelika have experienced FIC.

This program is done in collaboration with the Fulbright Association, Leslie Cordie, associate professor in Adult Education and Fulbright Core Scholar 2020-21; Chippewa Thomas, professor and director of Office of Faculty Engagement and Encyclopedia of Alabama; Jason Bryant, associate clinical professor and director, Truman Pierce Institute; and Venus Hewing, manager in Center For Educational Outreach and Engagement.



Group photo of the Tanzania service-learning training with the KN Youth, USAID program.



Global Community Day Festival

This colorful cultural event draws international and domestic communities from Auburn, Opelika and the surrounding areas together to learn and experience global cultures, history and food. Activities include the Vendor Trade Fair, the Global Attire Fashion Exhibition, musical performances, dance demonstrations, international food trucks, arts and crafts, sports and games.

Over the past three years the celebration has brought more than 1950 people together.

Premier Tanzania, East Africa 2024 Civic Education Service-Learning Program

The newest service-learning program developed by the AU Office of Outreach Global is the Tanzania Civic Education program which took place May 7-18, at Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar, Tanzania. This year's program was designed exclusively for AU students in the African American & Africana Studies Programs under College of Liberal Arts and was sponsored by the Office of the Vice President of University Outreach.

The goal was to provide a short-term (12 days) international experience to students who are unable to join the traditional study abroad programs due to financial constraints.

Participants included twenty (20) students, three (3) faculty members and two (2) Office of Outreach Global staff members. For some of these students, this was their first time ever traveling outside the country and also obtaining a U.S. passport. During the program, participants had an opportunity to learn about East Africa slave trade, visited slave museums and cultural sites that offered insight into Tanzania's complex past. Additionally, AU students, faculty and staff trained 280 KN Youth, a nonprofit under USAID, Tanzania in Dar es Salaam on how to write a resume, visited their school in Zanzibar and engaged them in basketball and softball physical activities.

"As director of African American & Africana Studies, I was moved by our students. Their commitment to the foundational tenets of Black Studies, their embodiment and expression of academic excellence, and their cultural engagement and sensitivities made them excellent ambassadors of Auburn University." — Ernest Gibson, Ph.D., director of African American & Africana Studies Program.

This service learning program proved to be both enriching and rewarding providing participants the opportunity to connect with the local community, U.S. Embassy in Tanzania, T-Marc - a nonprofit in Tanzania and to be immersed in Tanzania's history and culture while impacting the lives of underserved youth. We especially appreciate all of our Tanzania collaborators including the University of Dar es Salaam, U.S. Embassy in Tanzania, T-Marc and the Auburn College of Liberal Arts.

Success Through Entrepreneurship Program

Quansah and LaKami Baker, Russell Foundation associate professor of Entrepreneurial Studies in the Department of Management and Entrepreneurship, have hosted another transformative program, Success Through Entrepreneurship Program (STEP) in Benin, since 2022. Held each June, this program aims to equip entrepreneurs, students, youth, and women with essential skills to increase their quality of life and play a role in driving economic growth in their community. Since the program's inception, 250 existing and aspiring business owners, youth and women leaders have benefited from the training.

The program has proven to be a game-changer for female entrepreneurs. With 40% of participants being women, the training has had a significant impact on promoting female entrepreneurship and empowerment in Benin. Participants received comprehensive lessons in a variety of critical aspects, including marketing, product pricing, branding, public speaking and team building. The training sessions culminate with participants applying their newly acquired marketing techniques to promote their products and present their business pitches to the class.

"I am overjoyed with the success the program has had in equipping participants with the essential skills and

knowledge to excel in their businesses and contribute to the growth of their local and national economies," said Baker. "Hearing the testimonies and success stories of prior participants makes the intense week-long training worthwhile and gives meaning to my work."

Strong partnerships with local organizations, the Center for Partnership and Expertise for Sustainable Development (CePED) and the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) – Benin, helped make this program a success. The dedication of all involved highlights the transformative power of knowledge and its potential to create a positive impact on society by driving economic growth and prosperity in Benin.



Success Through Entrepreneurship Program (STEP) - Quansah and Baker exchanged a general agreement document with Mr. Yacoubou AMADOU, deputy director of cabinet, ministry of development, Benin and Mr. Roger Antoine TOHOUNDJO the director of Center of Partnership ET D'Expertise Pour Le Development Durable (CEPAD), Benin.

Greece - Student Experiences

"I was able to learn more about myself as well as the people I was working with. This experience solidified my passion for helping others and wanting to pursue a future in healthcare."

– **Elizabeth Bertram** student, COSAM, Pre-PA

"The people of Greece filled me up as much as I wanted to fill them up, and by doing so reminded me that there is so much more to healthcare and what we learn about in the classroom."

– **Marlee Brothers** student, College of Pharmacy

"I enjoyed how one day we volunteered at a polyclinic, another day we conducted street work to provide medications and food and water to the homeless, and another day we traveled to a refugee camp to conduct free testing for sexually transmitted diseases among the refugees living at the camps."

– **Emilie Brown** student, College of Nursing

"The whole trip was a very eye-opening experience and I am so glad I had the opportunity to attend. I will now practice nursing with a different perspective and lots of new knowledge."

– **Kate Campbell** student, College of Nursing

"We were able to experience the culture in Athens and were able to see sites such as the Acropolis, Olympia, and take a trip to Delphi. I am so thankful I was able to attend this global outreach trip."

– **Carson Ann Crow** student, College of Nursing

"We experienced the wonderful parts of Greece, but we also were able to see the challenges that vulnerable populations experience in this country."

– **Anna Fuentes** student, College of Nursing

"Whether we were playing basketball with schoolchildren in Arachova, testing patients for HIV in the blistering heat of Malakasa refugee camp, swimming in Lake Vouliagmeni, or learning about Greece's healthcare and civil society with Athens City Hall members, this was an experience unlike anything I had done before."

– **Landrum Brown** student, Forestry and Wildlife Science

"At the end of the day, we all want to be loved, seen, and known, whether that is in Athens, Greece, or Auburn, Alabama. To be able to serve the communities in Athens, with our hands, words, ears and smiles, was a blessing."

– **Erin Denenberg** student, College of Nursing

"My favorite and most impactful memory was going to the refugee camps and walking around with people that live there. There was a little girl there who was 9 years old, and she spoke five different languages. She walked around with us and helped translate."

– **Keller Dunnam** student, College of Nursing

"I met two little girls who were seeking refuge from Iran and Iraq. Although, we did not speak the same language, those young girls left a permanent bittersweet imprint on my heart. The girls along with the others at the refugee camp made me realize that even the simplest acts of kindness can go a long way."

– **Lucy Lawrence** student, COSAM, Dept. of Biological Sciences



Rwanda Environmental and Entrepreneurship Training – Cook and Quansah with the women and youth who produce sustainable stoves at Rwanda Environmental Awareness Organization (REAO) in Rwanda.

Rwanda Environmental and Entrepreneurship Training

In October 2023, the Office of Outreach Global conducted needs assessments and partnered with the Rwanda Environment Awareness Organization (REAO) to provide both online and in-person water management and entrepreneurship training for women and youth in the sustainability business.

The goal of the Outreach Global Rwanda Environmental and Entrepreneurship Training program is to increase the knowledge of trainees including Rwanda's local secondary teachers, university key personnel, community leaders and REAO staff in Rutsiro, Nyagatare, Karongi and Gasabo

"This experience allowed me to meet people in their most vulnerable state. I heard stories of people who traveled thousands of miles on foot to make it to the Greece border, stories of people watching family members die on the journey and stories of their new beginnings in a new country."

– **Sara Underwood** student, College of Nursing

"I found this to be an invaluable lesson that I will take into my career and share with others along the way."

– **Lalah Rose Hasbrouk** student, College of Human Sciences, Human Development and Family Science

"It was also amazing to have the opportunity to explore the city of Athens and to make new friends during my study abroad who also shared my passion for service and interest in the health care field. This experience has given me tools and experience that I will take with me as I start my career in nursing this year."

– **Reagan Sahlman** student, College of Nursing

"One takeaway from my service during my time there, is that I should always work on being a better nurse, but, at the same time, remain a humble person. I have learned that many little things in my life can be something that someone else strives to have and, because of this, I should always remember to not take anything for granted."

– **Neleh Stensrud** student, College of Nursing

"Helping at the refugee camps, shadowing the doctors at the polyclinic, and helping the homeless people down by the port were all new experiences for me that helped me grow as a person and as a professional."

– **Ashley Sbarra** student, College of Pharmacy



Auburn students traveled to Athens, Greece, to engage in service-learning activities. Students participated in a street work rotation.

districts. As a result of the program, trainees will be better equipped to improve water quality, earn profits from the local handmade stove making and contribute to economic sustainability.

This training is done in collaboration with the Auburn University Water Resource Center and Bill Deutsch of Alabama Water Watch for water management training and LaKami Baker, Russell Foundation associate professor of Entrepreneurial Studies for entrepreneurship training.

For additional information about these and other transformative programs of Outreach Global visit: <https://www.auburn.edu/outreach/global>.

"I was grateful to be able to help the less fortunate population with my nursing skills. I learned that not only the physical skills I had were helpful, but truly it was my listening skills that really allowed me to learn from them."

– **Alexandra Killian** student, College of Nursing

"The refugee camp and polyclinic allowed me to gain cultural competency and a heart for caring for vulnerable people groups."

– **Catherine Parma** student, College of Nursing

"The experiences that I had in Greece will remain with me after graduation, as they have helped me gain a greater understanding of health care on a global scale and of communicating with diverse populations."

– **Emily Larsen** student, College of Nursing

"Getting to see another side of health care was very interesting. I got to see a whole new way of doing things and this was very impactful for me."

– **Will Prophitt** student, College of Pharmacy

"One of the most memorable parts of the trip was the opportunity to visit a refugee camp. I was never able to properly comprehend this system until I saw it in person. Working directly with people from a variety of backgrounds taught me the need of empathy and cultural sensitivity in health care delivery. Even though we were only there for a limited amount of time, I felt as if our actions made a difference in these people's lives."

– **Isabel Smith** student, College of Liberal Arts, Healthcare Admin.

auburn.edu/outreach/global/greece.htm

Making connections one class at a time

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) and Outreach Global teamed up to provide a course on the relationship between Africa and South America, exploring the interconnection between the two continents through geography, ecology and culture.

The course was team-taught by Elizabeth Quansah, director of Outreach Global, Sonny Dawsey, retired Auburn University professor of geography and director of the Institute for Latin American Studies, and Bill Deutsch, research fellow emeritus in the Auburn University School of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Sciences and founding director of the Alabama Water Watch and Global Water Watch programs.

Dawsey, who grew up in Brazil, has previously taught courses for OLLI about South America, and Quansah, a Ghanaian American, has previously taught courses for OLLI about Africa. Bringing those ideas together, they shared the history of early civilizations in the two regions and how cross-cultural connections developed through the transatlantic slave trade, which brought 5.5 million enslaved Africans to Brazil until the 1860s. Similarities in dance, music and cuisine are still evident today. OLLI members tried on Ghanaian clothing as part of a mini-



Quansah teaching OLLI's Africa and the South American Connection Class on how to cook Ghanaian "Nkrakra (light soup)" at the Sunny Slope location.



African fair and sampled foods to learn about the shared influences in traditional dishes.

The past physical connection between Africa and South America before Pangea broke apart can be seen in the similar ecology and climate. Deutsch's work with Global Water Watch has taken him to South America, Kenya and Rwanda. He shared stories of firsthand experiences while also talking about the health of the environment and how strong aquaculture can benefit rural communities in these regions.

When asked to describe OLLI members, Quansah said, "They are open-minded. They are well-read." It was the many questions and thoughtful conversations that made this class fun.

Through the creative collaboration of OLLI and Outreach Global, these retired Auburn University faculty continue to educate and connect communities across Alabama and the world. OLLI members did have one more question for their instructors by the end of the last class: "When are we going?"

Curiosity never retires.



"When are we going?"

- OLLI at Auburn members



Quansah's Fall 2023 OLLI African and South American Connection class dressed in the various African clothing and accessories.

Korea Corner at Auburn University: Bridging cultures in global education

Korea Corner fosters global perspectives within its community through its Global Studies in Education program. The outreach initiative, now in its 11th year, provides the opportunity for ten East Alabama teachers to explore South Korea each summer. Through its mission to promote diversity and cultural understanding of educators in Alabama, the program has proven to be instrumental in enhancing cultural awareness, enriching educational experiences and building bridges between students and educators.

By delving into the rich tapestry of South Korean culture, education and society, teachers gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by Korean students and families who reside in East Alabama through increased knowledge of Korean culture and Korean educational systems, promoting appreciation of diversity and global education and developing skills and knowledge to teach Korean culture and the value of diversity to students.

Exploring the multifaceted aspects of South Korea has proven to be of tremendous benefit to teachers and students alike.

“We’ve learned a lot about the hardships of Korean students and their place in Korean society, but getting to meet students and parents and talk about their experiences together humanized it for me,” said Opelika City Schools teacher Brenna Flowers. I realized that, even facing unbelievably difficult circumstances, students will still work to find balance in their lives, as long as they are supported at home and at school.”

Auburn City Schools teachers engaged in the program have gained valuable insights into the cultural nuances, educational practices and societal dynamics of South Korea. This newfound knowledge not only enriches their

understanding but also empowers them to create inclusive and globally aware classrooms.

“I get to be the teacher that I wish I had growing up – someone that advocated for me, someone that wanted to celebrate all parts of my culture, someone that valued my background, someone that looked like me, someone that would tell me it’s OK to not ‘fit in’ because I would be creating my own culture and get to experience the best of both worlds,” said Mojen Lau, early education teacher for Auburn City Schools, who participated in the program in 2023.



Through the Global Studies in Education program, Korea Corner contributes to a more interconnected and culturally aware educational environment, fostering understanding among students and educators alike.

To learn more about Korea Corner or for more information on the Global Studies in Education program, visit aub.ie/koreacorner.



The Global Studies in Education program provides East Alabama teachers with the opportunity to explore Korean educational systems and culture to promote global education and the develop skills and knowledge to teach Korean culture and the value of diversity to their students.

Tech topics:

Auburn University hosts forum on the future of EV manufacturing and sustainability

Leaders, researchers and innovators in automotive technology and manufacturing gathered at Auburn University in November 2023 for the 2nd Korea-US Manufacturing Innovation Technology Forum. The event, a joint effort between Auburn University and the Korean Institute of Technology (KITECH), demonstrates the desired outcomes of the memorandum of understanding signed in 2022.

The event focused on electrical vehicle manufacturing and sustainability and was attended by a wide range of stakeholders, including academics and automakers who have been researching EV and battery technologies in Korea and the United States, as well as accounting firms working on policy issues.

The forum was divided into two sessions: a technical session and a special session covering policy and strategy. In his keynote address, Patrick Min, vice

president of the Washington Automotive Journalists Association, and senior product manager at Amazon Automotive, emphasized the challenges of autonomous driving and lack of communication infrastructure, suggesting that “self-driving cars are a long way off.”

“It will take much longer than the automotive industry’s publicly stated plans to move from the current 8% market share of electric vehicles to 100%,” Min said. He noted, however, that the pace of transition is accelerating. “Price is key,” Min said, adding that technologies that can reduce battery costs are needed to bring down EV prices, which are currently well above \$40,000.

Daniel Yu, assistant director for the global leadership initiative within Auburn University’s Office of Professional and Continuing Education, has worked



in the automotive industry and manufacturing operations, management and new technology adoption for the past 30 years. He shared the results of his research and analysis on the need for Korean manufacturers in the southeastern U.S. to adopt manufacturing innovation technologies, which was funded by KITECH USA.

Yu emphasized the importance of building infrastructure to address manufacturing innovation, technology issues and education. “EV electrification is a huge opportunity for growth in Korea and the southeastern US,” he stated.

“Auburn, Alabama, is in the heart of the automotive belt centered around the Hyundai Kia plant,” said Dr. Kwangjin Lee, director of KITECH USA, who co-hosted the forum. “We organized the forum to share new technology trends and ideas with companies based on academic research.”

“The southern U.S. is one of the fastest growing regions in the U.S. due to electrification,” said Lee. “We plan to create a good model for responding to the rapidly changing environment, such as EV electrification and factory automation, by collaborating with automakers and suppliers.”

Since 2015, Auburn has worked closely with KITECH on projects, including the “Korea U.S. Automotive Technology Workshop” and various technology support and research projects.

In 2022, Auburn University President Christopher B. Roberts signed an MOU with Nak Kyu Lee, president of KITECH, to expand upon the collaborative research efforts of Auburn’s faculty and laboratories with local companies supported by KITECH.



Auburn University hosted the second Korea-US Manufacturing Innovation Technology Forum Nov. 2, 2023, with a keynote address by Patrick Min, vice president of the Washington Automotive Journalists Association, and senior product manager at Amazon Automotive.

Tiger Giving Day 2024 smashes records: 45 projects fully funded, raising \$740,000+

The day, held on April 10, raised more than \$740,000 for special initiatives that support students and faculty, as well as local and even global communities. More than 4,240 donors participated in Tiger Giving Day.

Francelle Sanderford, a 1965 alumna, has supported Tiger Giving Day since 2019.

“I really appreciate Tiger Giving Day and the opportunity it allows me to give to causes that interest me,” she said. “It is also interesting to see the final results and to know I had a part in the success of the event.”

The unique day of giving places an emphasis on grassroots-led projects from across campus. With achievable, single-day funding goals, many programs can meet critical funding needs. Five programs from University Outreach exceeded their fundraising goals.



Rural Health Initiative

Donors helped Auburn University faculty and students remap the landscape of health across rural Alabama. With more than \$21,373 in funding, the Rural Health Initiative will better engage with community members to focus on their priority health needs. Efforts include purchasing health equipment for students in nursing, pharmacy, speech, language, hearing, nutrition and other areas to use during their clinical placements at rural health initiative sites.



OLLI

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) received \$12,290 toward its programming efforts to connect adults with opportunities to continue learning throughout their lifetime, but also to socialize with other adults in the same stage of life. The funding will allow the program to address the waiting lists for its hands-on classes by enhancing their infrastructure for furniture, cooking class equipment and more.



Rural Teaching Fellows

Auburn University Outreach and the College of Education received \$13,373 to fund stipends for student teachers in their Rural teaching Fellowship program. The program addresses teacher shortages in provincial areas and provides collaboration among current teachers, student-teacher fellows and K-12 students so they may learn from each other while incentivizing teaching in a rural Alabama community.



The Campus Kitchen

The Campus Kitchen at Auburn University (CKAU) received \$16,670 to create mobile food pantries

strategically positioned across Auburn and Opelika. The project directly addresses the pressing issue of food insecurity within our community. Accessible mobile pantries will provide immediate relief to families and individuals who experience challenges in accessing an adequate food supply, and eliminate any stigma associated with receiving items vital to a person's health. The funding will assist CKAU in building, maintaining and stocking the mobile pantries for the first year.



Young Professionals in Training

Young Professionals in Training (YPiT) is a mentoring program for students grades 5-12 from underserved populations in Auburn and surrounding communities. The program focuses on college and career readiness, as well as social and emotional development.

Thanks to \$7,250 raised on Tiger Giving Day, YPiT students have the opportunity to attend summer enrichment programs at Auburn University. Student participants will learn from positive role models. They

will develop confidence, self-reliance, independence, social skills and a sense of belonging. Student participants will also have the opportunity to meet people from a variety of backgrounds and receive academic support, as well as college preparation.



ACES Field Internship Program

In addition, the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service (ACES) received \$10,265 to welcome a new generation of student participants to its field internship program. ACES fulfills one of Auburn's land grant missions, but not all students are aware of the opportunities it affords. Field internships with ACES are personalized to the student based on their major and interests, but they also give them the opportunity to use their degrees while giving back to communities through participation in educational events and programs. Extension professionals who serve as intern mentors gain leadership experience, too.

Tiger Giving Day 2024 has ended, but your support for these programs does not have to. If you would like to learn more about how to support a cause that matters to you, please email tgd@auburn.edu.

According to Vice President for University Outreach Royrickers Cook, the support for outreach projects in Tiger Giving Day was outstanding. "This year's Tiger Giving raised a record \$70,956 for five Outreach initiatives," noted Cook. "This reflects both the immense generosity of our Auburn alumni and friends, as well as their keen interest in the outreach mission and projects which directly impact community well-being."

- Royrickers Cook, Ph.D., Vice President for University Outreach and Associate Provost

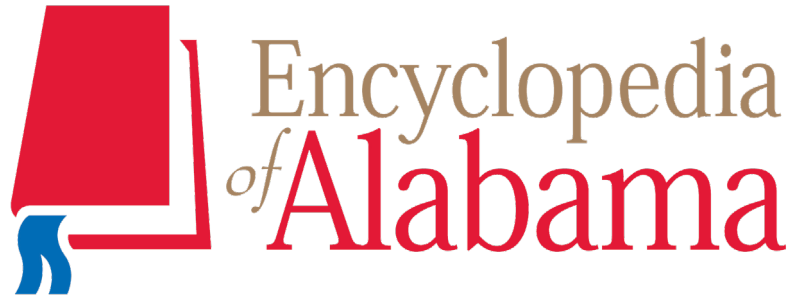
FIVE
Projects
\$70,956

Auburn University
Outreach's five projects for
Tiger Giving Day were fully
funded by generous donors.

Last report from May 13, 2024

Radio host uses Encyclopedia of Alabama to research show topics

Every weekday, Carolyn Hutcheson, host of In Focus on Troy Public Radio, broadcasts conversations with artists, historians, experts, environmentalists, musicians, authors and other newsmakers. Although she eschews being called a storyteller — she is adamant that her guests are the ones doing that — Hutcheson has a talent for holding listeners' attention by bringing the human-interest angles to the surface.



Her piece on Alabama's famous moonshiner Clyde May is one example. A press release about a new distillery opening in Troy, Alabama, led to an opportunity to interview May's grandson. The conversation became a two-part In Focus story that covered May's history, the creation of an official state spirit and even a bit of history about law enforcement. As with many of Hutcheson's interviews, she prepared for it with research.

"The Encyclopedia of Alabama is my go-to resource," said Hutcheson. "Sometimes an interview is scheduled very quickly, and EOA is a quick reference point to see what is there." In this case, there was an EOA article on May written by someone Hutcheson had interviewed, historian Monica Tapper, an instructor at Wallace Community College in Selma.

In addition to EOA making her research easier, there is a high probability that the articles Hutcheson finds are written by people she has interviewed or whose works she has read over the years while she has been hosting the show.

For instance, she turned to EOA to prepare for an interview with a historian from Florida about aviation pioneer Lewis Archer Boswell. He was a Talladega County resident who received a patent in 1874 for propeller-like devices designed to move a machine through the air. Hutcheson found Boswell mentioned in the EOA article on early aviation experiments in Alabama, written by Billy J. Singleton, a community leader and author from Clanton who has been on her show.

"EOA is like a treasure hunt," said Hutcheson. "It spurs my interest and makes me want to dig deeper. It is a lot of fun, and you can spend hours there." In Focus podcasts can be found at www.soundcloud.com/troypublicradio.

University Outreach administers the Encyclopedia of Alabama, the state's premier online resource for information on Alabama's history, culture, geography and natural environment. It is accessible from any internet-connected device.

Scholarships open pathways to summer camps and college readiness

Summertime on the Plains. If you know, you know. College Street becomes seasonably quiet, and the line for a Toomer's lemonade is refreshingly short. It is also when Auburn Youth Programs, or AYP, hosts thousands of campers who travel from across the country to attend one or more of the 50-plus summer camps and programs offered on Auburn University's campus.

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of academic partners, AYP offers several scholarship opportunities so students can develop skills, explore a passion and experience campus life with little to no out-of-pocket expense.

Each summer, more than \$200,000 is awarded to nearly 300 campers, making summer camp at Auburn University more accessible than ever.

This year, AYP will host a unique residential experience for rising eighth graders through Auburn's Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) Achieve initiative, a grant-funded program led by the College of Education and University Outreach aimed at providing greater college and career-readiness support for Alabama middle school students. Throughout the week-long camp, students participate in academic enrichment activities

related to math and science to build confidence and further interest in STEM and business and technology-related fields. They engage in daily career exploration workshops and are introduced to the college planning process.

More than 50 high school students can attend 21st Century Explorers camp through the Alabama 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant, a U.S. Department of Education program that supports expanded learning opportunities outside of regular school hours. Campers participate in hands-on experiences on the Auburn University and Southern Union State Community College campuses. During the week-long camp, participants explore college



and career focus options, including health care, architecture, aviation, design and construction and take part in mentoring training in preparation for fulfilling their 40-hour volunteer requirement.

The McWhorter School of Building Science hosts the Construction Management Summer Academy for Young Women. The camp affords females the opportunity to learn about the exciting and diverse career opportunities available in construction management through hands-on construction projects, a field trip to an active construction site, and industry-specific team exercises to evoke critical thinking and problem-solving skills.



Auburn University College of Architecture, Design and Construction offers full camp scholarships to high school students attending architecture camp. During the week-long camp, students learn and gain guidance from faculty within the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture. The workshop-style program begins with basic design concepts and leads students through real-world architectural design experiences. As they complete and present their projects, students gain a broad perspective of the various aspects of design.



Discovery MedCamp, hosted by the Southeast Alabama AHEC and led by the Auburn University Interprofessional Education (IPE) faculty team, awards more than 30 combined full and partial camp scholarships to Alabama high school students interested in pursuing a career in the medical field. The camp's mission is to empower students to make informed decisions about their future career paths. It introduces nine areas of health care, including osteopathic medicine, nursing, social work, speech and audiology, pharmacy, dietetics, physical therapy, occupational therapy and athletic training. Campers tour the labs and go behind the scenes at East Alabama Medical Center for an up-close look at the real world of medicine.

The World Affairs Youth Seminar, conducted by faculty, staff, and students from Auburn's College of Education and members of the Persistent Issues in History Network, awarded seven students with partial camp scholarships. The seminar uses the Model United Nations (MUN) forum to examine global issues in a real-world context. Participants assume the role of country delegates and strive to accurately represent the viewpoints of their assigned country in daily MUN General Assembly sessions.

The Minority Introduction to Engineering program (MITE) is a week-long residential program that exposes underrepresented students to engineering design processes that are used to solve some of the world's most pressing challenges. Participants explore engineering through hands-on activities led by faculty and administrators. Full camp scholarships



Campers explore options in the health care field. High school students are able to receive an up-close look at real world medicine by experiencing 9 different healthcare options.

are awarded to rising ninth through 12th graders who want to learn more about careers in engineering and the overall impact that one can have in the field.

“We appreciate our academic and community partners for all they do, from creating exceptional curricular experiences to providing funds for camp scholarships. They’re making Auburn accessible, opening doors to the university, and I think that captures the mission of Outreach,” said Jim Franklin, OPCE assistant director for Auburn Youth Programs.

AYP’s campus and community partners offer several full and partial scholarships. Applications and deadlines vary by program. For more information on Auburn Youth Programs, camp offerings or scholarship opportunities, visit auburn.edu/summercamps.

AYP, offered through the Office of Professional and Continuing Education (OPCE), is an extension of University Outreach that sponsors and executes a

variety of summer programs designed to educate and inspire youth. AYP exists to promote educational and enjoyable summer programs to empower youth to find their passion, strengthen skills and shape their future.

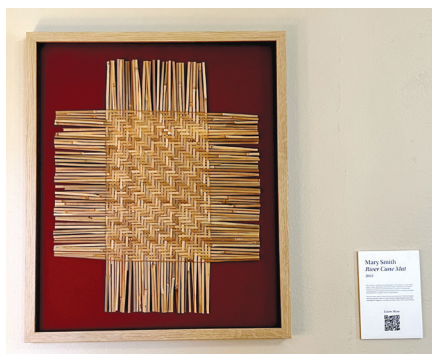


River Cane mat added to collection: collaboration involving award winning artist Mary Smith

On a warm May day, the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities team, Mark Wilson, Maiben Beard and Erica Dalton, spent the day watching award-winning Muscogee Creek artist Mary Smith teach basket weaving.

The purpose of the visit was twofold: not only did participants spend the day learning the art of basket weaving and interviewing Mary about her artistic practice, but they also delivered locally harvested river cane. Mary Smith's work is featured in museums around the country, and she is credited with reintroducing the traditional double-false braid rim technique in basket weaving.

Thanks to the generosity of John Beaver, curator for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Cultural Center and Archives



The finished river cane mat by Muscogee Creek artist Mary Smith hangs in Pebble Hill, the historic Scott-Yarbrough House.



The river cane mat is on view inside Pebble Hill.

Department, the team was able to use a gallery in the Creek Council House museum to interview other Muscogee artists. In addition to time with Mary Smith, they also interviewed Harre Beaver, Diana Beaver, Jon Tiger and the Fife sisters, Jimmie Carole Fife Stewart, Sandy Wilson, Robin Jenkins and Sharon Mouss.

The story of the river cane mat began earlier in May. The Caroline Marshall Draughon Center partnered with Robert Haygens, a traditional basket weaver from Opp, Alabama, to harvest river cane from the property of Bill and Janet Deutsch along Hodnett Creek, near



Muscogee Creek artist Mary Smith with the river cane from Alabama.

Loachapoka, Alabama. Haygens took the river cane to his studio to prepare it for travel.

The culmination of this collaborative effort resulted in the creation of a river cane mat by Mary Smith. The river cane mat was added to the collection at Pebble Hill in August. It adds to the collection of artifacts to tell the story of Creek Indian history, culture and contributions of native peoples who once resided in the majority of what is now the state of Alabama.



From left to right, Maiben Beard, Muscogee Creek artist Mary Smith and Erica Dalton.

Anyone interested in seeing the river cane mat can visit Pebble Hill for self-guided tours and guided tours by appointment only during business hours. To make a

reservation, email cmdcah@auburn.edu or call 334-844-4946.

Visit aub.ie/rivercane to learn more.



Basket weaver Robert Haygens and Center Director Mark Wilson examine river cane along Hodnett Creek, near Loachapoka.

Drumming up opportunities: Auburn Outreach hosts Huntsville Community Drumline participants

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), in conjunction with the Center for Educational Outreach and Engagement (CEOE) and the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for Arts and Humanities, invited the community to “Live Life Loud” with the Huntsville Community Drumline during the OLLI Brown Bag series on Feb. 28.

The Huntsville Community Drumline was founded in 2010 by Angela Walker, a retired teacher for Huntsville City Schools, when she saw the need for affordable non-academic, non-sports related after-





school youth programs. This successful program has developed more than 5,000 youth, providing them with opportunities to learn a craft that could lead to scholarships. In 2020, they launched a free percussion

class called “Gran Masters” designed to help adults over 60 improve brain function and increase socialization after the pandemic.



While at Auburn University, the program's fifth through ninth grade "Stickmasters" had the opportunity to tour Pebble Hill and see a World War I era drum before performing at the OLLI Brown Bag Series. Afterward, CEOE arranged for the students to meet with professors and percussionists in the Department of Music to talk about a path to college through music. Outreach Ambassadors provided students with a tour of campus.

The Auburn University Outreach community came together to show how these students could use the hard work they are doing now to master music to shape their future. For more information about OLLI at Auburn, visit www.auburn.edu/outreach/olliatauburn.

For more information about the Center for Educational Outreach and Engagement, visit www.auburn.edu/outreach/ceoe.



Honda partners with Harbert for executive education

Honda's automobile manufacturing plant in Talladega county covers almost 5 million square feet on a site of 1,350 acres, employs more than 4,500 people and represents a \$3 billion capital investment in Alabama's economy.

It requires many levels of good leadership to make such a sizable operation run smoothly. Experts at Auburn University's Harbert College of Business have adapted an existing program they feel can help, and after submitting a proposal to Honda, the two have expanded an existing partnership with Auburn that



Honda employees participating in the iLEAD leadership certificate program through the Harbert College of Business (pictured here with Aubie) were on campus Aug. 25 for the first of six instructional sessions.

combines business expertise with engineering and technical mentorship.

“We’re very excited to be here, and I’m personally excited to be back in Auburn,” said Honda leadership team member and Auburn alumnus Marty Cash during the program’s opening session on Aug. 25 at Auburn’s Horton-Hardgrave Hall.

The 16 participants from this cohort will convene on the Auburn campus for six day-long sessions over the course of the next two semesters for dual instruction in leadership and team dynamics to guide people toward success.

Members of this cohort completing all coursework will earn an iLEAD (Integrating Leadership Essentials through Applied Development) certificate from Harbert College. The leadership training is in addition to their efforts to earn a graduate certificate in Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE) from Auburn’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering.

Jim Parrish, Harbert’s executive director of Full Time and Online Graduate and International Programs, explained how the engineering and business colleges worked together to help boost the university’s partnership with Honda.

“The ISE certificate and the iLEAD program are stand-alone experiences,” Parrish said. “Our College of Engineering partners reached out to see if our iLEAD program could be developed for the associates from Honda.

“We have conducted similar leadership experiences through our partnership with Radiance Technologies. Our relationship with [Ginn College of Engineering] and their familiarity with our programs was truly paramount in connecting with Honda.”

The combination of Auburn’s leadership training with engineering and technical training is an attractive concept for Honda, one of its senior officials said in an earlier announcement of the partnership.

“Developing technical skills and capabilities is a top priority for our associates, and Honda’s decision to participate in this educational program stems from our commitment to our associates to foster professional development opportunities,” said Stephen Woodry, quality leader for the Alabama Honda facility. “Our industry is changing and the skills and requirements to build high-tech vehicles is also changing with the shift to electrification, alternative fuels and automated vehicles.”

Harbert, meanwhile, hopes that the Honda partnership will also create additional interest from other corporate partners seeking to share a similar leadership development experience, Parrish said.

“There are many facets of iLEAD that are applicable to every organization,” he said.

Parrish’s message to other companies who might consider a similar proposal? “Connecting other leaders and investing in their growth is always going to be in style,” he said. “While the iLEAD program will connect participants to talented Harbert faculty and staff, the learning within the cohort is where the true power is.”

For industry leaders who are looking for ways to develop their teams, Parrish would love to have a conversation about meeting their needs.

For more information about Auburn University’s iLEAD program, contact Jim Parrish, jim@auburn.edu; about Harbert College of Business, harbert.auburn.edu; or Sam Ginn College of Engineering, eng.auburn.edu.

Auburn University initiates AI smart manufacturing education program through NSF grant

Integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into advanced manufacturing has promising potential to revolutionize productivity and generate new jobs in smart manufacturing. Several Auburn University faculty members have recently been awarded a nearly \$200k National Science Foundation (NSF) Rapid Response Research (RAPID) Grant to initiate a career-driven AI educational program for high school students to prepare them for these opportunities. This project is a collaborative effort between the College of Engineering and the College of Education.

Peter Liu, assistant professor in the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering; Melody Russell, alumni professor of science education in the Department of Curriculum and Teaching; and Chih-hsuan Wang, professor in the Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Technology, have teamed up to develop an innovative AI curriculum for high school students from underserved school districts in the state of Alabama. The curriculum will focus on the integration of artificial intelligence and additive manufacturing content and processes into the science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM, curriculum through a one-week summer camp.

“We can foresee that in the future AI will be a very important tool for the workforce,” Liu said. “We want to teach these students these tools at an early age to solve some of the problems in manufacturing and possibly the future.”

Russell agreed.

“This is so important for workforce development in the state of Alabama and in our region, relative to AI,” she said. “We are excited about this collaboration,

which entails the development and implementation of an innovative curriculum for 50 high school students from underserved districts. This project will also provide transformative professional development for high school teachers, which is a key element for broadening participation in STEM.”

Wang added that it is also important for students to learn to use AI in diverse ways.

“We want to teach these students that they can incorporate AI in a different way, in a positive way,” she said. “It’s not about just learning it, but knowing how to utilize it to improve our life in the future.”

In addition to the students, 10 high school teachers will be recruited for a three-day intensive professional development institute before the student summer camp. Teachers will facilitate and lead the summer camp activities, engage in the development and implementation of the curriculum and develop lessons specifically for their own classroom and school.

The team will use the summer camp outreach experience to provide insight on strategies for engaging high school students and teachers in AI and additive manufacturing content to broaden participation in STEM for students in underserved school districts and interest in careers in AI and smart manufacturing.

“We want to develop a curriculum that these teachers can take back to their school and use to build a sustainable program,” Liu said. “We hope to use this camp as a springboard to gain more funding in the future and expand this program to share with more communities.”

GEDI's Intensive Economic Development Training Course turns 40

Building Local Leaders for Economic Development

Since the fall of 2015, Auburn's Government and Economic Development Institute (GEDI) has partnered with the Economic Development Association of Alabama (EDAA) to educate and empower elected officials and business and community leaders around the state. The EDAA Leadership Institute is designed to improve local economies by strengthening community leaders. In a series of workshops offered online and in locations around the state,

leaders learn from industry experts about topics critical for growth and prosperity.

The 2024 program has been revised and now includes classes on the use of data, information and technology for economic development; economic development financing and deal structuring; the site selection visit: best practices from the pros and keys to extraordinary results in ordinary communities. Courses can be taken on a stand-alone basis, but the focus is on having students earn a leadership institute certificate. To earn a certificate, participants



must complete four one-day courses and attend at least one summer or winter EDAA Conference. Since the EDAA leadership program was launched, over 75 participants have earned GEDI-EDAA certificates. The certificates are awarded annually during the EDAA Summer Conference. Anyone interested in learning more about the institute should visit GEDI's website at www.auburn.edu/gedi/daaleadership or contact GEDI at 334-844-4782.

Intensive Economic Development Training Course celebrates 40 years

The Government and Economic Development Institute is celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Intensive Economic Development Training Course at Auburn University. "Intensive," as it is commonly known, has been educating economic development professionals, elected officials and community and business leaders for four decades, impacting their

careers and communities across Alabama and beyond. This program, which takes place over a week in the summer and a second week in the fall each year, is a deep dive into the most pertinent aspects of economic and community development. The first week, accredited by the International Economic Development Council fulfills one of the prerequisites for those who wish to take the exam for the Certified Economic Developer designation. The second week covers topics and resources unique to Alabama. Spire Energy is the presenting partner for the Intensive Economic Development Training Course.

Intensive is taking place at The Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center, located at 241 South College Street in Auburn on July 8-12, and Sept. 16-19. In addition, an alumni reunion is planned for October 28-30 this year in Auburn.

For more information, visit auburn.edu/gedi/intensive or call 334-844-4782.



Circle K International

Renews commitment to service leadership and fellowship

Live to Serve Love to Serve, the motto of Circle K International (CKI), perfectly embodies Liza Devane's approach to service and the opportunity she has to make a positive impact on the Auburn University campus and the surrounding community.



Devane, a recent graduate in exercise science, has served as president of CKI at Auburn University for the past year. "We serve to make a difference in people's lives," said Devane. "I personally serve because I just want to give back to the community that has given so much to me over the past four years."

Since 1947, Circle K International, the collegiate branch of the Kiwanis International family, has been committed to developing leaders by offering unique service, leadership and fellowship opportunities that change the world and the lives of its members. CKI members are dedicated to childhood development, environmental justice, mental health and serving those who are food insecure or lack housing.

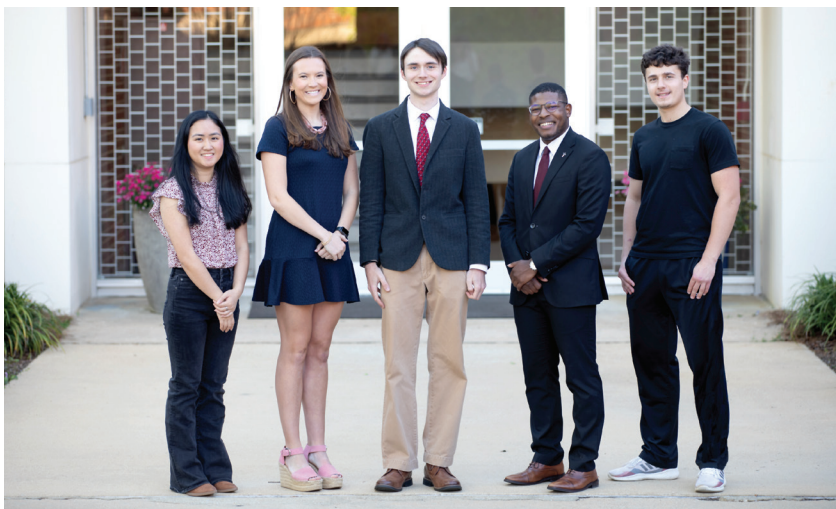
The Auburn University chapter carries on this tradition with a variety of service projects. Over the past year, CKI has

assisted with All In All Pink Breast Cancer Awareness Program, worked with the local food bank, created cards for children who are hospitalized, made Valentine's cards and provided treats for the Boykin Community Center senior program and made dog toys for the Lee County Humane Society.



One of the service projects that Devane particularly enjoyed included a collaboration between CKI, the Kiwanis Club and the Key Clubs from Lee-Scott Academy and Auburn High School.

"We came together as a club along with Kiwanis and the Lee-Scott Academy and Auburn High School Key



CKI executive team - (from left to right) Josie Williams, Liza Devane (outgoing president), Josiah Yarborough (president), Jamie Candy and Tioma Turkic. Circle K International at Auburn University is a sponsored student organization.

Live to serve.

clubs to do a project at the food bank,” said Devane. “That was really fun because we all got to come together for an hour, and we packed over a thousand bags of food for less fortunate kids in the community. It was a very meaningful opportunity. We were able to impact quite a few lives and make a difference.”

In addition to providing numerous opportunities to give back, serving as president of CKI, organizing meetings and service projects and communicating with members and partners has allowed Devane to expand her leadership and communication skills.

In addition to providing an outlet for her passion for service and building on her leadership skills, CKI gives Devane valuable fellowship opportunities. “I have loved getting to know people on and off campus and building relationships with students I wouldn’t have otherwise crossed paths with.”

In addition to the projects that have been completed this year, CKI plans to add additional service projects to its calendar including visiting the residents of the EASE House assisted living facility and volunteering with Lee County Literacy.

CKI is open to any Auburn student with a desire to serve. “Anyone on Campus who is service-oriented and has a heart for service is welcome here,” said Devane. “We’re very inclusive and this is just a student-led organization where you can let your creative juices flow and make a difference. We’re open to any service ideas that you have. We just want you to feel welcome.”

CKI at Auburn is advised by the Office of Public Service. For more information about service projects or to join or support the organization, contact Josiah Yarborough, president, at jgy0002@auburn.edu.



2024-25 CKI strategy and brainstorming session - discussing current programs & needs, fundraising, focus areas, recruitment and retention and introducing the new team.



Dog Toys for CARE Humane Society



Senior boxes packing at East AL Food Bank with Lee Scott and Auburn High School Key Clubs and Kiwanis members.



Valentine's Day cards and treats for Boykin Senior Center



Love to serve.

Graduate student receives prestigious fellowship

Keith Matthews, a graduate student in the College of Nursing, received the prestigious Albert Schweitzer Fellowship for 2023. The Montgomery native who is working on his doctoral degree, received both his bachelor's (2009) and master's degree (2014) from Auburn.

Since graduating with a master's degree in nursing, Matthews has worked as a nurse practitioner at Unity Wellness Center, an AIDS Service Organization (ASO) in Opelika, Alabama. "The position was open when I was applying even though I knew nothing about HIV. Over the years, HIV has become my passion, and I can't see myself working with any other patient population. It's a vastly interesting field, and the patients and their challenges make my work even more exciting," he said.

According to Matthews, all the patients who come to ASO have been diagnosed with HIV. "On a national level, half of new HIV diagnoses occur in the South. Alabama has about 24,000 people diagnosed with HIV, but due to the stigma associated with the disease, the incidence rate is underreported," said Matthews.

"Where HIV was once a death sentence, advances in antiretroviral therapy can now help an infected person become virologically suppressed and live a normal life span as someone without HIV.

Improving the health of others has always been important to me, but getting to serve this marginalized population was the next logical step. Even though my primary work is HIV, I also address primary care and mental health needs."

East Alabama
Health 
UNITY WELLNESS
CENTER



THE ALBERT
SCHWEITZER
FELLOWSHIP®

Matthews says the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship will help him develop future research projects and studies that can positively impact HIV care and the overall health of his patients.

“With current therapies, patients can remain virologically suppressed on as little as one pill taken daily. And once they achieve virologic suppression, they can no longer transmit the virus! My goal is to get all my patients to optimal health. By working with their case managers, we are able to address medical needs as well as assist with housing, insurance and food needs,” said Matthews.

“I will be focusing on Mental Health screenings and treatment for my patients. Over the years working at Unity Wellness, I have seen the negative impact of untreated mental health conditions on HIV adherence and overall health. I will be screening all patients at Unity Wellness Center for depression, anxiety, alcohol and substance abuse then look to connect them with appropriate counseling services and potential treatment with medications. Fortunately, I will be able to perform my fellowship duties at my current practice site.”

In addition to providing higher-quality care for patients, during his tenure as a fellow Matthews hopes to gain more skills in leadership development and future project coordination while networking with some of the best health care workers in Alabama.

“Keith is an unbelievable DNP student,” said Dr. Linda Gibson-Young, professor in the College of Nursing. “He consistently impacts care of those living with HIV. He is a true leader as an FNP and nurse in Alabama.” Founded in the fall of 2015, the Alabama Fellows Program is one of 13 active Schweitzer programs across the U.S. dedicated to developing a pipeline of emerging professionals who enter the workforce with the skills and commitment necessary to address unmet health needs. Alabama Schweitzer Fellows are competitively chosen from students enrolled in graduate and professional schools around the state who demonstrate a passion for cultivating positive change in Alabama communities with the greatest need.

The fellowship provides students the opportunity to effectively address social factors that impact health and develop lifelong leadership skills. In doing so, they will follow the example set by famed physician humanitarian Albert Schweitzer, for whom the fellowship is named.



Matthews presenting at the 2024 Gulf South Summit hosted at Auburn University.

Founded in fall of 2015, the Alabama Fellows Program is one of 13 active Schweitzer programs across the U.S. dedicated to developing a pipeline of emerging professionals who enter the workforce with skills and commitment necessary to address unmet health needs. Alabama Schweitzer Fellows are competitively chosen from students enrolled in graduate and professional schools around the state, who demonstrate a passion for cultivating positive change in Alabama communities where the need is greatest.

COMPASSION IN ACTION

Auburn students partner with REACH to support individuals with memory loss



The REACH community respite program provides engagement and socialization for individuals living with memory loss.

Each semester, speech-language pathology graduate students in the College of Liberal Arts lead engaging social activities for members of the Auburn community living with memory loss.

“The participants and volunteers alike consistently report having the best time with students at REACH,” Jones said. “Dementia is truly a cruel type of disease and those living with it hear the word ‘no’ in so many

The Refresh, Encourage, Activities, Care, Hope (REACH) community respite program provides engagement and socialization for individuals living with dementia, Alzheimer’s disease or other forms of memory loss. Auburn students lead REACH activities that stimulate cognitive and language abilities, including music, art, fine-motor activities and exercise. Director Sarah Jones said students contribute to the community of hope at REACH by creating a safe and fun environment for participants.





Auburn students lead REACH participants in a table-based activity.

ways so very often. SLHS students are committed to saying 'yes' to our participants and letting them fully be themselves just as they are in the moment by emphasizing what they can do rather than what they cannot."

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) specialize in the prevention, assessment and treatment of speech, language, social communication, cognitive communication and swallowing disorders in children and adults. Many of the REACH participants



SLP students with REACH friends.

experience expressive language difficulties in addition to memory loss, and evaluation and treatment for both falls within the SLP scope of practice.

Meri Blake Waldrop, a graduate student and teaching assistant in the Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences, said participating in the REACH program was a source of practical learning, relationship building, and joy.

“REACH’s purpose and mission reiterated my original passion for the field of speech-language pathology – affirming the dignity and worth of every individual, regardless of communication or cognitive impairments he or she may have,” Waldrop said. “This experience was by far one of my most treasured of graduate school and I am expectant to see how this program continues to pave the way for advocacy in quality of life for individuals with dementia and their loved ones.”

The Centers for Disease Control estimates that nearly six million people in the U.S. live with Alzheimer’s

disease and related dementias. The Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences’ partnership with REACH provides students with experience with adults like those they would evaluate and treat in medical settings.

Laura Willis, clinical professor and clinic coordinator for the speech-language pathology program, said the partnership with REACH expands the department’s outreach activity, prepares students to serve and advocate for patients and supports REACH’s need for volunteers.

“Students treat each individual with integrity, compassion and respect and apply knowledge learned in the classroom to facilitate confidence and communication in the participants,” Willis said. “REACH is a beautifully unique place that allows us to be present in the moment and appreciate the joy of communication in any form. We are grateful that REACH has welcomed us to their family and allows us to build relationships and serve the participants and their families.”



SLP students lead REACH participants in a game.

Living Democracy program shares stories

For the past 13 years, Auburn students participating in Living Democracy, a program of the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities and the David Mathews Center for Civic Life, have shared hundreds of stories about the rural communities where they live for 10 weeks each summer on the Living Democracy site: auburn.edu/livingdemocracy.

In the summer of 2023, those stories found a wider audience when the Montgomery Advertiser published the work.

Paige Windsor, an Auburn University journalism graduate who was the executive editor of the Advertiser in 2023, saw the value of the partnership that resulted in 40 student-written stories published last summer.

Windsor, currently the senior director of the local news division of Gannett/USA Today, said, “The Living Democracy writers made it possible for us to provide human-interest coverage of these rural communities, places that typically aren’t featured in statewide



Artist Dorothy Vaughan shares her love for mosaics with the Elba community and Living Democracy student, Mikailie Caulder.



Living democracy student Jessica Criswell reports on the Alpha Women's Resource Center in Jackson, Alabama, that offers life-changing beginnings by providing hope and emotional, mental and spiritual support for women seeking medical care.

media unless something catastrophic happens. That benefits all our readers, some of whom are from rural areas and can delight in stories about life in a small town."

The stories, which were also published in Gannett newspapers in Tuscaloosa and Gadsden, were appreciated by readers "who enjoy getting a slice of

life from a community that wasn't their own," Windsor noted. Collectively, she added, the stories "highlighted the beauty and ingenuity of rural Alabamians."

Most importantly, she said the stories had real impact. "Statewide decision-makers read the Montgomery Advertiser, and stories like these from all parts of the state highlight that Alabama's many constituencies have unique needs and solutions to problems."



Living democracy student Kaitlin Stabler has a deep appreciation for hometown, role of citizens in Camden as reflected in her writing.



An article written by Living democracy student Kaitlin Stabler features Ieshia Smith, CEO and founder of MDCT Credit Solutions, which stands for Making Dreams Come True. Smith decided to make finances easier to digest for children in Wilcox county schools where financial literacy isn't a part of the curriculum. Smith writes children's books about money management and visits local schools and youth organizations, using her work to initiate the conversation about responsible financing and financial literacy.

The 2023 Auburn University students who enjoyed seeing stories published under their bylines were Mikailie Caulder, Jessica Criswell, Payton Davis, and Kaitlin Stabler. Living Democracy students are members of the David Mathews Center for Civic Life Jean O'Conner Snyder Internship Program (JOSIP).

Jessica Criswell, who served in her hometown of Chatom, said, "The most exciting part of being published by the Advertiser was seeing such important people in Chatom be celebrated on a larger scale. Many of the subjects in my stories deserve so much recognition for their service to rural communities." She added, "I also hope the stories serve as motivation for others to know that no matter who you are or where you live, there is something that you can do to serve others."

Writing about rural life has been a vital component of Living Democracy since its inception in 2012. Nan Fairley recently retired associate professor of journalism has worked with Mark Wilson, director of the Draughon Center, on the initiative since it began.

Since then, more than 500 stories written by Living Democracy students have been published on the Living Democracy site. Fairley, who works with the students as a writing coach and editor, said she was proud to see student work published in the Advertiser. "They gained a deeper understanding of their communities and will carry both their writing and civic engagement experiences with them into future careers. They also delighted in the impact the Montgomery Advertiser series had in their respective communities." The partnership is continuing in the summer of 2024.



Living democracy student Mikailie Caulder reports on the removal of a historic dam and the effects on eco-tourism opportunities in Elba, Alabama.

"The collaborative efforts of The Nature Conservancy, the National Parks Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Alabama Scenic River Trails, Restoration 154, the city of Elba, and individual stakeholders promise to bring a new chapter to town when the removal of a historic hydroelectric dam transforms the area into an eco-tourism hotspot."



Living democracy student Jessica Criswell reports on her experiences in the Living Democracy program.

"The opportunities and experiences I gained from JOSIP and Living Democracy changed the course of my life. I discovered new passions and broke through the limitations I had set for myself. I would have never considered myself a writer, and I definitely would not have imagined that my name would be on articles that made a statewide impact."



Living democracy student Payton Davis reported on Collinsville, Alabama – a rural community 20 minutes from the closest Walmart. "It struggles to keep mom-and-pop shops open with big chain stores the town over. Many residents work labor jobs where they're overworked and underpaid. Many don't speak English and don't have citizenship. The removal of a historic dam and the effects on eco-tourism opportunities in Elba, Alabama."

student engagement

Facing tough questions: Nursing student advocates for women's health

Sarah Putzer stands in front of a classroom facing two dozen young women, all seniors at LaFayette High School, who are asking some very hard questions about their bodies, minds and relationships.

While many adults might be uncomfortable or overwhelmed, she is instead excited for the opportunity to answer tough questions. Putzer, who

has worked as an emergency room nurse for more than 23 years, is an advocate for women's health education. As a graduate student in Auburn's Nurse Practitioner program and a Rural Health Fellow, she is currently spending time with residents of LaFayette, Alabama, discussing women's health, including menstrual cycles, sexually transmitted infections and hygiene.



Sarah Putzer works with the Chambers County Community Health & Wellness Center to connect with area residents and has visited the middle and high schools to distribute feminine hygiene products and answer questions about women's health.

Putzer is working with the Chambers County Community Health & Wellness Center to connect with area residents and has visited the middle and high schools to distribute feminine hygiene products and answer questions about women's health.

The Rural Health Fellows program, an offshoot of Auburn's Rural Health Initiative, aims to train future health care leaders to create positive change in health equity. After a rigorous application process this past fall, the seven students who were named Fellows are now gaining experience in rural health care by attending monthly meetings, completing Canvas course modules online and designing and implementing health-centered activities in the LaFayette community. Fellows receive feedback on their projects through regular review sessions with the health service team, along with constructive critiques and mentorship from experienced professionals in their respective fields.

Long before she was named a fellow, Putzer developed an interest in women's health education when she was asked to speak to seventh-grade girls while on a medical mission trip to Kenya.

"Despite feeling nervous and unprepared, I connected with the girls as I realized the challenges they faced due to the lack of access to feminine hygiene products," she said. "This experience led me to understand the critical link between women's health, education and empowerment."

When Putzer returned to Kenya two years later, she decided to focus her efforts on young mothers in the village. Her research into maternal mortality rates highlighted the urgent need for better access to female-specific care around the globe.

"Regardless of location or socioeconomic status, women share everyday experiences and aspirations," she said. "Bonding over our shared hopes and dreams, I was inspired to further advocate for women's health and well-being. I have learned how much health disparities, social inequities and a lack of health education affect women, especially young women."

Putzer is working with the Chambers County Community

Health & Wellness Center to connect with area residents and has visited the middle and high schools to distribute feminine hygiene products and answer questions about women's health. Chambers County has some of the highest rates of human papillomavirus (HPV) and cervical cancer deaths in the state. Putzer hopes to battle these statistics by introducing education to reduce teen pregnancy, increasing awareness of vaccines that prevent HPV-related cancers and promoting regular screenings for cervical cancer.

"They have asked some really good questions," Putzer said. "I had to do some research, so I'm learning things too."

In addition to questions about physical health, many young women have expressed concern in how to care for their mental health. Putzer knows physical and mental health are connected, so she encourages them to go back to the basics and evaluate diet, exercise and sleep as the foundation for their overall health.

"We have to go back to those things we keep hearing: regular exercise, healthy eating, adequate sleep, relaxation techniques, social support, time management and positive thinking," she said. "And know you can always seek professional help."

Back in the high school classroom, Putzer fields questions on the difference between HIV and HPV, why hormonal fluctuations cause moodiness and which yoga poses help relieve cramps. She notices a group of students in a back corner huddled around the notebook, whispering as they write and then rewrite a question they're scared to ask out loud.

Putzer retrieves the notebook, takes a deep breath and dives right into her response, on a mission to answer all the hard questions that come her way.



Rural Health Fellows, a program with Auburn's Rural Health Initiative trains future health care leaders to create positive change in health equity.

Hear ye, hear ye:

Audiology student wants everyone to listen up

When she first started doing hearing screenings at the Chambers County Community Health & Wellness Center in LaFayette, Alabama, Auburn grad student Lexy Barraza had some long, quiet days without patients. But now that she's been there for several months, things are different.

"I have learned progress takes time," Barraza said. "There were many times where I sat in an empty center hoping we would have at least one screening. Now, as my team and I have been consistently going there every Friday, we have seen more and more people each time."

There are currently no practicing audiologists in Chambers County. Each Friday, Barraza, who is working toward a Doctor of Audiology degree in Auburn's College of Liberal Arts, conducts free hearing screenings for community members as a Rural Health Fellow. She also provides more in-depth hearing-related services with her Audiology faculty mentor to members of the community who schedule appointments through the Auburn University Speech and Hearing Clinic.

The Rural Health Fellows program, which is an offshoot of Auburn's Rural Health Initiative, aims to train future health care leaders to create positive change in health equity. After a rigorous application process this past fall, the seven students who were named Fellows are now gaining experience in rural health care by attending monthly meetings, completing Canvas course modules and designing and implementing health-centered



Rural Health Fellow Lexy Barraza conducts a hearing screening for classmate Abigail Weyerman.



activities in the LaFayette community. Fellows receive feedback on their projects through regular review sessions with the health service team along with constructive critiques and mentorship from experienced professionals in their respective fields.

Many of the Fellows, including Barraza, were motivated to apply for the program because they are originally from rural or underserved areas.

Barraza grew up in a primarily Hispanic community in rural Florida. There was a lack of access to adequate hearing health care in the area, and it didn't stop at audiology — it took an hour to get to most specialty medical providers. After earning a bachelor's degree in health sciences, Barraza took a year off to work as a pharmacy technician, and that experience helped her refine her goals.

"I see a big need for better health care for our Hispanic population," she said. "My specialty is audiology, but I would like to use my knowledge to give back to the Hispanic community as much as I possibly can. I want to take what I have learned from this fellowship and implement that when I graduate."

A young woman uses an instrument to look inside her patient's ear.

Rural Health Fellow Lexy Barraza practices performing an examination on classmate Abigail Weyerman. Barraza initially wanted to be a speech-language

pathologist, but after just one hearing science course, she was sold on audiology.

"I am highly fascinated with sound science," she said. "Along with that, I really enjoy helping someone reconnect with their social environment. When you're not able to hear, it's hard to participate in conversations with family members and friends. Introducing sound back into someone's life is a great feeling."

For the past two years, Barraza has been fitting patients with hearing aids under the guidance of the audiology faculty, and she recently got to deliver her first set of donated hearing aids to a patient in need. After her fellowship ends this May, she would like to continue to work toward expanding access to hearing care in rural communities, and when she graduates in two years, Barraza will hold herself to that commitment.

"I plan to find a practice that caters to a more rural population," she said. "I want to expand access to hearing health care, but first, I need to find a practice that aligns with my values."



out and about
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Outreach News

Foster appointed to David Mathews Center Board

Assistant Vice President Emeritus for University Outreach **Ralph Foster** has been appointed to the board of directors for the David Mathews Center for Civic Life, effective January 2024. The center is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, tax-exempt organization that focuses on promoting effective civic engagement and innovative decision-making to strengthen civic life across Alabama. The Mathews Center's initiatives include the Alabama Civic Health Index, the Alabama Issues Forums, and the annual Civic Institute. Foster, who retired in 2020 after 31 years in University Outreach at Auburn, has remained active in civic engagement initiatives in Outreach as well as other community-based organizations across the state.



Auburn student wins service-learning award

Jessi Riel, a doctoral student in Educational Psychology at Auburn University, received an award for Outstanding Student Contributions to Service-Learning in Higher Education during this year's Gulf South Summit. Reil serves as program director at O Grows Community Garden, a community-university partnership between Auburn University and the City of Opelika, Alabama. As such, she works to design experiential and community-informed educational programming for pre-K through 12th-grade students that builds their critical thinking and real-world skills, especially around participating in local food systems and food justice. Riel also serves as a service-learning coordinator for Auburn University's Department of



Tell your story and engage with University Outreach!

Campus and community friends are invited to use these interactive platforms to share their opportunities, projects and programs.

AuburnServes
aub.ie/auserves

Outreach Programs and Projects Network
aub.ie/outreachpro

The AuburnServes network functions as a repository for community partners to chronicle needs and offer volunteer opportunities to students.



Through this database, Auburn University faculty can share information about their Outreach programs and projects to facilitate further engagement, promotion and partnerships.



Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology and works with undergraduate pre-service teachers to provide them with experience in community-responsive, project-based educational methods to inform their future teaching.

Riel earned a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Auburn University in 2014 and spent the subsequent six years teaching second and third grade, coaching high school soccer, developing a

youth soccer program, and joining community and economic development efforts in the rural Arkansas Delta before returning to Auburn University to contribute to larger-scale educational change and rural community well-being through doctoral research into community-responsive educational models that can simultaneously provide students with exceptional academic opportunities and promote sustainable intergenerational collaboration toward addressing community concerns.



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Outreach

Government & Economic Development Institute



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ASSOCIATION OF ALABAMA

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Educating and engaging elected officials, economic development professionals and other community leaders about key issues in economic and community development.



GEDI/EDAA Leadership Institute



Educating and engaging elected officials, economic development professionals and other community leaders about key issues in economic and community development.

Connect with GEDI:

gedi@auburn.edu or

auburn.edu/outreach/gedi/edaaleadership

Staged Reading: 'Bear County Bulletin'

OLLI at Auburn hosted a staged reading of *Bear County Bulletin* on Friday, May 3, at the Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. *Bear County Bulletin* tells the story of a struggling small-town newspaper and the young intern who discovers that there is always more to the story if you dig deep enough.

OLLI member and instructor Bill Brown wrote the play, and Dan LaRocque and Daydrie Hague, both emeritus professors in Auburn University's Department of Theatre & Dance and members of Actors Equity Association and SAG/AFTRA, directed the play. The actors are members of OLLI participating in the Staged Reading course during Spring term. For more information, please visit aub.ie/ollievents.



AU hosts Alabama OLLI Day

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Auburn University hosted Alabama OLLI Day 2024 on August 3 at the Gogue Performing Arts Center.

The keynote speaker for the event, **Margaret Renkl**, is a New York Times opinion writer and bestselling author. Renkl's latest book, *The Comfort of Crows: A Backyard Year* follows the creatures and plants found in her backyard through the course of a year in a season-by-season rumination on the ongoing pleasures of the natural world. The book is illustrated by the author's brother, artist Billy Renkl. Margaret and Billy Renkl are both graduates of Auburn University now living in Tennessee.



OLLI is a membership program designed to offer non-credit classes, social connection and volunteer opportunities for adults aged 50 and over. Through the OLLI Shares initiative, the OLLI programs at University of Alabama, the University of Alabama in Huntsville and Auburn University collaborate to offer several online courses to members of all three programs. Alabama OLLI Day provides an opportunity for members of OLLI throughout the state to celebrate together. Alabama OLLI Day is open to current OLLI members and the public. For more information, please visit auburn.edu/olli.



GULF SOUTH SUMMIT Executive Committee: Back left to right – Tim Stewart and Rachel Snoddy; third row left to right – Candice Salyers, Sarah Becker, Urkovia Andrews, Josh Podvin; second row left to right – Hollie Cost, Ashley Cochrane, Keller Hawkins; first row left to right – Jocelyn Vickers (chair), Karen Rankin, Taylor Morrison, Whitney Lee

Gulf-South Summit 2024

The Gulf-South Summit was held from April 15-17 at the Auburn University Hotel and Dixon Conference Center. With a theme of "Bridging the Gap Between Personal and Social Responsibility through Knowledge, Engagement, and Action," over 220 attendees from all over the U.S. were in attendance. Students came from as far as Fresno, California, and a number of students, faculty, and staff from Auburn University participated.

Pre-conference events included presentations on Campus Kitchen, Chambers County Rural Health Initiative, Braveheart, and our local government.

The Most Innovative Poster was awarded to Bree Withrow and Jamyah Combs, Mercer University; Most Student Impact – Lauren Shinholster, Mercer University; Most Community Impact – Ahavah Davis, Hannah Puckett, Kaley Happenworth and Maria-Paula McIntyre, Florida State University, the Most Research



Campus Kitchen wins Involvement Award

Campus Kitchen at Auburn University received the award for the **Most Exceptional Campus Organizations through Sponsored Student Organizations** at the Involvement Awards on April 9. In addition, Jocelyn Vickers, director of the Office of Public Service was a finalist for advisor of the year, the second year in a row for Campus Kitchen. Campus Kitchen received an award for being “an organization that most exemplified the traits of an excellent Auburn student organization and that best empowered its members to be impactful Auburn University students as a group.”

Campus Kitchen Mobile Pantry

Ethan McCulloch set out to create a mobile food pantry for Campus Kitchen for his Eagle Scout Project. After designing and building the mobile pantry, Ethan and a group of Campus Kitchen executive board members installed the pantry at Timothy Manor Senior Apartments on April 24.

This is one of the many mobile pantries that Campus Kitchen will install across Lee County. For Tiger Giving Day, Campus Kitchen at Auburn University raised over \$15,000 to build, maintain and stock the mobile pantries around the area.

Let's keep forking hunger! For more information about Campus Kitchen, please go to www.ckau.org.



Impact was by Kathryn Kloepper, Kaylee Barger, and Todd Davis – Mercer University, and the People's Choice Award went to Beat Bama Food Drive, Auburn University. Lynn Pasquerella, President of AAC&U, morning keynote, discussed “The Role of Liberal Education in Bridging to Gap Between Personal and Social Responsibility” and Marisol Morales’ lunch keynote spoke on “Accountability Measures and Organizational Results (AMOR) for Community Engagement Professionals and Leaders.”

Outstanding Practitioner Contributions to Service-Learning in Higher Education went to Rhoda Reddix, Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University; Outstanding Community Partner Contributions to Service-Learning in Higher Education went to Sherri Dennis-Flagg, United Way of Central Georgia; Outstanding Faculty Contributions to Service-Learning in Higher Education – Instruction went to Sinjae Hyun; Outstanding Faculty Contributions to

Service-Learning in Higher Education – Research went to Magdalena Anna Denham; Outstanding Student Contributions to Service-Learning in Higher Education went to Jessi Riel, Auburn University; and Outstanding Service-Learning Collaboration in Higher Education went to the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa YMCA, and Tuscaloosa Parks and Recreation Authority. The 2025 Gulf-South Summit will be in Nashville, Tennessee, March 26–28, 2025. For more information about the Gulf-South Summit go to www.gulfsouthsummit.org.



Sharing Alabama Stories with the National Scrollathon

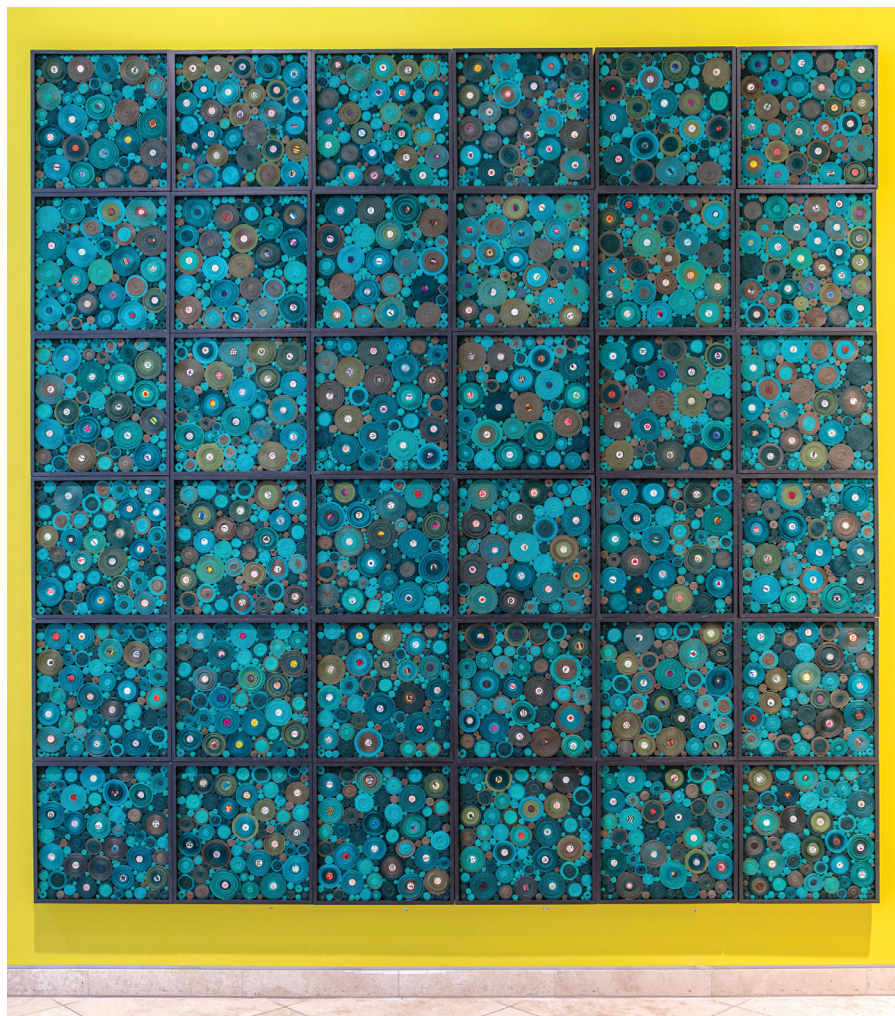
*Auburn museum unites community through art
for Kennedy Center exhibition in Washington, DC*

Thirty participants buzz about the lobby of The Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art at Auburn University when the faint sound of rhythmic clapping begins to build. What they are about to take part in is unlike any museum experience most would imagine. A steady chant lands between the claps, reaching a crescendo: Welcome! Welcome! Welcome to the Scrollathon!

Doors open to a makeshift art studio as the guests file in and find a seat, passing tables lined with colorful fabric trimmings. From there, the energy explodes as brothers and award-winning artists Steven and William Ladd compassionately and humorously command the room for a solid hour. Welcome to the National Scrollathon—part pep rally, part hands-on workshop, yet entirely an expression of individual creativity celebrating the power of story and community. The countrywide visual arts project aims to unite Americans to celebrate the country's 250th Birthday. Thousands of groups like this one from all 50 states and U.S. territories will create a collaborative artwork for an exhibition at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., in 2026.

In March, Auburn's art museum hosted the Alabama edition of the National Scrollathon. In a series of hour-long workshops over five days, approximately 450 community members with and without prior art-making experience rolled strips

of fabric into scrolls. Each participant contributed one scroll to an eight-by-eight-foot collage that will represent Alabama at the Kennedy Center, while they kept the other scroll to commemorate the event. Invited groups were of all ages, ethnicities, abilities and socioeconomic backgrounds. Since 2006, the Ladds and their team have worked with more than 17,000 community artists to blend fine and conceptual art with hands-on educational collaboration.



Steven and William Ladd, *Made for More*, 2024. 6x6 ft. Courtesy of The Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art at Auburn University. Photo: Mike Cortez.

SPEND YOUR LIFE DOING WHAT YOU LOVE

“Beads!” shouts William, appropriately wearing an Auburn baseball cap. “I love beads!” He describes his self-proclaimed obsession with the medium as his brother Steven chimes in with his affinity for textiles and design, telling the audience about their shared journey to New York City, where they have partnered for decades to launch Scrollathon, among other projects.

The brothers share the three tenets they live by with the group. “Number one! Spend your life doing what you love,” William tells the audience, crediting his parents, who encouraged him to pursue his dreams. “Number two! Be focused and disciplined,” adds Steven, who once worked at a gas station and recalled his dad’s advice to give his all, no matter the task. “And number three, to collaborate, which is what we will do with you today.”

EVERYONE’S VOICE WELCOME

The audience first creates a personal scroll made of two-colored fabric strips of their choosing that are rolled together and pinned, titled, signed and placed in a souvenir tin. “Think about your life story,” Steven said, demonstrating the simple act of scrolling and providing inspiration. The Ladds warmly welcome volunteers to the front to share the title, why they picked their shades and patterns and what they mean to them. For some, the objects represent a lighter side, from obsessions with outer space to the peace gained from eight solid hours of sleep. Scrolls also serve as memorials to loved ones, support social causes and personal beliefs, and acknowledge obstacles they have overcome.

Visual arts educator Tricia Oliver teaches seventh grade at East Samford School in Auburn and said her students loved the experience. “Everyone’s voice felt welcome,” she said, adding that the Scrollathon provided an opportunity for authentic interaction and a safe space for peers to see similarities and differences.

“I hope those more profound stories touched the hearts of those in the room enough to say, we’re all human, and I have a voice,” she said. “Isn’t that what art is about? Giving a voice to an idea, a thought, a

hope, a conviction, a history, a story that needs to be shared?”

MADE FOR MORE

The artists then focus on the second scroll, symbolizing the state. Trimmings span shades of green, ranging from mint to lime to emerald, a nod to Alabama’s timber industry, its national forests and growth in sustainability.

“We value your stories,” said Steven. “Your stories are what make up this country. We want you to take an active role in creating what that future can be.”

Participants again select two shades from the green piles and wind the strips around a small wooden dowel. This time, intention is turned toward the nation and observing 250 years since the ratification of the Declaration of Independence. The wooden centers are personalized with initials, small drawings and messages. Each community artist is photographed, with those images assembled in a mural to accompany the piece when on view. Video interviews with select attendees provide oral histories for a multimedia display.

“When people see this piece, they are going to see individuals who look like them,” Steven commented. “That might not always be the case.”

“The Ladds titled the piece ‘Made for More,’ and we installed the collage at the museum. The composition represents our community and state with such joy. No two scrolls are alike—even though they used similar materials,” said museum executive director Cindi Malinick. “Before the piece is loaned to the Kennedy Center, we hope to collaborate with other university entities to install ‘Made for More’ in campus spaces so that students, faculty and staff can experience the impact of this art on the way to class and work.”

“Steven and William Ladd have found a simple yet engaging way to celebrate how we are connected in our humanity,” Oliver said. “I am thankful we were a part of the big story.”



**JULE
COLLINS
SMITH
MUSEUM
of FINE ART**

AT AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Tuggle honored with Fulbright Specialist Award for impactful social work initiatives

Felicia Tuggle, assistant professor in Sociology, received a Fulbright Specialist Program Award to complete a project at African Methodist Episcopal University (AMEU) in Liberia, West Africa. Tuggle will co-develop a Master of Social Work curriculum and facilitate training and workshops for social work educators and practitioners. Additionally, she will interact with government officials and civil society organizations to institutionalize professional social work practice as part of her Fulbright Award.

“This Fulbright Specialist award serves as a catalyst for my faculty engagement and public impact scholarship by facilitating capacity building, culture exchange, cross-disciplinary collaboration and public diplomacy,” Tuggle said. “This award will provide so many meaningful contributions to the advancement of social work education and practice in Liberia because I will be able to co-contribute to curriculum development, faculty development, field practicum enhancement, research collaboration, community outreach and engagement and advocacy and policy development. All of this will ultimately empower individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations with the knowledge and skills to advance sustainable development and improve quality of life.”

Tuggle’s outreach and engagement in Liberia began in 2017 after the country faced two decades of civil war and an Ebola epidemic. The United Nations agencies who



Felicia Tuggle, assistant professor in Sociology



Tuggle facilitating a workshop to social work students and civil society organizations at AMEU.

visited Liberia during the time cited an urgent need for social workers, so Tuggle helped AMEU and the University of Liberia start their undergraduate social work programs. Since then, Tuggle has trained social work educators and practitioners, conducted a national evaluation of social work programs in Liberia and helped the four social work degree-granting universities in the country build undergraduate capacity. With more students graduating with an interest in social work and social development, the need for a master's degree became clear.

Tuggle is one of over 400 U.S. citizens who share expertise with host institutions abroad through the Fulbright Specialist Program each year. Recipients of Fulbright Specialist awards are selected based on academic and professional achievement, demonstrated leadership in their field, and their

potential to foster long-term cooperation between institutions in the U.S. and abroad. Fulbrighters address critical global issues in all disciplines while building relationships, knowledge and leadership in support of the long-term interests of the United States.

The Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government and is designed to build lasting connections between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. The Fulbright Program is funded through an annual appropriation made by the U.S. Congress to the U.S. Department of State. Participating governments and host institutions, corporations, and foundations around the world also provide direct and indirect support to the Program, which operates in over 160 countries worldwide.



President, **Chippewa Thomas**, director, Faculty Engagement, Outreach at Auburn University

ALABAMA CHAPTER OF THE FULBRIGHT ASSOCIATION

Auburn University represented on the newly elected leadership team of Alabama Fulbright Association:

Chippewa Thomas, President

Leslie Cordie, Vice President

Steven Jones

Ashley Brown

Jilisa Milton

Chelsea Jones

Elizabeth Quansah

Priya Menon

Stacye Fraser Thompson

President, Chippewa Thomas, director, Office of Faculty Engagement, Auburn University Outreach

Vice-President, **Leslie Cordie**, associate professor in Adult Education, Auburn University

Secretary and Member-at-large, **Ashley Brown**, AU alumni and co-founder of Lee County Remembrance Project in partnership with the Equal Justice Initiative

Board Members include Chelsea Jones, PhD; Reggie Mitchell, School Psychologist/Independent Contractor; Elizabeth Quansah (founding director of the Office of Outreach Global, Auburn University Outreach); Steven L. Jones, Jr. (interim executive director of the Alabama Transportation Institute and leader of the Transportation Policy Research Center); Jilisa Milton, JD (executive director of GASP, an environmental justice and climate justice organization in central Alabama); Stacye Fraser Thompson (coordinator of International Student Services at Jefferson State Community College); and Priya Menon (professor of English at Troy University).

Alabama Fulbright | (fulbrightchapters.org)

Auburn University is an institutional member of the Fulbright Association.

47th Fulbright Conference | Annual Conference for Fulbright Alumni and Friends.

Visit <https://conference.fulbright.org> for details.







2024 Global Community Day Festival

A day for uniting international and domestic communities to foster a shared exploration of global culture, history and other related opportunities. Outreach Global believes that bringing communities together to experience diverse perspectives will enhance awareness and critical thinking about social issues such as cultural differences, customs, traditions, religion, politics and the world economy.





OLLI Annual Meeting: Celebrating 34 Years of Learning & Community

A celebration of the past, present and future of OLLI - honoring the original director of AUALL/OLLI, Mary Burkhart, as well as the volunteers that continue to make this program a success.





Share your Auburn Outreach story!

**Send your Outreach news, opportunities, projects and programs to
outnews@auburn.edu
or send us your email address to join the monthly newsletter mailing list!**

The Outreach newsletter serves to provide our Auburn Family with ongoing updates regarding the tremendous outreach initiatives that are collaboratively launched between our unit and others across campus to impact citizens across Alabama and beyond. We are pleased to add this to our publication portfolio and hope this will inspire you to join us in making a difference!



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