

# beyond AUBURN

• AUBURN UNIVERSITY'S OUTREACH MAGAZINE •

## Steven Brown

Department of Political Science  
College of Liberal Arts

### *Alabama Justice - Making A Difference*

The Auburn University Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach honors the engagement of exemplary faculty members and demonstrates the tremendous impact Auburn's outreach has on our community, state, nation and beyond.



AUBURN

UNIVERSITY OUTREACH

WINTER 2021



## ON THE COVER

Steven Brown was chosen to receive Auburn's Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach and was recognized at the 2020 Faculty Awards Ceremony in November. Professor Brown is well-liked in the Department of Political Science - College of Liberal Arts.

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**Beyond Auburn** is published by Auburn University twice per year as a joint project of the Office of the Vice President for University Outreach and the Office of Communications and Marketing.

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Vice President for University Outreach and Associate Provost

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AU Photographic Services  
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## Addressing Concerns

As we look back on the previous year, as well as look ahead at the coming months, it is clear that our lives have been changed by the ongoing economic, social and human impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the widespread civil and human rights concerns across our world. Besides the significant health concerns COVID posed for individuals, families and communities alike, once again we are reminded of the disparities in equity, inclusion and opportunity for minority populations in Alabama, especially the African American community.

Significantly, Auburn University's outreach mission has responded to these unprecedented challenges by doing what it does best – extending instructional access, providing expert resources and facilitating community engagement. For example, though face-to-face programs and services were cancelled or postponed due to coronavirus restrictions, the Division of University Outreach immediately adapted and converted many of its courses and conferences to remote online offerings. While the net number of outreach activities was initially reduced, ultimately we expanded capacity to deliver non-credit instructional programs overall. This added capacity and flexibility means more accessible opportunities for continuing education for the public long term.

Taking a lead in promoting inclusion and reducing bias in communities, University Outreach is providing cultural leadership training for civic and educational leaders throughout the state of Alabama through its Culture Bump program. To date, Head Start education staff across the Black Belt, officials in the Birmingham City Schools and many others have participated in Culture Bump, as well as other University Outreach programs promoting inclusive leadership and ethical professional practices.

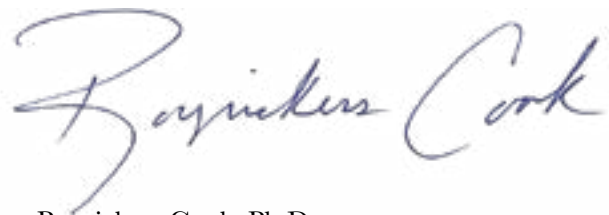
Auburn's faculty have been at the forefront of applying their outreach scholarship to tackle significant challenges facing our society. Steven Brown in the Department of Political Science in Liberal Arts is one such exemplar of engaged scholarship, recognized this year as the recipient of the Auburn University Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach. Brown has amassed an impressive record over the last two decades of effective outreach programming and well-documented scholarship that leverages his innovative teaching, meaningful research and impactful service to benefit his students and colleagues at Auburn, as well as our communities beyond

campus. Through his nationally recognized traveling exhibit, "Alabama Justice: The Faces and Cases that Changed a Nation," Professor Brown has fostered civic education among countless Alabamians while promoting the foundations of equal justice upon which our nation exists. In response, the Alabama Supreme Court unanimously requested the exhibit be placed on permanent display at the State Judicial Building in Montgomery. Congratulations Steve on this singular honor and for your receipt of the Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach.



Indeed, 2020 was a challenging year, but 2021 and beyond promises great opportunity. Once again, the outreach engagement of Auburn's faculty, staff and students in partnership with the public is clearly improving the quality of life for all across our state and beyond. ***Working together, we are making a difference—Join us!***

War Eagle and stay safe,



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



# 2020 Alabama State Economic Report



GOVERNMENT & ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE



2020 Alabama State Economic Report  
Prepared for the Economic Development Administration:  
atlanta Regional Office



Steven Brown was chosen to receive Auburn’s Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach and was recognized at the 2020 Faculty Awards Ceremony in November. Dr. Brown is a well-liked professor in the Department of Political Science - College of Liberal Arts.

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# JAY AND SUSIE GOGUE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

CURTAIN SHOWS WET TIME A INDOORS  
WELCOME YOU OPEN I LOVE UH BELIEVE  
CONGRATULATIONS

## FACULTY AWARDS



# Alabama Justice - Making a Difference

## *Brown's career accolades continue with Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach*

For Steven Brown, outreach has become a valued tool that has helped him develop as a leader among educators at Auburn University.

The professor and Morris Savage Endowed Chair of the Department of Political Science has become a faculty standout and beloved part of the Auburn community since arriving on the Plains in 1998. For his dedication to teaching students of all ages and walks of life in a variety of arenas, success as an author and status as an expert in his field, Brown recently was presented the Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach as part of Auburn's annual Faculty Awards.

The award "honors the engagement of exemplary faculty members and demonstrates the tremendous impact outreach has on our community, state, nation and beyond." Brown—an expert on everything from constitutional law and church-and-state issues to the Supreme Court and American legal history—was flattered to receive such a prestigious award.

"It really is an honor, especially since there is a good bit of outreach that goes on here at Auburn," Brown said. "There are a lot of great things happening, so it is a great honor."

Brown's teaching has been recognized regularly at the departmental, college and university level with numerous awards and nationally in 2006 when he received the National Society of Collegiate Scholars Faculty of the Year Award. He was an inaugural recipient of the Auburn University Parents Association's Faculty Award in 2018, has been awarded several grants, has conducted numerous workshops and spoken at dozens of conferences across the country, as well.

His research topics have ranged from First Amendment church-and-state issues and Christian right litigation strategies to the U.S. Supreme Court and American legal history. After spending a few years working on Capitol Hill as a staff member in the U.S. Senate, Brown began his studies at the University of Virginia thinking he would concentrate his focus on Congress, but fate intervened.

"As professors, we have research skills and the time to be able to explore some of those questions, and it's important for us to share what we have learned."

- Steven P. Brown, professor,  
Department of Political Science, Auburn University



Steven Brown with his new book: *Alabama Justice*, a piece that examines the legacies of eight momentous US Supreme Court decisions that have their origins in Alabama legal disputes.



“I really thought I’d become ‘the Congress guy’ because of my experience on Capitol Hill,” said Brown, who would go on to earn his doctorate from the university in 1998. “I had signed up for a constitutional law class, and the professor happened to be in Japan at the time for the first two or three weeks. I lived in Japan for two years when I was younger, and when he came back, we kind of made this connection about Japan. He took me under his wing, and I ended up becoming a teaching assistant for him.

“I gradually shifted my focus toward constitutional law, and I wrote my thesis and dissertation about it. That’s not how I thought grad school would end, but I’m glad it worked out the way it did. I’m having a lot more fun in this field than I think I would if I had specialized in Congress.”

Brown—who teaches courses in American Constitutional law, religion and politics, law and society and government—is an award-winning writer who has been published regularly since 2002. He received the National Communication Association’s Franklyn S. Haiman Award for Distinguished Scholarship in Freedom of Expression in 2005 for his book, “Trumping Religion: The New Christian Right, The Free Speech Clause and the Courts.”

Brown’s article, “The Girard Will and Twin Landmarks of Supreme Court History,” received the Supreme Court Historical Society’s 2017 Hughes-Gossett Senior Prize which was awarded by Chief Justice John Roberts. Earlier this year, Brown’s book, “Alabama Justice: The Cases and Faces That Changed a Nation,” the companion book to his award-winning traveling exhibition, was awarded the Anne B. and James B. McMillian Prize in Southern History, and the exhibit was named a finalist for the 2020 Silver Gavel Award for Media and the Arts by the American Bar Association.

Brown has committed considerable effort to promoting outreach and providing instruction to a wide range of students through the years, regularly teaching at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, or OLLI, where he has thoroughly enjoyed sharing his knowledge with older students who still have an innate desire for knowledge.

In addition, Brown has served as an instructor for The National Association of Election Officials for more than two decades.

**COMPELLED DISCLOSURE**  
FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND NAACP v. ALABAMA (1958)

**Organizing for Change**

In December 1955, Rosa Parks defied a bus driver's order to obey a segregated-seating law, and her arrest sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Two months later, Auberine Lucy's admittance to the University of Alabama was met by four days of protests in Tuscaloosa. Embarrassed by the national attention that followed, state officials believed that the NAACP was responsible for both.

Attorney General John Patterson learned that the organization had not fulfilled certain registration requirements. He obtained a court order preventing the NAACP from doing further business within the state until it submitted the necessary material.

The NAACP supplied most of the requested information but refused to produce the names of its 14,000 Alabama members. It was held in contempt of court, fined \$10,000, and given five days to comply. When the NAACP again refused to reveal its members, it was fined \$100,000.

**ARGUMENTS BEFORE THE COURT**

**For the NAACP**  
The state's efforts to obtain the membership list violated the freedom of association of the state's NAACP members. In Alabama's tense racial environment, making the names public could result in loss of employment, harassment, and even physical danger.

**For the State of Alabama**  
The request for the membership list was justified by Alabama's interest in knowing who was doing business in the state and why. In addition, as a corporation, the NAACP lacked standing to invoke the constitutional rights of its individual members.

**RULING AND AFTERMATH**

“This Court has recognized the vital relationship between freedom to associate and privacy in one's associations.... Inviolability of privacy in group association may in many circumstances be indispensable to preservation of freedom of association, particularly where a group espouses dissident beliefs.”  
— Justice JOHN MARSHALL HARLAN II in NAACP v. ALABAMA

In a unanimous decision, the Court overturned both the contempt charge and the \$100,000 fine against the NAACP.

However, because of state court delays in implementing the Court's original ruling, the NAACP was forced to return to the Supreme Court again in 1959, 1961, and 1964. On June 1, 1964, exactly eight years after the case began, the justices finally removed all obstacles facing the NAACP in Alabama, and the organization resumed its operations within the state.

**TOUCH THE SCREEN TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS CASE.**

**Traveling exhibit – Alabama Justice: The Cases and Faces That Changed a Nation – designed by Steven Brown**

**TO SECURE THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY**  
THE CONSTITUTION AND ITS AMENDMENTS

Delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1787 purposely formed a strong national government. In addition to conferring specific responsibilities upon the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, they also gave to each the ability to check and balance the considerable power of the others.

What the delegates did not do, however, was provide for any protection against this strong government for the citizens over whom it would rule. The preamble to the Constitution begins with the well-known reference to “We the People,” but there is virtually no further mention of “the people” throughout the rest of the document.

The Constitution's lack of protection for individual rights and liberties caused many Americans to oppose the document that emerged from the 1787 Convention. In fact, several states refused to ratify the Constitution until they were assured that amendments would be added to protect the people.

**THE SUPREME COURT**

The Constitution and its amendments contain no instructions regarding how they should be interpreted and applied. While not specifically set forth in the Constitution, the power of judicial review permits the Court to strike down legislative or executive branch action that conflicts with the Constitution. It also allows the Court to affirm individual rights protected by constitutional amendment.

**BILL OF RIGHTS**

On June 8, 1789, James Madison introduced nine amendments into the first Congress. These amendments contained nineteen different proposals cobbled together from the more than two hundred that the state conventions submitted as a condition for ratifying the Constitution.

Congress spent several weeks debating Madison's original amendments, which were substantially revised and expanded. It then sent twelve amendments to the states, which ratified ten of them — what we now know as the Bill of Rights — within the next two years.

**OTHER AMENDMENTS**

Between 1795 and 1992, seventeen other constitutional amendments were ratified by the states. While the Bill of Rights was originally adopted to protect people against the national government, several of the later amendments restricted state power.

**TOUCH THE SCREEN FOR THE COMPLETE TEXT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND ALL 27 AMENDMENTS.**



“As people learn new things or gain new perspectives about things, they’re like, ‘Oh, wow, I never really thought about it that way,’” Brown said. “That generates other questions, and that’s where learning begins to take place. Somebody might hear about a constitutional law issue on the news, or maybe they remember something from high school or something from one of my classes. That’s when they’re on the verge of learning, because they then go and Google that issue or check out a book about it.

“That’s what every professor and educator wants. They want their students to keep learning on their own. It is empowering in that sense, because I think everyone has a thirst for knowledge. We just help facilitate that when we go out and help answer some of these questions.”

Outreach has long been a focus for Brown, who was trained of its importance from the start of his graduate studies.

“In graduate school, one of my professors at the University of Virginia told us that we were basically required to do outreach,” Brown said. “He said that, as research professors, we would have the skills and the time to devote to different questions and that there are a lot of people out there who have those same questions but didn’t have the time or research ability to answer them. So, it was incumbent upon those going into academia to share that knowledge, not just with other scholars, but with non-academic audiences, too.

“So, that’s where a lot of this has come from. There are a lot of people out there who may have really good questions, but they may not know how to find the answers. As professors, we have research skills and the time to be able to explore some of those questions, and it’s important for us to share what we have learned.”

Brown’s teaching philosophy is inclusionary and interactive, centered on establishing an atmosphere of open dialogue and collaboration.

“I like to ask questions of my students, and my teaching philosophy thrives on student participation,” Brown said. “What’s great about my area is that everybody already has an idea about ‘con law,’ even if they don’t realize it. They know how

they feel about abortion, church-and-state issues, capital punishment or presidential authority. They may not

## THE SCOTTSBORO BOYS


**THE RIGHT TO EFFECTIVE COUNSEL AND POWELL v. ALABAMA (1932)**

### It Started On a Train

On March 25, 1931, a fight broke out between whites and blacks who were “train-hopping” their way from Chattanooga to Memphis. News of the fight preceded the train’s scheduled stop in Paint Rock, Alabama. Accompanied by an armed mob, a local deputy arrested the only people he could find on the train—nine African American youth ranging in age from 13 to 20.

Two white women later emerged from the train and accused the young men of rape, a crime then punishable by death under state law.

The trial judge appointed two attorneys to represent the young men: a Chattanooga real estate lawyer with no criminal law experience and a Scottsboro attorney who had not argued a case in decades. They were given 25 minutes before trial to meet with their clients. Eight of the nine were ultimately found guilty and sentenced to death; the ninth case resulted in a mistrial.



The Scottsboro Boys trial resulted in multiple death sentences, decades of jail time, two landmark Supreme Court decisions, and international attention. The central question throughout: Did the nine young black men receive effective representation from their court-appointed attorneys?

### RULING AND AFTERMATH

“... a defendant should be afforded a fair opportunity to secure counsel of his own choice. Not only was that not done here, but such designation of counsel as was attempted was either so indefinite or so close upon the trial as to amount to a denial of effective and substantial aid in that regard.”

—Justice George Sutherland, in *POWELL v. ALABAMA*

In a 7-2 decision, the Court held for the first time that the Fourteenth Amendment’s due process clause required an effective appointment of counsel in state courts. *Powell v. Alabama* is the foundation case for anyone who has ever needed a court-appointed attorney to represent them.


### ARGUMENTS BEFORE THE COURT

**For Ozie Powell**

The appointment of inexperienced and unprepared lawyers the morning of the trial was a violation of the due process guaranteed to the young men by the Fourteenth Amendment.


**For Alabama**

The appointed lawyers never requested more time to prepare and were not capable of mounting an adequate defense. Had the state delayed the proceedings further, it would have violated the young men’s right to a speedy trial.



Some Alabama men and the last man on the train had to represent the defendants.

### TOUCH THE SCREEN TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS CASE.



## REVERED AND REVEILED

### THE LEGACIES OF ALABAMA’S SUPREME COURT JUSTICES

#### JOHN MCKINLEY

1870-1852; service on the Court 1837-1852

John McKinley was born in 1780 in Virginia. He came to northern Alabama as a lawyer and land speculator, helping to establish the city of Florence in 1818. He served in the territorial legislature, was on the first board of trustees for the University of Alabama, and represented the state in both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

He was appointed as an Associate Justice in 1837 after Congress expanded the seats on the Supreme Court from seven to nine. He was also assigned to hear disputes in the new Ninth Circuit which encompassed Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. McKinley repeatedly informed Congress that his circuit was too large. Although the justices had long complained about their circuit duties because they were gone from their families for long periods and had to pay their own expenses, McKinley’s concerns forced Congress to finally respond. To split his circuit in half in 1842 and reduced the justices’ attendance at their circuit courts to just once annually. Congress later relieved the justices of riding circuit.

McKinley moved to Louisville to be closer to water routes that would help him carry out his duties, and died there in 1852.

#### JOHN ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL

1811-1889; service on the Court 1853-1861

Born in 1811 in Georgia, John Archibald Campbell came to Alabama in 1830 and set up a very successful legal practice first in Montgomery and later in Mobile. He became the most prominent and wealthiest attorney in the South.

In 1853, the justices themselves recommended Campbell to President Franklin Pierce for appointment to the Supreme Court. He resigned when the Civil War started in 1861. His tenure as an Associate Justice was largely characterized by his efforts to protect the states against national government power.

After the war, Campbell argued many times before the Supreme Court. In *The Slaughterhouse Cases* (1873), he claimed that the Fourteenth Amendment protected all Americans and that the Court should use it to strike down state regulations that infringed upon fundamental rights, including those that were not specified in the Constitution. He lost the case, but within the decade, the Court adopted his reasoning.

Campbell died in 1889, but his argument continues to give vast power to the Supreme Court to determine what is and is not a fundamental right, and is responsible for some of the Court’s most controversial decisions.

#### HUGO L. BLACK

1886-1971; service on the Court 1937-1971

Hugo Black was born in Clay County, Alabama in 1886. At the age of 17, without finishing high school, he enrolled in a medical college, but left to pursue a law degree at the University of Alabama instead. He practiced law in Birmingham, and served as the city’s police court judge and later prosecuting attorney for Jefferson County. Black was elected to the United States Senate in 1926 and became one of Franklin Roosevelt’s key supporters. The president appointed him to the Supreme Court in 1937. Black’s nomination was nearly derailed when it was revealed that he had previously been a member of the Ku Klux Klan.

On the Court, however, Black consistently opposed racial discrimination, which earned him widespread vilification throughout the South. His liberal reading of the Constitution led him to become a free speech absolutist and a staunch defender of the rights of the accused in the criminal justice process. He forcefully argued for the application of the protections of the Bill of Rights against all levels of government. He died in 1971 after thirty-four years on the Court.

#### CIRCUIT RIDERS

McKinley’s circuit was the largest in the country and had the most cases to handle. The road between the east coast cities of the region took three to four months to travel. McKinley’s circuit was the largest in the country and had the most cases to handle. The road between the east coast cities of the region took three to four months to travel.

#### CIVIL WAR JUSTICE

Campbell argued numerous cases and had to represent Southern states in the Supreme Court. He argued for the South after the Civil War ended but lost the case. Campbell was a pro-secessionist and a supporter of the Confederacy. He argued for the South after the Civil War ended but lost the case.

#### INCORPORATION OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS

The Bill of Rights was initially adopted to protect citizens against the power of a national government. In 1868, the Supreme Court ruled that the Bill of Rights applied to state and local governments as well. Over only one year, the Court incorporated all ten of the provisions of the Bill of Rights against all levels of government.

know the case law behind all those quite yet, but they already have an opinion on them.

“So, I’m already tapping into an existing body of knowledge that’s based on what they’ve heard. I tend to get a lot of participation in that sense, just because people already have a framework or a point of reference.”

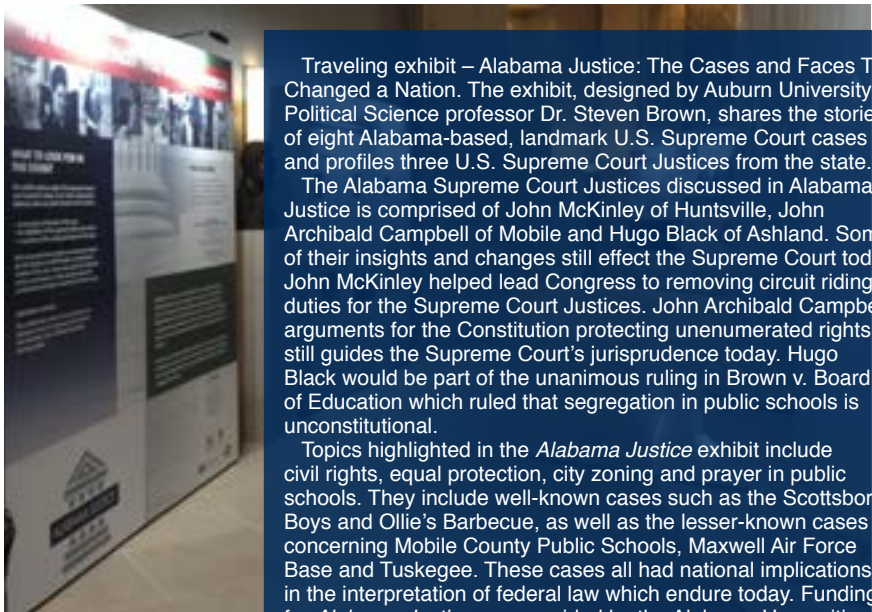
Brown’s peers and supervisors effused praise for the veteran professor, submitting glowing letters of recommendation for him during the nomination process.

“In a college with over 300 tenure-track faculty, Steve is a standout as one of the most engaged faculty in the college with a lengthy and substantive track record in faculty outreach,” College of Liberal Arts Dean Joseph Aistrup said of Brown in his recommendation letter. “Steve connects his scholarly expertise to the wider world and in turn has brought a great deal of positive recognition to Auburn University. Of the many strengths which makes Steve such a deserving candidate for the Outreach Award is his ability to connect with a broad audience outside the university and convey complex ideas and concepts.

“Steve has the ability to connect to his classes making his students—whether in the Election Center courses, OLLI or as a guest lecturer—feel like they have joined Steve along this journey for knowledge. Steve has achieved a level of scholarly acclaim which has and continues to bring great credit upon the department, the College and Auburn University.”

Brown—who has raised seven children with his wife, Melanie—says the most fulfilling part of teaching is seeing students learn and grow while expanding their knowledge.

“It’s when you see that light go on and can tell that students get it, because of their comments in class or their performance on exams,” Brown said. “I’ll get e-mails long after class is over from students about certain cases or something that’s going on at the Supreme Court. So, just watching them learn and have an interest is great.”



Traveling exhibit – Alabama Justice: The Cases and Faces That Changed a Nation. The exhibit, designed by Auburn University Political Science professor Dr. Steven Brown, shares the stories of eight Alabama-based, landmark U.S. Supreme Court cases and profiles three U.S. Supreme Court Justices from the state.

The Alabama Supreme Court Justices discussed in Alabama Justice is comprised of John McKinley of Huntsville, John Archibald Campbell of Mobile and Hugo Black of Ashland. Some of their insights and changes still effect the Supreme Court today. John McKinley helped lead Congress to removing circuit riding duties for the Supreme Court Justices. John Archibald Campbell’s arguments for the Constitution protecting unenumerated rights still guides the Supreme Court’s jurisprudence today. Hugo Black would be part of the unanimous ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* which ruled that segregation in public schools is unconstitutional.

Topics highlighted in the *Alabama Justice* exhibit include civil rights, equal protection, city zoning and prayer in public schools. They include well-known cases such as the *Scottsboro Boys* and *Ollie’s Barbecue*, as well as the lesser-known cases concerning *Mobile County Public Schools*, *Maxwell Air Force Base* and *Tuskegee*. These cases all had national implications in the interpretation of federal law which endure today. Funding for *Alabama Justice* was provided by the Alabama Humanities Foundation, Auburn University Intramural Grants Program and a College of Liberal Arts Summer Research Grant.





# Pharmacy Faculty Provide for Underserved in Community Clinics

Committed to taking care of the less fortunate in our communities, two Harrison School of Pharmacy faculty members are actively involved with clinics dedicated to helping the underserved.

Jeanna Sewell and Katelin Lisenby, both faculty members in the Department of Pharmacy Practice, count these clinics as one of their active practice sites. Sewell has worked with Mercy Medical in Auburn since 2016, while Lisenby has worked with Good Samaritan Clinic in West Alabama since 2015.

Mercy Medical was started by local physician Dr. Dell Crosby in 2000. The faith-based clinic only saw patients without insurance until a year ago and has now expanded to include those with Medicaid. Supported by community donations, a limited staff and a large group of volunteers, the clinic saw nearly 3,000 patients last year. Most patients are seen on a regular basis to manage chronic health conditions.

Similarly, Good Samaritan Clinic, or GSC, is an interdenominational Christian ministry and free health clinic that provides primary health and dental care and referral for low-income persons who are medically uninsured or underinsured residents of West Alabama. Opened in 1999, it is a 501(c) nonprofit that is supported by contributions and volunteer staffing. Health care professionals at the clinic include physicians, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, nurses, dentists, nutritionists and dietitians, counselors and social workers.

Sewell works in multiple roles at her clinic, including chronic disease state management, such as hypertension and diabetes, and transitions of care where she follows up with recently discharged patients based on referral from social workers and nurses at East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika.

“Mercy Medical serves as a source for primary and acute care for uninsured and Medicaid patients in our area,” said Sewell. “There are very limited resources for this patient group in our area as few providers are able to see uninsured patients at a cost that is affordable to these



Katelin Lisenby consults with a physician at Good Samaritan Clinic.

patients. By allowing patients access to medical care, the goal is that they won't wait until their health conditions are very out of control, leading to poor health outcomes and increased burden on the patient and health care system.”

At GSC, pharmacists had been involved since its inception, but it was not until Lisenby's arrival that pharmacy services were further developed. She works in a shared visit model with the physicians to evaluate each patient's pharmacotherapy, provide recommendations and serve as a referral resource for other staff on medication-related issues.

“A lack of primary care and health insurance is associated with poor health outcomes and health



Jenna Sewell meets with a patient at their car at Mercy Medical.

disparities,” said Lisenby. “The GSC exists to serve this need focusing on primary care, but also provides services and referrals, as well as education, wellness and spiritual and social support.”

Harrison School of Pharmacy students, in both their second and fourth years, can work and learn at each of the clinics. Students have the opportunity to interact with a variety of health care providers and a diverse patient population.

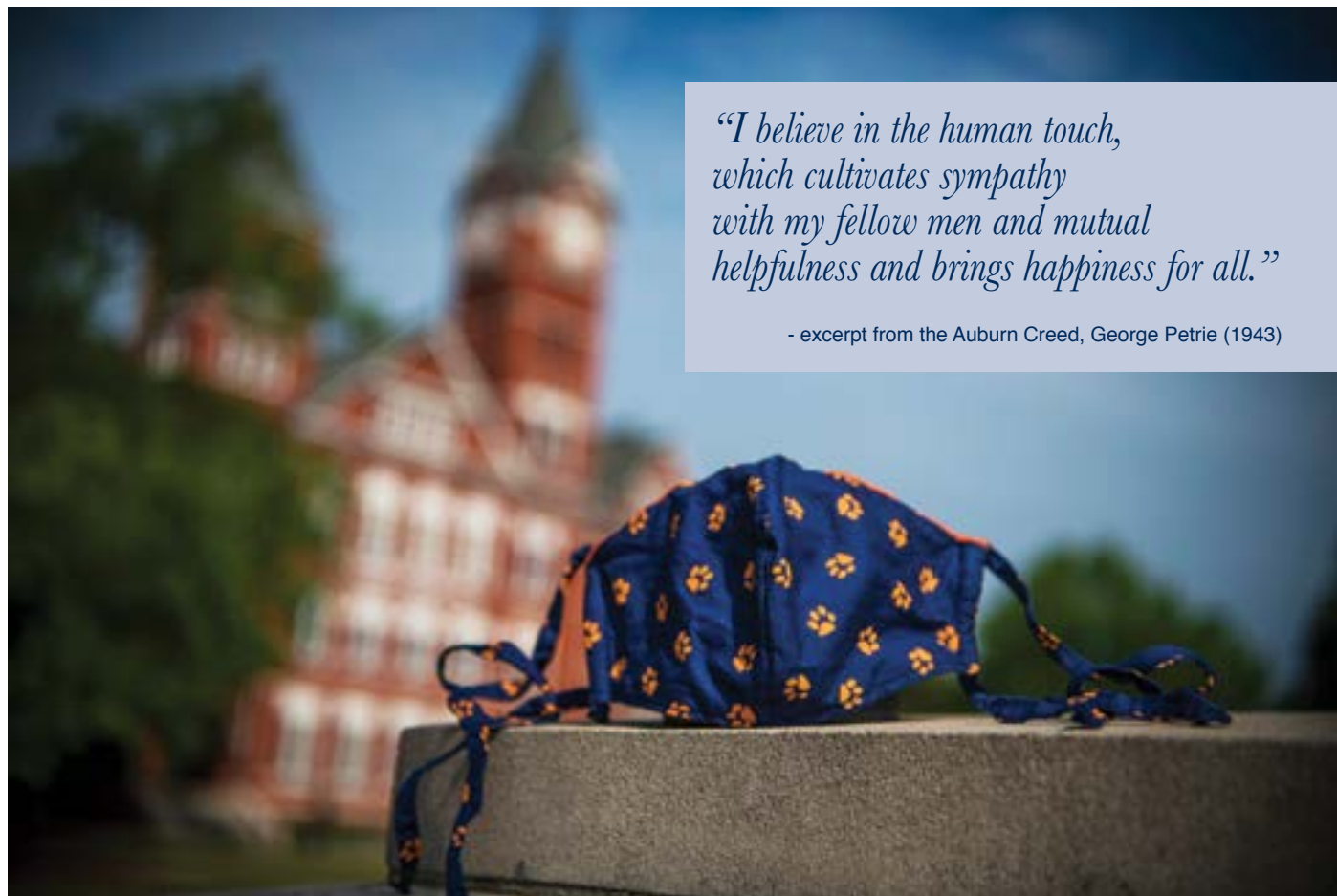
“While on this rotation, students get to experience the added complexities of caring for patients who are underserved,” said Sewell. “Transportation limitation, food insecurity and lack of financial resources are frequent situations that our patients face, and students are exposed to what their role can be in assisting these patients.”

For Lisenby and Sewell, both Auburn graduates, their work at their respective clinics was a natural decision in living up to the Auburn Creed and the university’s land-grant mission.

“Auburn University is dedicated to improving the lives of the people of Alabama through selfless service, which embodies all that we do at the GSC,” said Lisenby. “Outreach should align with this mission and meet our communities’ most pressing needs.”

*“I believe in the human touch,  
which cultivates sympathy  
with my fellow men and mutual  
helpfulness and brings happiness for all.”*

- excerpt from the Auburn Creed, George Petrie (1943)





# Outreach Global and International Engagement in a COVID-19 World

Although the COVID-19 pandemic mandated the University Outreach Global office find innovative, creative ways to engage communities, the primary mission remains the same: to create global engagement opportunities and develop communities across the globe. As people are physically separated by the coronavirus, international outreach efforts are more important than ever before to promote global connectedness. Outreach Global revised programs throughout the coronavirus pandemic and continues to engage globally.

With many around the globe wrestling with the negative realities of the coronavirus pandemic, Outreach Global continues to engage with these communities to help them identify and address their greatest needs. For example, many smaller international organizations are unsure of how to best navigate the changing landscape they now occupy. To help address this need, Outreach Global repurposed existing resources to create online, specialized training programs for international partners, ranging in topics from leadership and management to branding and marketing. These online training resources are designed to help organizations adapt and survive the current dynamic business environment.

The online training programs also provide an opportunity for leaders across the globe to deliberate over



Volunteers with the mask initiative distributed over 12,000 masks to local groups.

shared problems and solutions. Fostering these global discussions allows diverse organizations to glean from other professionals, which leads to improved innovation and circulation of ideas.

While continuing to engage internationally with their partners, Outreach Global has not forgotten to offer a helping hand at home. Outreach Global office staff assisted University Outreach and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, or OLLI, with the mask initiative, distributing over 12,000 homemade masks to local healthcare organizations.

To learn more about how Outreach Global is fulfilling its mission in a COVID-19 world, visit [www.outreach.com/outreach/global](http://www.outreach.com/outreach/global).



# School of Pharmacy Helps Community with Production of Sanitizer

In the wake of COVID-19, items such as hand sanitizer, cleaning solutions and other household essentials have become coveted commodities. In an effort to ensure those in the Auburn community continuing to serve are protected, faculty, staff and students at the Auburn University Harrison School of Pharmacy came together to compound, package and deliver hand sanitizer.

“We are all facing new challenges together and we know we are having to come up with unique solutions to address this unique problem,” said Richard A. Hansen, dean of the Harrison School of Pharmacy. “We would like to contribute by manufacturing hand sanitizer for our friends and families and employees who are remaining on the job in the community.”

Hand sanitizer is important because it helps to kill off infectious agents on the skin, such as bacteria and viruses. While proper hand washing with soap and water is the most effective practice, hand sanitizer is useful for those times when soap and water are not readily available.

After the university moved to its alternate operating procedure in late March, Hansen approached Erika Kleppinger and Kevin Astle, both faculty in the Department of Pharmacy Practice, about compounding hand sanitizer. Kimberly Braxton Lloyd, associate dean for clinical affairs and outreach, received permission from the Alabama Board of Pharmacy to compound in the school’s skills labs as an extension of the AU Employee Pharmacy. Additionally, the project received funding from the Auburn University Concessions Board.

After ordering supplies, the group collaborated with Feng Li and Jay Ramapuram, faculty from the Department of Drug Discovery and Development, to finalize calculations and formulations.

Recipients of the hand sanitizer included the City of Auburn Department of Public Safety, Auburn University Facilities, Auburn University Human Resources, Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy in Mobile, various campus offices and pharmacies in the community.

“Pharmacists have expertise in compounding techniques and access to ordering raw ingredients, so that quality products can be made, however they are overwhelmed with their current situation. As a school of pharmacy, we have the personnel, facilities, supplies and equipment to compound on a larger scale than most community pharmacies and have contacts throughout the community to distribute to those most in need. This is one small way that we can contribute to the outreach mission of Auburn University.”

The project also serves as an opportunity for students to put into practice what they learn in the classroom. Student volunteers have the opportunity to assist in the compounding and packaging. To maintain social distancing standards, no more than 10 people were allowed in the lab at a time.

“While this preparation is not difficult, understanding the basics of weighing, measuring, and pharmaceutical compounding is important and students were able to jump in and help with minimal instructions,” said Kleppinger. “Student involvement helps to reinforce the techniques they have used in the lab and allows them to apply concepts in a real-world environment.”

The Harrison School of Pharmacy emphasizes the principles of teaching, research and outreach in each of the school’s efforts. For Kleppinger, being a part of this project was a way to combine each of those in a meaningful and practical way.

“I love that this was a way to incorporate my knowledge as a pharmacist, my role as a skills lab coordinator and my passion for teaching into one project,” said Kleppinger. “It was all worth it when I got to see everyone working together this week to compound, pharmacist faculty, research faculty and student pharmacists. I think everyone learned something throughout the process and it felt good to know that we were compounding something that many people need right now.”





# Mission 200 Transforms How Teachers Educate Future STEM Leaders

Mission 200 is bringing a love of robotics and learning to underserved communities. This unique partnership between the Southeastern Center of Robotics Education, or SCORE, at Auburn University, The Daniel Foundation of Alabama and the REC Foundation aspired to start 200 new robotics teams in Alabama and Tennessee during the 2019-20 academic year.

The goal of Mission 200 is to offer sustainable, robotics-based educational programs across the South and provide hands-on science, technology, engineering and math opportunities for students and teachers — particularly those in rural and under-resourced communities.

The Mission 200 initiative, created by SCORE founding director, Mary Lou Ewald, feeds into the VEX Robotics tournament system — a series of contests in which teams design, build and program robots to compete at tournaments.

What makes Mission 200 unique in this world of robotics competitions is a three-way formula for success that includes free robotics equipment for under-resourced schools, quality professional development for teachers and on-going support from SCORE educators. The implementation of this formula creates a sustainable robotics ecosystem within a community.

The unique way Mission 200 brings students, teachers and communities together benefits all stakeholders.

Participating schools receive more than \$1,400 worth of equipment and supplies including VEX IQ competition robotics kits and field and game pieces for teams consisting of students in grades four to eight. These



Auburn University hosts two teacher trainings each year to equip educators to coach robotics in their classroom. They develop a network of educators to help support them in their mission to provide robotics support for their students.

robotics kits contain all the necessary pieces students need to design and create their own robot to compete in the VEX Robotics tournament system.

The 2019-20 Mission 200 season far exceeded the goal of 200 new teams. A total of 265 new teams at 138 schools were created across Alabama and Tennessee.



A student battles Aubie in a VEX Robotics tournament.



Two teachers work as a team to program their robot to complete a maze autonomously.

The majority of participating schools (76%) were Title 1 or Title 1 eligible schools. Considering the average size of a VEX team is five students, Mission 200 impacted 1,325 elementary and middle school students this past year and will continue to impact thousands of students in the future.

Students were not the only ones who benefited from Mission 200. The initiative also provided hands-on, two-day training workshops and supported 208 teachers throughout the academic year. These training sessions were held at various geographic locations making it easy for teachers to attend. In addition, 22 of the Mission 200 teachers traveled to Auburn University to participate in

the annual Southern Regional VEX Robotics Conference for Educators.

“Mission 200 empowers teachers to support their students to compete in VEX IQ robotic competitions,” explained Nicholas Giordano, dean of the Auburn University College of Sciences and Mathematis. “Our college is helping to prepare the next generation of students to pursue careers in STEM.”

The teacher training sessions created opportunities to deepen teachers’ STEM knowledge through hands-on, project-based learning opportunities in robotics education. This is accomplished through ten two-day regional workshops — seven in Alabama and three in Tennessee.

During each workshop, teachers become the students. They build a VEX robot from scratch, learn how to code the robot using VEXcode IQ Blocks, participate in autonomous and driving challenges, and explore a multitude of curricular options on implementing robotics in the classroom. Survey results indicated teachers’ confidence in their ability to teach engineering concepts increased significantly.

“Being part of this training helped me picture how I will implement VEX IQ into my classroom,” said Yolanda Jones, a teacher from John P. Powell Middle School in Lanett, Alabama. “I can really help my students prepare to compete in tournaments.”

When visiting with Mission 200 teachers at tournaments, they tell stories of how robotics changed the way they teach and how it profoundly impacted the lives



Teachers from various parts of Alabama and Tennessee partner to design VEX robots.





Workshop participants tryout their robot to see if it is correctly coded. This is a learning experience for the teachers, and many have to recode the robots several times.

of their students. Robotics is not just about robots — it is a valuable tool that teachers can use to engage students in a challenging, exciting, creative STEM endeavor.

“Until my learners voiced an interest in robotics earlier this year, I never considered incorporating them into my precious instructional time. But that all quickly changed,” said Catherine Kenny, a C6 Teacher/VEX IQ Teacher-sponsor at Pike Road Elementary School. “I can honestly say that in all my years of teaching, no other learning opportunity has helped develop such collaboration, task commitment, critical thinking skills and creative problem solving as robotics.”

Teachers and students involved with Mission 200 feel a sense of community involvement and support. Local tournaments involved dynamic partnerships with incredible STEM education advocates in Alabama and Tennessee including system administrators, two-year colleges, local education foundations, 4-H and the Alabama State Department of Education.

These partners helped organize the teacher training events, recruited teachers from their communities, attended the trainings to help support the teachers, and hosted local tournaments. Schools often received a small profit from the local tournaments, which will help support the future of robotics growth.

Mission 200 has seen an overwhelming response from school systems anxious to provide robotics opportunities for their students. Additional resources were obtained from local education foundations, school systems and partnerships last year to help fund the additional teams that participated. No team was turned away that expressed interest in becoming a Mission 200 team.

Interest is already being communicated from teachers and administrators who want to be a part of the next Mission 220 project. Teachers see the value in robotics education for their students.

Mission 220 looks to expand into Georgia, Mississippi and Louisiana over the next two years with applications being accepted in the spring of 2021. Neptune and Southern Company have already stepped up to help with this initiative, and many other community partners are being identified in these states. Mission 220 will continue to increase the exposure of robotics to students and teachers across the Southeast.

“Outreach programs such as Mission 200 are absolutely essential so that all schools have an opportunity to help their students experience STEM by building robots and participating in a team environment,” said Jennifer Spencer, assistant director of SCORE and former elementary school teacher.

To learn more about Mission 200, visit [scoreau.org](http://scoreau.org).



Students from Opelika Middle School work together at a local VEX tournament to drive their robot.

addressing issues

# Auburn Youth Programs Delivers Virtual Campus Experience to 2020 Campers

Auburn Youth Programs, or AYP, a program area within the Office of Professional and Continuing Education, or OPCE, had to think outside of the box when it came to this year's summer camp experience. Together with its university and community partners, AYP virtually connected students to campus by delivering a wide selection of online programs.

The high-demand Vet Camp offered in partnership with the Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine was converted to a Virtual Vet Camp Experience and covered topics such as canine anatomy, snake handling and everything in between.

Students interested in the medical field attended Discovery MedCamp and worked with Auburn University Interprofessional Education faculty, participating in a virtual health clinic that simulated a real-world patient experience, and engaging with others in an online community to examine symptoms, create a care plan and discuss the role of different providers.

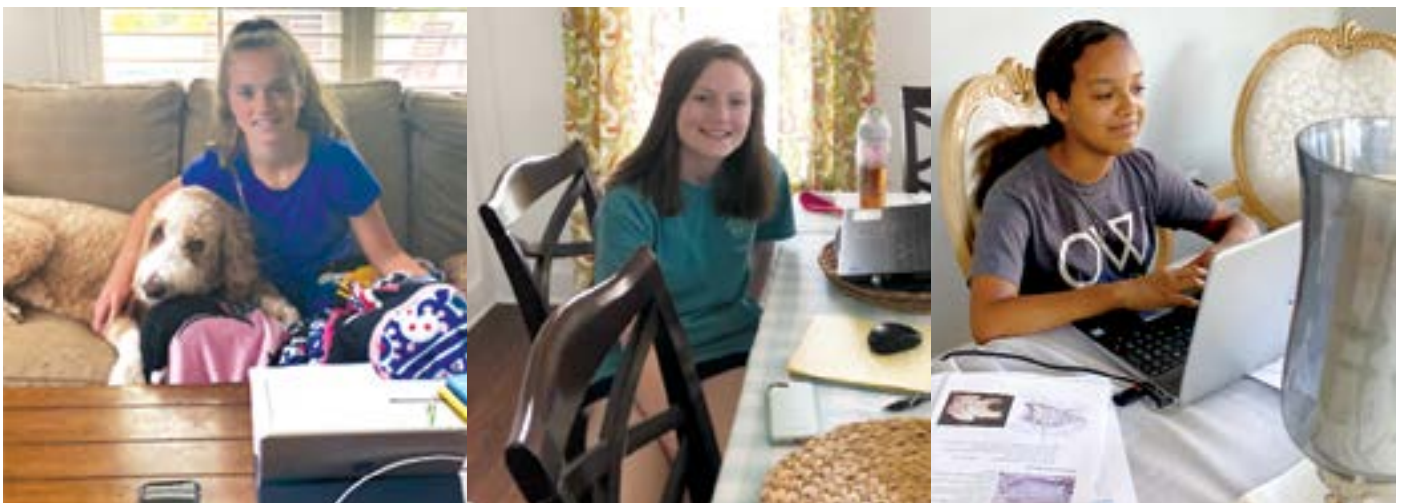
In Virtual Nursing Camp, presented in partnership with the Auburn University School of Nursing, campers learned about nurses' roles in triage, ICU, NICU and



various areas including assessment, sensory, surgery, venipuncture and pediatric and case studies.

In the online version of Architecture Camp, students worked under the guidance of program faculty from the Auburn University School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture to complete architectural design projects.

Working with Agriscience Education faculty, campers in Exploring Agriculture and Gaining Leadership Experience Camp virtually toured the Auburn University



Auburn Youth Programs went virtual in 2020 during the ongoing pandemic by offering various camps online to participants.



Equestrian Center and E.W. Shell Fisheries Center, enjoyed a virtual hike at the Kreher Preserve and Nature Center, processed soil samples and planted their own herb gardens.

“These camps are very popular and kids come from not just the United States, but from other parts of the world to experience campus life through these programs. Because no one has been able to travel, this gives youth a connection to Auburn University and the area they are passionate in,” said Jim Franklin, OPCE assistant director for Auburn Youth Programs. “We have to credit our campus partners for being creative and figuring out ways to deliver the camp experience virtually.”

Auburn Youth Programs offered 53 virtual camps with nearly 750 campers from 30 states and four countries including Bolivia, Japan, Nicaragua and Puerto Rico. AYP continued to offer virtual camps in the fall with a lineup of STEAM-related camps including coding, game development, animation and robotics programming.

The Summer Reading Skills program, previously offered in locations throughout the state of Alabama, also continued with its live online programs through the

fall. In the program, individuals of all ages and stages of reading develop a deep love of reading by engaging in a dynamic online class, interacting with each other and the instructor in real-time.

While on-campus camps are expected to return in 2021, Auburn Youth Programs continue to work with community and campus partners to increase its digital outreach through online camps and programs.

AYP, offered through the Office of Professional and Continuing Education, 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. By expanding camp offerings to an online format, AYP enables students to experience Auburn University from anywhere in the world.

To learn more about Auburn Youth Programs, or to see the complete list of online camps and programs visit [www.auburn.edu/summercamps](http://www.auburn.edu/summercamps).



Logan Lung, virtual poultry science camp participant, stands with his hens at his home in Maui, Hawaii. “I have a flock of 19 laying hens and was excited to be able to learn more about how to better take care of my hens and maximize their laying potential, as well as how to grade my farm fresh eggs,” says Lung. In 2020 Auburn Youth Programs, together with its university and community partners, converted several in-person camps to virtual formats, connecting campers to campus by delivering a wide selection of online programs.

addressing issues

# RURAL-CP

## *Rural Pharmacy Network*

With a shortage of health care infrastructure, hospitals and specialty clinics in rural areas, significant health disparities exist for people in those communities. For many, the most accessible and well-positioned health care provider is the community pharmacist.

To help address this issue and provide innovative solutions, the Harrison School of Pharmacy's Dr. Salisa Westrick is collaborating with counterparts at the University of North Carolina, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, University of South Carolina and the University of Mississippi to create the Rural Research Alliance of Community Pharmacies, or RURAL-CP.

RURAL-CP is a network of more than 100 rural community pharmacies spanning five southeastern states and is the only network of its kind in the United States. Network members collaborate with colleges and schools of pharmacy to identify and address societal, community and professional issues that relate to medication use and pharmacy practice.

"Prescription medications are key components of American healthcare and pharmacists play a critical role in dispensing these medications, educating patients and ensuring patient safety," said Westrick, Sterling Professor and department head in the school's Department of



RURAL-CP member Boaz Pharmacy.





RURAL-CP member Kilpatrick Pharmacy.

Health Outcomes Research and Policy. “In an area where there is no pharmacy, residents will not have timely access to prescription drugs nor access to pharmacists where they can consult with when they have questions about their medications. Therefore, our work is to build strong evidence of the value and the impact of pharmacists on patient outcomes in rural communities.”

The project is headed up by Dr. Delesha Carpenter at North Carolina’s Eshelman School of Pharmacy. Working with Westrick at Auburn are fellow faculty members Dr. Lindsey Hohmann and Dr. Natalie Hohmann, along with students NeCall Wilson, Robert Alongi and Kavon Diggs.

With nearly 30 rural pharmacies already enrolled, Westrick and her team are continuing to work through the on-boarding process for network members, including a site survey and visit.

“These pharmacies and the academic institutions work together to identify and prioritize critical health concerns in rural communities,” said Westrick. “Together, we will identify and refine the solutions, assess the effectiveness and feasibility of the solutions and then disseminate the outcomes to various stakeholders.”

By joining the network, pharmacies will have access to continuing education programs and workshops addressing areas such as seasonal and non-seasonal immunizations, operations during a pandemic, naloxone counseling, medication therapy management for special populations and more.

The work in the network pharmacies will also drive multiple research projects, testing the effectiveness of certain interventions.

“These network pharmacies will serve as demonstration sites for innovative pharmacist-led services and the patients whom they serve can and will benefit from these interventions,” said Westrick.

Living up to Auburn’s land-grant designation, Westrick and her team are working to improve the health outcomes of Alabamians through the network. With insurance practices and low profit margins on medications making it difficult for some rural pharmacies to stay open, the program provides an opportunity for members to diversify services and find new ways to generate revenue.

“Payments to community pharmacies and pharmacists for clinical services are not common and we hope that RURAL-CP can serve as a catalyst to change the reimbursement landscape for community pharmacists’ services and allow pharmacists to get reimbursed for clinical services they provide in their pharmacies,” said Westrick.

“It is also important to recognize that community pharmacies in rural areas are critical components of the community. By assisting rural pharmacists and pharmacies, we ensure that Alabamians in rural areas continue to have access to their pharmacy and their trusted pharmacists.”

# GEDI Partners with Western Communities Redevelopment Alliance to Host the Invincible Small Business Series

As part of an Economic Development Administration University Center grant, the Government and Economic Development Institute's, or GEDI, LaKami Baker, hosted an eight-week training program in partnership with the Western Communities Redevelopment Alliance, or WCRA, titled "The Invincible Small Business Series: Creating, Delivering, and Capturing Value Post COVID-19."

WCRA serves urban and rural communities lacking economic development capacity through support and coordination of resources. "The Invincible Small Business Series" challenged minority small business owners to reinvent their business, compete on superior business models, transcend industry boundaries and create more value in an effort to become invincible.

The idea for the program came from Jeremy Duckworth, executive director of WCRA.

"I contacted Dr. Baker about conducting a small business accelerator program in my community. She was very receptive to the idea and developed a program that included eight, one-hour online classes with activities and homework assignments," Duckworth said. "The topics were designed to add the most value to small business owners and the program was well received."

Twenty-five businesses submitted video applications detailing their business needs and what they planned to bring to their communities if selected to participate in the program. A selection committee reviewed the applications and selected 10 people to participate in the program. In the end, nine students completed the program in its entirety and received certificates of completion during a virtual graduation ceremony on Monday, Aug. 17.

"The feedback from the participants has been overwhelmingly positive," said Duckworth. "Most of the comments I got were 'Where has this been all my life?' and 'When can we do more programs like this?' Several of the businesses who participated in the program are



**LaKami Baker**, Government and Economic Development Institute, or GEDI.

already having success. One of the program graduates has been able to secure some funding through a private funder based on the work done refining their value proposition in the class."

Ariel Smith, owner of The Food Truck Scholar blog and podcast, found the program to be especially useful and engaging.

"Dr. Baker was very intent on making this program one that would work for small business owners. Each session was packed with useful content and information, and examples of how each topic could be directly applied



to our individual businesses,” Smith said. “We also got feedback from classmates and on the spot consulting from our peers. Having someone explain the concepts and how we can engage with our various customer channels was huge for me. I will definitely replay the recorded sessions so I can go back again and revisit key points and ideas as my business grows and changes.”

Reginald Davis, owner of Heartful Echoes, a Christian based clothing company, had a similar reaction.

“Dr. Baker was phenomenal,” Davis said. “I appreciate her hands-on approach and how she walked us through the topics and made them easy to understand. She helped me narrow down my vision so I can effectively manage my business and pinpoint actions with my customer channels to help me get my products to the consumers.”

Over the course of eight weeks, participants were introduced to the business model canvas and applied the nine elements of the business model to their business, with a focus on identifying the customers that benefit the most from the products and services they offer and clarifying the value they create and deliver to their customers.

The business owners brought value to Baker as well.

“Working with all the business owners was a highlight of this pandemic for me,” said Baker. “They inspired me with their willingness to learn and their desire to take their business to the next level. I am honored to be involved in their journey to becoming invincible.”

Program graduates are: Corey Bishop - Refresh Clothes 2 ([instagram.com/refreshclothes2](https://www.instagram.com/refreshclothes2)), Reginald Davis - Heartful Echoes ([heartfulechoes.com](http://heartfulechoes.com)), Andrea McIntosh - Milestone Barbers ([www.milestonesgrooming.com](http://www.milestonesgrooming.com)), Ariel Smith - The Food Truck Scholar ([TheFoodTruckScholar.com](http://TheFoodTruckScholar.com)), Michael Gould - E21 Realty ([Michaelgouldgroup.com](http://Michaelgouldgroup.com)), Yolanda Sullivan - Penny Foundation ([www.pennyfoundation.org](http://www.pennyfoundation.org)), Jennifer Elizabeth Duckworth - Neighbor Foundations (<https://www.facebook.com/NeighborFoundations>), Tanesha Sims-Summers - Naughty But Nice Kettle Corn ([nbnkettlecorn.com](http://nbnkettlecorn.com)) and Jeremy Duckworth - Western Communities Redevelopment Alliance ([www.wcranow.com](http://www.wcranow.com)).

GEDI is committed to helping entrepreneurs and small businesses succeed and was able to provide this program at no cost to participants through a Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration grant to Auburn’s University Center.

Auburn’s University Center is a partnership among the Government and Economic Development Institute, the Lowder Center for Family Business and Entrepreneurship and the Office of External Engagement.

## Bullock County Development Authority Collaborates with Auburn University GEDI for Summer Online Course

David Padgett, economic developer with Bullock County Development Authority, recently collaborated with GEDI in an online class at Auburn University during the summer session. A portion of the class curriculum was focused on Bullock County. The students presented ideas on website and social media design, tourism, and uses of the Franklin Field Airport along with its industrial expansion.

The class (POLI7700) is a three-hour graduate course offered through the Department of Political Science. The course introduces students to the theory and practice of the broad field of economic development. The program allows students to expand their knowledge, develop an appreciation of the field, and gain practical experience assisting a community with an application project. Most of the students who took part in the course are studying in the Master of Public Administration or Community Planning programs. Approximately one-third of the class was comprised of international students.

### David Mixson,

associate director of University Outreach’s Government and Economic Development Institute, or GEDI, served as instructor of the course which was conducted via Zoom. Mixson was pleased with the students’ recommendations and work during the short summer mini-semester.



“The opportunity for our students to apply their knowledge and gain first-hand experience, while also helping Bullock County develop an economic development plan, is a win-win proposition. This community project reflects Auburn’s commitment to both instructional and outreach excellence as a land-grant university,” Mixson said.

For more information on this program, GEDI and Auburn University’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) University Center, please contact David Mixson at 334.844.3887 or via email at [mixsoad@auburn.edu](mailto:mixsoad@auburn.edu).

# Continuing to Serve: Alabama Extension's Response to COVID-19

Uncertainty, fear and confusion plagued many people during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. So many questions were being asked, while few answers were given in return. While so much was uncertain, the professionals of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System took the needed measures to remain a constant source of credible information for Alabama residents.

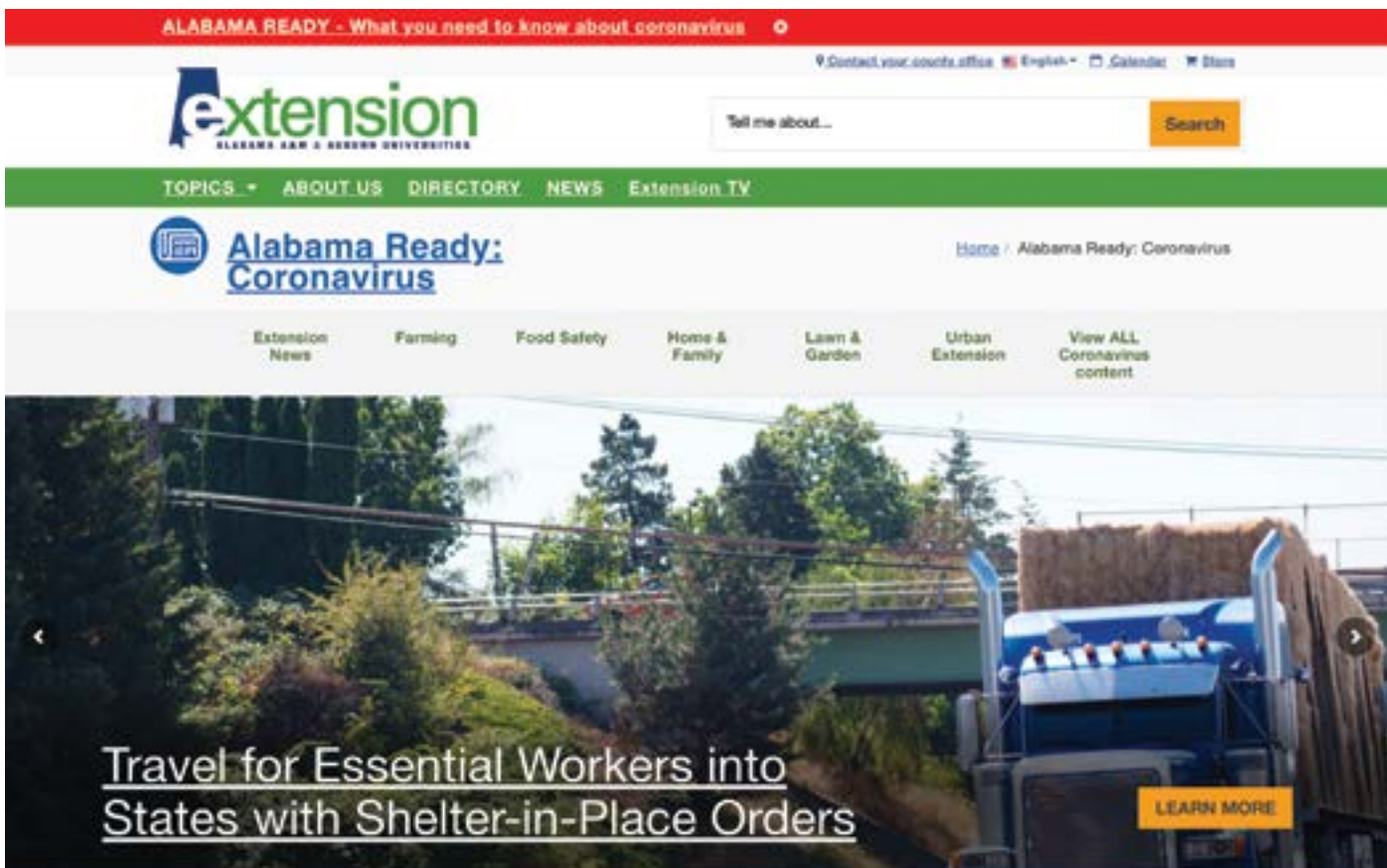
“COVID-19 has made it clear that the world is facing an unprecedented health event,” said Gary Lemme, director of Alabama Extension. “The Alabama Cooperative Extension System continues to provide the unbiased information people have come to expect of us.”

## Extension Went Digital

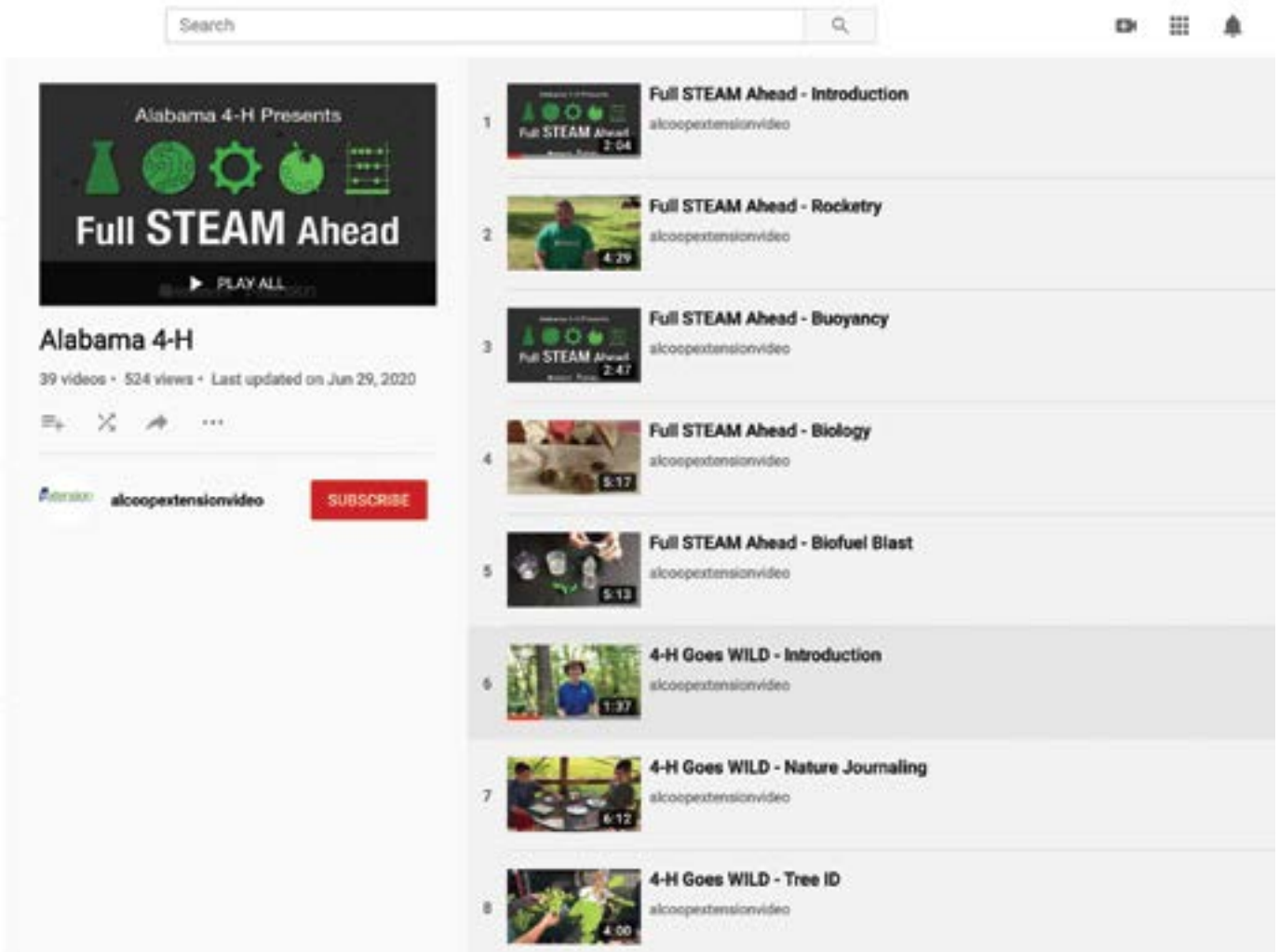
While traditional outreach methods, such as in-person meetings, farm calls and county office visits, have not been possible during these times, that did not stop Alabama Extension professionals from providing educational materials to the public.

In addition to digital materials already available on their website, Extension worked to create other avenues of digital learning. A popular option was the use of Zoom to host single and reoccurring webinars of different topic areas.

“These webinars were a big hit among our stakeholders and even allowed Extension to broaden its







reach to other audiences,” Lemme said. “The Stay at Home Beekeeping Series was one of the most popular webinars, quickly filling up registration spots and even reaching audiences outside the United States.”

From Feb. 1 through Aug. 10, Extension held 2,579 educational events or workshops. These were done mostly through Zoom, but some used Facebook Live. These events involved 61,439 stakeholders, with as many as 5,000 people participating in a few of the programs.

The use of pre-recorded videos through social media was also a tool that Extension utilized to disseminate information to audiences. Alabama 4-H was one of the first program areas that took full advantage of this tool.

According to Molly Gregg, assistant director of Alabama 4-H, this outbreak was simply not going to keep the program from educating and engaging the state’s young people.

“We knew it was important to have fun learning activities to do at home, especially during this time of isolation,” Gregg said. “To keep youth engaged, 4-H promoted projects such as woodworking, baking, gardening and photography, as well as several STEM activities, all through videos.”

## AlabamaReady.info

Extension administration also knew it was equally important to keep residents informed on COVID-19. Extension created the coronavirus website, AlabamaReady.info, as a resource for families and businesses to protect themselves from the disease. It provides information on dealing with and recovering from the virus exposure.

“The website is constantly updated so it had the latest information through informative articles and videos on the coronavirus,” Lemme said. “This helped Alabama Extension to become known as one of the national leaders in coronavirus materials among Extension systems.”

While the effects of COVID-19 will likely be felt for an extended period, Lemme said Extension is here to help people face those challenges.

“Extension is here to help you,” Lemme said. “We are always working to find new ways to serve your needs and help you face any challenges you have.”



# Juneteenth: Auburn Tigers Learn “Eye-Opening” History Lesson

Derryn Moten, history professor at Alabama State University, teaches Auburn student athletes about Juneteenth.

In light of recent societal issues of race, equality and social justice, Auburn Athletics included a history lesson to help expand students’ knowledge and continue to foster the Auburn spirit of family and unity. Socially distanced in the stands of Plainsman Park, Auburn’s football and men’s basketball teams lunched, listened and learned a history lesson about Juneteenth.

Standing behind home plate, Derryn Moten, chair of the history and political science department at Alabama State University, taught about the day 155 years ago when a Union Army general arrived in Galveston, Texas, 71 days after the end of the Civil War, to proclaim that all enslaved persons in Texas were now free.

“Juneteenth is now considered the longest continuous celebration of Black freedom in this country,” Moten told the student-athletes and coaches. “It’s significant for that reason.”

Moten elaborated on the 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery and involuntary servitude, and the 14th Amendment, which ruled that all people born in the United States are U.S. citizens, nullifying the Supreme Court’s Dred Scott decision.

“Freedom is a constant struggle,” Moten said. “Even though Gen. Granger announced the freedom of those enslaved persons in Texas, in practical terms we still struggle in this country for full freedom and full citizenship, by which I mean to have the laws of



**Derryn Moten**, chair of the history and political science department at Alabama State University, taught Auburn student athletes about the history of Juneteenth.

the United States apply equally to all citizens of the United States.”

The luncheon was organized and Moten was invited to address the Auburn team.

“I really appreciate Dr. Moten educating us on Juneteenth,” Malzahn said. “I know our players and coaches were very engaged.”

In a question-and-answer session after Moten’s lecture, senior linebacker K.J. Britt asked why more aspects of African American history are not covered more extensively in textbooks.

“We have to demand it,” Moten replied. “But more importantly, we have to write the history books.”

“It’s eye-opening, the struggles we went through that are unseen and aren’t really talked about,” Britt said, expressing appreciation for the educational opportunity. “A lot of people are opening their eyes. It’s huge to be around people who are willing to learn and accept another culture for something they really didn’t know about.”

Britt, one of Auburn football’s leaders, summarized the message he hopes to use his platform to communicate.

“Unity across the board,” he said. “From one race to another. If we can have unity, then we can be all right.”





# Jefferson County SNAP-Ed Educator Plays Vital Role in School Physical Education

Desiree Hutcherson-Bates continues to help students in Birmingham, Alabama’s urban schools find ways to be physically active through her role as SNAP-Ed educator for Jefferson County. Throughout the past two years, Hutcherson-Bates worked with schools to create safer routes for walking to school and to teach the importance of physical activity through riding bicycles.

In 2019, Hutcherson-Bates’ work with the Gulf State Health Policy Center encouraged the city of Birmingham to make improvements around Booker T. Washington K-8 School for safer pedestrian traffic to and from the school. Such renovations included installing a bridge over a set of railroad tracks and implementing new signs to streamline carpool lines and transportation around the school.

## Safe pedestrian traffic

In 2020, as a member of the Jefferson County Community Coalition, Hutcherson-Bates helped Washington begin a wellness committee as part of Quest for Healthy Schools, a SNAP-Ed initiative to support schools in improving nutrition and physical activity practices.

One of the initiatives she helped bring to life was a walking school bus, which consisted of supervised routes that enabled children to walk to school safely.

“The walking school bus was implemented every Friday from March through May 2019,” said Washington Principal Antonia Ishman.

According to Ishman, the walking school bus has four goals:

- To teach children how to obey traffic laws;
- Help children recognize potentially unsafe situations;
- Build rapport between parents, teachers and students; and



Hutcherson-Bates helped to facilitate, “Bike Rodeos”, bicycle safety events funded by United Way of Central Alabama – teaching children to learn and practice safe bicycling habits.

- Use walking as a safe and fun way to increase daily physical activity.

## Bike Rodeos

Hutcherson-Bates also spends time supporting the wellness efforts at CJ Donald and Oxmoor Valley elementary schools. At these institutions, she helped to facilitate bicycle safety events funded by United Way of Central Alabama. During “Bike Rodeos,” schools promote physical activity by teaching children to learn and practice safe bicycling habits.





having fun. The kids had a great time at the hydration station learning about fruit-infused water recipes. I really enjoyed volunteering and assisting the children learn how to ride the bikes.”

Another parent volunteer, H. Collins, said the bicycle safety program should be a mainstay at all schools.

“It also affords students in urban areas the lost art of learning to ride a bike and the joy of playing outside as opposed to gaming,” said Collins. “This is a vital program that should continue to be offered at schools.”

## COVID-19

While the COVID-19 pandemic has changed how all SNAP-Ed educators have been able to do their jobs, Hutcherson-Bates said she’s used virtual classes to continue providing evidence-based nutrition education for her clients.

Additionally, she said she’s partnered with the farmers’ markets in Jefferson County to coordinate produce give-away sites. During these events, she said she handed out bags with Live Well Alabama recipe cards and

teaching tools for clients to provide ideas on how to prepare and enjoy the produce.

“I’ve learned through the COVID-19 pandemic that remote learning and providing resourceful information is just as important as face to face learning,” said Hutcherson-Bates.

Parents who volunteer in the program said not only were the rodeos good for the children, but also an excellent way for parents to get involved.

“Having bike rodeos promotes bicycle safety and being active,” said parent volunteer R. Short. “It teaches hand signals, where and how to stay safe while riding and



Volunteers assist as kids navigate activities during the bike safety program.



# OPCE Expands Online Course Offerings

Each year the Office of Professional and Continuing Education, or OPCE, serves thousands of individuals through its certificate programs, seminars, conferences, professional development and personal enrichment courses. This spring, OPCE was met with an unusual set of circumstances as the world transitioned to a remote operating structure.

OPCE began expanding its online course offerings in 2019 and was prepared to meet the challenge of quickly transitioning to a world of online learning. Many of the classes previously offered in person have now been converted to a virtual format. With a commitment to creating learning opportunities that address both professional development and personal enrichment needs, OPCE continues to add new courses to allow learners to build the skills and knowledge needed to keep moving forward in an ever-changing world.

Whether the goal is career advancement, acquiring new skills, developing as a leader or simply enjoying personal enrichment, there are many online programs offered that allow new opportunities for learning.

The Digital Web Design Online Certificate Program is a three-course program designed for individuals interested in a career as a professional web designer or developer. From design concept to webpage creation, this hands-on, fully online program gives participants the necessary tools for success in webpage creation, including an understanding of color and typography, web design concepts, coding languages and best business practices. Students can expect to build foundational knowledge of HTML and CSS; learn the basics of JavaScript and other essential web technologies; and use the Bootstrap Framework to create a responsive design.

The Elder Planning Counselor is a designation that is perhaps more relevant than ever. Designed to help working professionals enhance their understanding of the evolving needs of the aging population, the program prepares professionals, including insurance and financial



Jan Moppert, director of the Office of Professional and Career Development in the Harbert College of Business, discussed how to prepare for a technology-based interview in May.

advisors, real estate agents, attorneys, CPAs, accountants, caregivers, medical personnel and those who work with the 55-plus age group, with a total-needs approach for providing advice to the aging population. The online program is offered in partnership with the American Initiative for Elder Planning Studies, or AIEPS, and covers such topics as aging and health issues, the social and psychological issues associated with long term care, financial issues and ethics.

For over 40 years, the Auburn University Accounting and Tax



James Barth, Lowder Eminent Scholar of Finance in the Harbert School of Business, presented *How COVID-19 Is Changing the Global Economy* in June.

Training Institute has provided quality continuing education for enrolled agents, certified public accountants, certified financial planners, tax return preparers and attorneys. Each year the program provides an opportunity for participants to not only meet yearly continuing education requirements, but also to receive updates on new legislation. The nationally accredited, two-day tax seminar is now offered in an online format with robust training provided by top-notch instructors, including nationally recognized speakers, expert tax professionals and federal and state tax specialists.

OPCE is proud to add two new webinar series to its virtual line-up. The EagleCast Webinar Series is designed to meet the demand for information and skills essential for navigating today's ever-changing world. The series is offered free of charge and features experts from a variety of sectors, including education, business, industry, public service and finance. The Personal Enrichment Webinar Series explores topics such as personal wellness, diversity, social media, art, cooking, test preparation tips and more.

Perhaps one of the timeliest offerings is the Culture Bump Toolkit for Culture and Communication. This online program is offered in partnership with Carol Archer and the Center for Educational Outreach and Engagement and is available in whole or by module. The program provides unique cultural and communication training around cultural differences. Participants gain specific skills for authentic personal and organizational change in an easy to learn process.

In 2015, OPCE began its partnership with the Society for Human Resource Management, or SHRM, to provide human resources certification and training. Although OPCE is now the providing partner for three distinct Alabama regions including Auburn/Opelika, Montgomery and North Alabama/Huntsville, the addition of new online certification test prep options for SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP provide flexibility without regard to geography.

Individuals can also build a variety of skills in one of the many online personal enrichment courses offered by Auburn University Community Courses. Participants can get creative in a drawing or sketching course, become conversational in Spanish, prepare for the ACT, GRE, GMAT, LSAT or Praxis, sharpen resume, cover letter and interview skills and more.

While the pandemic has brought its share of challenges, it has also offered new opportunities to build connection and community by providing high-quality learning opportunities to an audience that extends beyond Auburn. To learn more about OPCE and its programs, visit [auburn.edu/opce](http://auburn.edu/opce).



The banner features the text "EAGLECAST WEBINAR SERIES" in large white letters, with "presented by the Office of Professional and Continuing Education" in smaller text below. The Auburn University logo is in the bottom right corner. Below the banner are four portrait photos of the panelists: Mike Clardy, Rick Rainer, Jay Jones, and Laura Eason.

In July the webinar series featured Crisis Communication: A Panel Discussion, with panelists (L to R): **Mike Clardy**, vice president for communications and marketing; **Rick Rainer**, former principal of Enterprise High School, **Jay Jones**, sheriff of Lee County; **Laura Eason**, chaplain at East Alabama Medical Center; Rita Smith, director of the Lee County Emergency Management Agency (not pictured)



# Outreach Responds to Coronavirus Pandemic through Contribution, Collaboration

Through strong collaboration and community bonds, Auburn’s Global Leadership Training Initiative, or GLTI, and Korea Center have accomplished much amid the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic.

In April, Korea Corner’s Suhyun Suh and Aeri Song, along with a group of volunteers, dedicated their time to the East Alabama Food Bank where they sorted and packed 1.2 tons of canned goods. In May, Korea Corner donated thousands of medical supplies to regional health care centers, addressing the critical shortage of personal protective equipment for health care workers fighting COVID-19. With the support of the local Korean community and others, the group secured more than 13,020 medical KN95 and N95 protective masks, 50 gowns, 315 containers of hand sanitizer and 4,006 snack bars for medical workers at the forefront of COVID-19 patient care. The supplies were delivered to East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika and Baptist Medical Center in Montgomery.

“Our Korea Corner staff and friends in the Korean community are great supporters of outreach programs and initiatives, especially now during the coronavirus crisis in our area,” said Royrickers Cook, vice president for University Outreach. “This generous donation of critical medical protective supplies to our front-line health care workers is a fine example of effective community engagement and the collective impact of Korea Corner and its constituents.”

“During difficult times it takes all of us to pitch in to help,” said Auburn mayor Ron Anders. “I was thankful again to the Korea Corner and their



Daniel Yu, assistant director of OPCE

resolute commitment to the local community. Thank you to each person who contributed to assist our health care personnel. This is how a caring community overcomes its common obstacles.”

Led by Daniel Yu, assistant director of OPCE, the Global Leadership Training Initiative, or GLTI, has also expanded its outreach efforts, launching Effective Leadership in the Manufacturing Environment, an online certificate program. The online offering is designed to meet the sudden demand for virtual training in the manufacturing environment by providing leadership and soft skills training to supervisors. Yu also began distributing a weekly newsletter that covers issues specific to COVID-19 in the manufacturing environment. The newsletter is translated and distributed to approximately

100 executives and managers at Korean automotive suppliers. Yu's prior experience as president and CEO in various manufacturing industries allows him to understand the potential impact of the pandemic on manufacturing and the supply chain.

This fall, the Korean After School program also went virtual, converting its after-school language and culture education program to an online format. The language classes are designed for beginners who want to learn the Korean language as non-Korean speakers and focus on developing speaking and listening skills. Previously offered in-person to local students in Auburn City Schools, the program began offering open-enrollment formats available to elementary, middle and high school students online, anywhere in the world. The Korean After School program, offered by OPCE's Korea Corner in collaboration with Auburn Youth Programs, continues to create educational experiences designed to strengthen the connection between Korean and American culture and society. The partnership, sponsored by the Korean Education Center, a division of the Korean Consulate General in Atlanta, began in the fall of 2018 and continues to offer the classes free of charge.

"Through early exposure of Korean language and culture to our non-Korean students, we are helping to build cultural understanding, and this virtual format gives us the possibility of doing so within a global community," says Jim Franklin, Office of Professional and Continuing Education assistant director for Auburn Youth Programs.

Korea Corner, part of the Office of Professional and Continuing Education in University Outreach, is a cultural resource center that promotes educational experiences and collaboration between Auburn faculty members, students and the local Korean community. To learn more, visit [auburn.edu/outreach/opce/koreacorner](http://auburn.edu/outreach/opce/koreacorner).

The Global Leadership Training Initiative (GLTI) is organized by and managed through the Office of Professional and Continuing Education at Auburn University and has provided comprehensive training for team leaders and supervisors in the automotive industry along the I-85 corridor since 2015. To learn more, visit [auburn.edu/opce/glti](http://auburn.edu/opce/glti).

To learn more about the Korean After School program or to register, visit [auburn.edu/outreach/opce/koreacorner/koreanafterschool.htm](http://auburn.edu/outreach/opce/koreacorner/koreanafterschool.htm).



Auburn University's Korea Corner and members of the local Korean community donated medical supplies to East Alabama Medical Center and other regional health care centers. Pictured are, from left, Auburn Mayor Ron Anders; EAMC Director of Pharmacy Services and Government Relations Chuck Beams; EAMC Chief Financial Officer Sam Price; Korea Corner Coordinator Suhyun Suh; Auburn University Outreach Vice President Royrickers Cook; Auburn Opelika Korean Church Senior Pastor Jun Mo Jeong; and Office of Professional and Continuing Education Assistant Director DongWoo Yu.



# Reaching Out by Creating a Virtual Community of Practice

Leslie Cordie, associate professor in Adult Education, has enjoyed a professional career enriched by a diverse group of educators throughout the world. At the start of the pandemic, she searched for a way to maintain connections to this vibrant group of people. The answer came through the development of a podcast series. The podcasts include Cordie's personal interviews with educators from across the world and focused on how the educators were adapting to the new normal. Her goal was to create a dialogue where they could share lessons on teaching and learning.

This podcast series developed a virtual community of practice during a critical time. A community of practice (CoP) can be defined as a group of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and learn how to do it better (Wenger, 1998). In the world of adult education, the transformative learning theory considers that adult learners and professionals who move toward shared perspectives that are more inclusive and integrate experiences can allow for both perspective and behavior changes (Mezirow, 1978). During the pandemic, Cordie wanted to improve her skills and actively engage new ideas by becoming aware of what was happening globally through the perspective of others.

After reaching out to colleagues, Cordie was delighted to find that so many in the educational community wanted a path to connect and dialogue with others in terms of lifelong learning. Indeed, those who have been able to participate jumped at the chance to share their ideas, viewpoints and experiences with the global community during these difficult times. Six months later, there are over 17 podcasts, with more scheduled in the coming months, and a growing list of subscribers.

The main topics that have been shared in the podcasts include:

- Lifelong Learning – why it is important to keep learning and leaning forward in times of crisis;
- The Climate of Teaching – issues that need to be covered in the classroom in terms of mindfulness and well-being and shared dialogue;



- Online Engagement – how to engage and interact any learner in a variety of ways with technology;
  - Workforce Development – unemployment and the need for skilled workers in today's remote workplaces;
  - Leadership – how leadership is a reflection or mirror to society and organizations, especially during a crisis;
  - University-Industry Collaboration – how to build partnerships and relationships to prepare learners for the workforce and create learning organizations that thrive;
  - Society – what is happening in the moment and continuing to learn and grow by acknowledging civil unrest, and issues of equity and equality
- For Cordie, the podcast has been an enjoyable learning experience.

“While I am a novice at podcasting, with a great deal still to learn, the pandemic encouraged me to reach out and engage as a lifelong learner,” said Cordie. “I feel privileged to have the opportunity to share the knowledge and experience of so many educators across the world through the podcasts. It has been highly rewarding for me, and I hope others, during these unprecedented times.”

For more information, visit: <https://aub.ie/LeslieCordie>

# Amid COVID-19, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Auburn University Mobilizes Community Army for Sewing Project

When COVID-19 arrived in Alabama, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Auburn University, or OLLI at Auburn, was just completing its winter semester, and its members, many well into their 60s and older, were anxious about the implications of the virus, but also looking for ways to help. The national shortage of personal protective equipment was in the headlines. As a unit of University Outreach, OLLI staff, volunteer leadership and members took University Outreach’s mission to heart and began to leverage the resources of Auburn University to serve the people of the community. From the time the project concept was identified in mid-March, and with the support of upper administration, various university entities came together, and OLLI became the organizational hub for homemade mask production and distribution.

Grassroots efforts to address the PPE shortage had sprung up across the country. OLLI recognized the opportunity to offer some collective, organized assistance to help ramp up those efforts. Under the advisement of Medical Clinic Director Dr. Fred Kam, Science and Engineering Professor Dr. Christine Schintka created a prototype and sewing instructions for a one-size-fits-most reusable, cloth mask. Media Production Group, under the leadership of Bruce Kuerten, made an online how-to video and designed printable instructions. With \$20,000 of support from the Auburn University Foundation, Outreach purchased bolts of orange and blue fabric. Clark Lundell, head of the School of Industrial and Graphic Design, lent the school’s laser cutters and technicians Chad Bailey, Robert Capps and David Gowan to cut the fabric into kits to be distributed to sewists. In turn, sewists returned the assembled masks to OLLI headquarters, and under the direction of Dr. Elizabeth Quansah, Outreach Global staff coordinated identifying need and distributing masks.

“Auburn’s outreach mission and strategic purpose is to provide practical and innovative solutions to significant public needs, and this interdisciplinary initiative is powerful example of that responsiveness,” said Royrickers

Cook, associate provost and vice president for University Outreach.

The initial goal was to distribute 10,000 homemade masks. By the time the project was completed, the Auburn University Outreach Mask Initiative had provided over 12,700 masks to medical facilities and people at high risk in our immediate area and as far away as Mobile, Dothan and Atlanta. It had also engaged over 350 members and community sewists, offering a sense of purpose and accomplishment in uncertain times.



“What we learned is that a small army mobilized with sewing machines can make a powerful impact and that OLLI can embody the values of Auburn University’s outreach mission in creative and effective ways,” said Scott Bishop, director of OLLI.



# The Cary Center Expands Nonprofit Programming

The Cary Center Nonprofit Affiliate Program anticipated 2020 would be an impactful year, but never imagined the challenges and opportunities it would bring. Events like the Cary Center Volunteer, Internship and Career Fair (Meet Me at the VIC) and Mix & Mingles were cancelled as the pandemic hit in March.

Instead of being discouraged by the circumstances, the Cary Center staff pivoted to a platform they envisioned but had never executed – virtual programming. Having never hosted a virtual program, while understanding the immediate need for nonprofit professional development during a time of crisis, the Cary Center Nonprofit Affiliate Program launched The CARES Act for Nonprofits via Zoom to address funding concerns.

Based on this virtual programmatic success, 4 Steps of Donor Fundraising with Cary Center Philanthropist in Residence Greg Doepke and the Summer Fundraising Series followed, providing free programming to nonprofit professionals in Alabama and beyond. Covering topics like planned giving, securing major gifts, grant writing and donor-centered virtual events, The Summer Fundraising Series offered resource education during a time when many nonprofits had to change their approach.

Summer 2020 also brought a unique opportunity as the Cary Center began researching the impact of COVID-19 on nonprofits. Sharing a survey developed by the University of San Diego, the Cary Center received

input from 67 nonprofit organizations in Alabama and Georgia. The report for this research is forthcoming.

The Cary Center followed with a second survey titled The Impact of COVID-19 on Alabama and Georgia Nonprofits to understand the repercussions of COVID-19 on revenue and services in the local sector. This project is scheduled to conclude by the end of the fall semester.

The Cary Center's Nonprofit Affiliate Program scheduled more virtual programs for Fall 2020. The 4th Annual Cary Center Nonprofit Summit in October featured Coach Bill Curry and author and journalist Echo Garrett serving as keynote speakers. Topics covered included digital marketing, board leadership, resource development and volunteer recruitment.

The 2nd Annual Cary Center Volunteer, Internship and Career Fair Meet Me at the VIC, convened nonprofits from across the United States as they met virtually with Auburn University students seeking internships, practicums and jobs.

Additional fall programming covered topics ranging from building annual reports, nonprofits and self-care, to auditing services for nonprofits.

The Cary Center Nonprofit Affiliate Program prides itself in providing salient professional development programming for nonprofits and their leaders, and membership is free. For additional information, visit [auburn.edu/ic/npaapp](http://auburn.edu/ic/npaapp) or email [branyba@auburn.edu](mailto:branyba@auburn.edu).



# Cary Center

learn • give • grow

# Auburn University Wildlife Professor Serves as Lead Editor on Nation's First Handbook for Citizen Scientists

An Auburn University researcher and faculty member is the lead editor of the newly released Handbook of Citizen Science in Ecology and Conservation, the nation's first comprehensive guide for both professional scientists and citizen scientists—avid science enthusiasts within communities who carry out essential, hands-on work for research projects.

Editor Christopher Lepczyk, a professor of wildlife biology and conservation in Auburn's School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, said the handbook aims to provide tools to citizen

scientists to help them start or become involved in projects. While the focus is on ecology and conservation, the lessons in the book are applicable to most citizen science projects, he said.

"This is very much a book for practitioners and the public, as much as it is for professional scientists,"

Lepczyk said. "Our goal was very much oriented at creating a book that can be read and used by both an interested lay person as well as the scientific community. Thus, we worked to present the concepts of citizen science in an easy-to-read and user-friendly manner, without a lot of jargon or citations."



Christopher Lepczyk

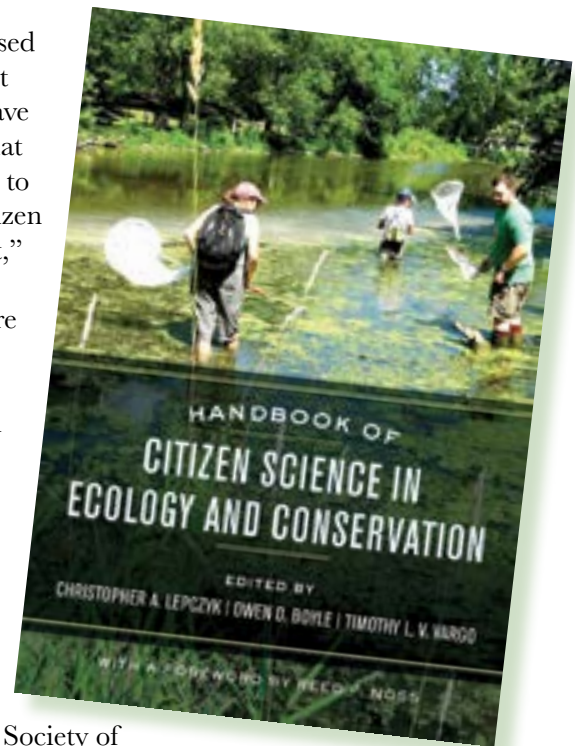
The idea for the book came about years ago in Milwaukee after Lepczyk and two close friends and colleagues—Tim Vargo and Owen Boyle, co-editors of the book—worked on a citizen science project focused on migrating birds that used public parks as stopover locations.

"We discussed how valuable it would be to have a handbook that described how to carry out a citizen science project," Lepczyk said. "Although there were papers and some short technical reports, no handbook existed."

After holding a symposium on citizen science at the Ecological Society of America meeting, the three proposed the book to the University of California Press, which accepted.

Lepczyk began work on the handbook along with Boyle, chief of species management at the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Conservation Program, and Vargo, manager of research and community science at the Urban Ecology Center in Milwaukee.

Rather than using the terms "scientists" and "non-scientists," Vargo said he refers to the two categories as





professional scientists and community scientists because, “in the end, we are all contributing to science.

“Citizen science provides collaborative opportunities between the two groups, as each group brings particular talents and support,” Vargo said. “The very first scientists were citizen scientists, and then we created the university system where most professional scientists became trained. But outside the auspices of the ivory tower, people have been contributing so much to our understanding of how the world works.”

He cited the names of some familiar pioneering “citizen scientists,” including Charles Darwin, Thomas Jefferson and Increase Lapham.

“Professional scientists bring a strong and important skillset, and community scientists bring a strong—usually different, but equally important—skillset to projects,” Vargo said.

In the handbook, the editors aim to tear down some longstanding myths: that only professional scientists can engage in scientific research; that community involvement decreases the integrity of science; and that science is outside the grasp of the community, said Boyle.

“We worked hard to bring together a group of citizen science practitioners with many decades of experience in the full diversity of citizen science projects in conservation and ecology that vary in scale, geography, duration, organizational support and level of volunteer involvement,” Boyle said.

“I hope the handbook not only inspires new citizen science projects on under-studied species or in under-surveyed areas, but that it can also provide fresh ideas and approaches for existing projects. Citizen science is crucial for scientists’ understanding of the natural world. And for citizen scientists, it’s just plain fun.”

The handbook draws from the experience of professional scientists from universities, government agencies and non-governmental organizations to present a set of best practices and important processes to consider when starting or strengthening citizen science projects.

Citizen science expert Rebecca Christoffel, sole proprietor of Christoffel Conservation, said the volume



Researchers from Auburn University’s School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences and the College of Agriculture, along with the Alabama Water Watch, engaged high school students to participate as members of the Auburn University Stream Team. In this citizen science program, high school students learned about water quality issues and became trained to accurately monitor and collect stream data from watersheds located within the state.

is an important addition to the literature in the field, not only for scientists who are developing citizen sciences projects, but also for the individuals involved in those projects.

“It really lays out the nuts and bolts of designing, implementing and assessing a citizen science program,” said Christoffel, who plans to use the book in a class she is developing for naturalists involved in citizen science. “Each chapter is authored by individuals who have expertise in the topic discussed.”

Dean Janaki Alavalapati of Auburn’s School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences applauded the efforts of Lepczyk and his team.

“Citizen science projects have always been valuable and are becoming more and more common,” Alavalapati said. “With the publication of this handbook, Dr. Lepczyk and his co-editors have provided a much-needed, comprehensive guide for both professional scientists and the citizen scientists who contribute so much to research.”

*Handbook of Citizen Science in Ecology and Conservation* is available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Walmart and other retailers.

# Spotlight on Faculty Engagement

## *The Affective Impact of Mask-Making Amid a Pandemic*

While Christine Schnittka and Chippewa Thomas were sewing cloth face masks during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, they began a research project to study people sewing face masks. During the summer of 2020, over Zoom, they interviewed over 100 sewists in 35 states about the impact that sewing these masks had on their lives, health and emotions. Thomas and Schnittka are currently examining the taped interviews to investigate the impact sewing masks has had on people with disabilities, people who are retired, people who are homemakers and people who have picked up this baton with full-time jobs. During the interviews, they also asked about creativity, innovation and what is known as “folk engineering” to see how mask makers are doing the work of engineers in their homes, designing and constructing face masks to fight the pandemic.

Additionally, the two served on a panel at the Homemade Mask Summit sponsored by Tulane University, and along with Scott Bishop, director of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Auburn University, discussed some of what they had learned thus far. Bishop spearheaded the production and distribution of 12,000 masks made by volunteers in the community as a service gift from Auburn University Outreach. Bishop corralled people from all over the university and community to accomplish this multifaceted initiative that answered the call for masks needed by first responders, health care workers and citizens in Alabama and beyond.

Results of the interviews revealed making textiles during a global pandemic is a powerful, symbolic act that benefits both the maker and the recipient. Sewing face masks during this pandemic gave sewists newfound purpose in life. Psychological benefits include positive feelings of being calm, the feeling one gets when being affirmed by others, the gratification of accomplishing something and the sense of being powerful and in control during a time when life can feel out of control.

For some older adults, it helped them cope in a variety of meaningful ways. There were psychological, relational and existential benefits. Making masks allowed people to help others, and it gave them a feeling of value, worthiness and purpose. They felt more in control in a



chaotic world. Industrialization has replaced much of the need for people to make things by hand, but it is part of human nature to do so, and it has many benefits. Philanthropic crafting enhanced sewists’ well-being in many ways, and lessons learned from the study could be extended into “normal times.”

With upper administration leadership and strong communication and cooperation among units, a university has a rich cache of talent that can be leveraged during a crisis, from communication and marketing designers, videographers and webmasters, to faculty, medical staff and industrial design technicians. Podcasts from the summit are available here: <https://www.justwannaquilt.com/homemade-mask-summit>.





# Auburn Professor Helps Lead ‘Nurdle Patrol,’ *a Multinational Citizen Science Project on Microplastics Spanning the Gulf of Mexico*

Kelly Dunning, an assistant professor in Auburn University’s School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, was part of a team that created and implemented a volunteer-driven citizen science project called “Nurdle Patrol,” which measured microplastic pollution across the Gulf of Mexico.

The project’s open-access findings, “Measuring plastic pellet (nurdle) abundance on shorelines throughout the Gulf of Mexico using citizen scientists: Establishing a platform for policy-relevant research,” were published earlier this year in the *Bulletin of Marine Pollution*.

The vast scope of volunteer interest allowed for the project’s expansion across the Gulf of Mexico region, with 744 citizen scientists conducting 2,042 surveys of microplastics from the shorelines of Mahahual, Mexico, to Fort Jefferson, Texas.

Dunning said the findings serve as a warning about the wide prevalence of microplastics, or “nurdles”—small plastic pellets composed of the raw material of nearly everything that is made of plastic—in the Gulf of Mexico, as well as the power of citizen science to bring about widespread awareness of marine pollution.

“Because of the many scales of policy implementation around microplastics—international, national, regional and local—there are significant challenges to getting all actors to work together to lessen microplastic spills into the environment,” said Dunning, whose role on the project was to analyze how citizen science informs decision-maker action, leading to policy that can reduce the amount of marine microplastic pollution.

“Private companies must act to lessen nurdle spills in production and transport phases, and local and state governments have the most power to work with companies to tighten microplastic security along the supply chain where leaks into coastal waters occur most,” she said.

The project began in 2018, when scientists at the Mission Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve, led by the organization’s director, Jace Tunnell, noticed the nurdles on the beaches of Corpus Christi, Texas. From there, they established the Nurdle Patrol, which

was made up of citizen scientists tasked with monitoring the presence of nurdles.

Janaki Alavalapati, dean of Auburn’s School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, said this wide-scale, citizen science-led project will shed a bright light on the vast presence of plastic particles bringing about marine pollution in the Gulf of Mexico.

“By taking on the arduous task of measuring the amount of microplastic spills in the Gulf of Mexico, Dr. Dunning and her fellow researchers, including the many citizen scientists who devoted their efforts to this project, have brought about widespread awareness that is likely to lead to serious action that will not only address the current problem, but also substantially decrease microplastic spillage in the future,” Alavalapati said.

Dunning said the work could not have been done without the hard work of the citizen scientists.

“It would have been completely impossible,” she said.

An interesting and encouraging fact about this massive research is that it originated in research done by Tunnell’s daughter, Parker.

“This started as her science fair project. So, it shows how young women in STEM can lead to huge movements that span countries, states and communities,” Dunning said.

Tunnell agreed that the scope of the study would be insurmountable without the contribution of the widespread group of citizen scientists.

“The extent, frequency and visibility of the project all depends on citizen scientists,” Tunnell said. “This could not be done by one single group of researchers, and it is so inspiring to work with such compassionate groups of individuals wanting to make a difference on plastics reaching the ocean.”



Nurdle Patrol project founder Jace Tunnell displays a nurdle, or piece of microplastic, found on the Texas coast of the Gulf of Mexico.

# Women's Philanthropy Board Ventures into New Outreach Territories

When the global COVID-19 pandemic hit home, it upended how companies conducted business, how educators taught and how outreach programs delivered services to the community. For the Women's Philanthropy Board, the fallout from the pandemic provided the organization the opportunity to venture into new territories.

Since 2002, the Women's Philanthropy Board, or WPB, has provided its members and the community with educational programs focusing on financial wellness and philanthropic engagement. In addition to its two annual large-scale ticketed events featuring nationally known speakers, WPB produces smaller "roundtable" programs on topics such as investing, financial planning, financial technology, philanthropy, estate planning and social security. These roundtable sessions, offered free of charge, are open to the entire community. Traditionally, WPB hosted three to five roundtable sessions.

In the spring of 2020, with the pandemic spreading and a "safer-at-home" mandate issued, WPB redefined how it delivered education to its participants. As the university did with its academic courses, WPB quickly made the transition from in-person to virtual programming. Educational sessions were developed and presented to address concerns that arose from COVID-19. Initial topics included Managing Your Family's Risk, Diversifying Your Income Sources and Seven Mistakes Investors Make in a Volatile Market.

As the quarantine became the new normal, WPB sought to develop programs that not only provided pertinent information, but also gave participants a much-needed social outlet and diversion. For its members, WPB hosted virtual trivia nights and a comedy night. For the community, it hosted programs including Alabama Returns to School Roadmap, Budgeting Like a Boss, the Mediterranean Diet and the Auburn Dog: Canine Performance Sciences. During the summer and early fall, more than a dozen virtual roundtable sessions were developed and presented by WPB. Some programs attracted as many as 125 participants in a single session.

In addition to educational programs, WPB partnered with the Auburn University Office of Gift Planning to offer a virtual book club. The inaugural book selection was *Your Meaning Legacy* by Laura A. Roser and

focused on how to cultivate and pass on non-financial assets.

While virtual events may not provide the same level of comradery and interaction as in-person sessions, they can connect participants from afar. Through its new direction, WPB reached beyond the city limits and state lines to more than 500 participants from as far away as Seattle and Miami. This represented an increase of approximately 10 times the number of in-person participants that normally attend WPB's summer programs.

WPB is the flagship division of the Cary Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies, an academic center in Auburn's College of Human Sciences. WPB's programs are open to the public. Individuals interested in supporting the mission of WPB can join as members. To learn more about WPB memberships or programs, or to be notified of upcoming events, please email [wpbchsl@auburn.edu](mailto:wpbchsl@auburn.edu) or call 334-844-9156.





# Outreach News

## University Outreach's Foster Retires

After more than 31 years of service, Ralph S. Foster Jr., assistant vice president for University Outreach and Public Service and CEU officer, retired from Auburn University. In recognition of his contributions, he was awarded emeritus status.

A third-generation Auburn alumnus, Foster earned a bachelor's in business administration from Auburn in 1979, a master's in personnel management from Troy State University-Montgomery in 1988 and completed the National Leadership Institute in Adult and Continuing Education at the University of Georgia. Foster joined the Office of the Vice President for Extension—now University Outreach—as a project associate in 1989. He was promoted to director in 1993 and served in several progressive appointments in the Division of University Outreach, culminating in his promotion to assistant vice president in 2017.

“Auburn gave me a career and purpose, made all the more meaningful by my family ties to campus and the area,” said Foster. “My family settled near Armstrong Church (on Wire Road) in the 1850s. My grandfather was a student in 1908 and lived in Smith Hall where my office has been located for the last 20 years.”

“Mr. Foster's record in outreach and public service has been exemplary,” said Royrickers Cook, vice-president for University Outreach. “His leadership and dedication have contributed greatly to the Division of University Outreach, the advancement of the institution's land-grant mission and Auburn's national reputation as an engaged university.”

During his tenure, Foster contributed significantly to Auburn's culture and institutionalization of engagement: spearheading the university's first comprehensive policies for non-credit professional CEU certifications, assisting in developing sections of the university's Faculty Handbook and Auburn Bulletin related to outreach, compiling the original Guide for Faculty Engagement, co-chairing a university task force to advance and support service-learning and curricular engagement at Auburn and providing oversight of the Encyclopedia of Alabama.

Foster's most significant contribution to Auburn has been his efforts to obtain the institution's prestigious Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement



Classification. Foster organized the university's Carnegie application, which led to Auburn's first classification in 2010 and its subsequent reclassification in 2020.

Foster has produced an extensive portfolio of engaged scholarship and presentations including serving as keynote speaker at Ohio University's College of Education Faculty Engagement Colloquia in 2011, serving as a member of the Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement editorial board and authoring numerous peer reviewed publications and book chapters. Additionally, Foster served on the executive committee for the national Gulf-South Summit on Service-Learning and Community Engagement, co-chaired the program committee of the Engagement Scholarship Consortium's annual international conference in Birmingham, Alabama, and is a member and past chair of the board of Alabama Possible.

“It has been an honor to serve Auburn University all these years, and I'm blessed to have worked with

the dynamic leadership of University Outreach and dedicated coworkers in my office, as well as so many other great people across campus and beyond,” said Foster. “Outreach and engagement are truly the heart of our land-grant mission and the part of the Auburn Spirit which urges us to make a difference in the lives of people all across our state.”

Foster and his wife of 30 years, Lesley, reside in Montgomery, Alabama.



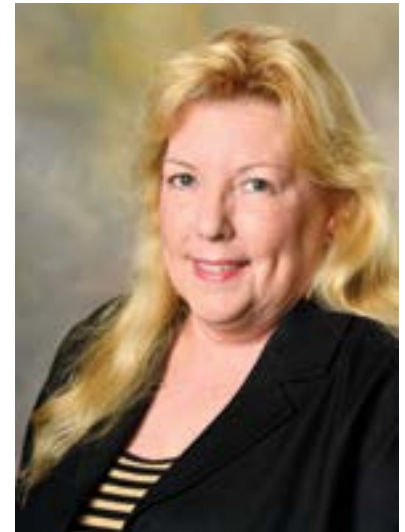
### **In Memory, Sarah Reese-Burney**

Long-time University Outreach Program Coordinator and CEU Manager in the Office of Public Service, Sarah Reese-Burney, recently passed away. She retired from Auburn University, effective June 30, with more than 36 years of service. A lifelong resident of Opelika, Reese-Burney was a graduate of Opelika High School. She later earned her bachelor's and MBA degrees from the University of Phoenix.

In 1983, Reese-Burney joined the staff of Auburn University in the Department of Botany and Microbiology. She was hired in University Outreach in 1993 as an administrative assistant for the newly formed Office of Outreach Information. In that role, Reese-Burney organized the records management and cross-referencing system still in use today for non-credit programs and CEU certifications across campus. Over the years her role expanded in the office, including responsibility for CEU transcript management, archives oversight and public information on Outreach's wide variety of program offerings. She touched the lives of many and will be missed.

### **Markie Southerland retires**

On June 30, Markie Southerland closed a chapter of her life, retiring from Auburn University after 35 years of service. Southerland started working at Auburn in 1982 as an administrative assistant in the dean's office of the School of Arts and Sciences. Over the years Southerland worked for various departments, including the College of Education Learning Resource Center, the School of Pharmacy and Aerospace Engineering. After a few years working in the private sector, Southerland returned to Auburn University in 1993 and started working for University Outreach as an administrative assistant in the Economic Development Institute, now GEDI, supporting the executive director. Southerland worked for Joe Summers, executive director emeritus, for most of her years in Outreach.



### **OPCE's New EagleCast Webinar Series engages experts, audience**

The Office of Professional and Continuing Education, or OPCE, is proud to offer a new monthly

webinar series featuring experts from a variety of sectors, including education, business, industry, public service and finance. The ongoing series, offered free of charge, presents information and skills essential for navigating today's ever-changing world.

The series launched in May and featured Jan Moppert, director of the Office of Professional and Career Development in the Harbert College of Business. In her presentation, *The New Job Interview: Zoom, Phone, and Social Distancing*, Moppert discussed how to prepare for a technology-based interview.

The series has continued with a variety of topics and experts, including: *How COVID-19 Is Changing the Global Economy*, presented by James Barth, Lowder Eminent Scholar of Finance in the Harbert School of Business; *Crisis Communication: A Panel Discussion*,





featuring Mike Clardy, assistant vice president for Communications and Marketing, Rick Rainer, former principal of Enterprise High School, Jay Jones, sheriff of Lee County, Rita Smith, director of the Lee County Emergency Management Agency, and Laura Eason, chaplain at East Alabama Medical Center; and Individual Income Tax Updates, presented by Joel Jones, CPA, director and shareholder for Kassouf & Co. and an instructor for the Auburn University Accounting and Tax Institute, an OPCE program area. Additional topics have included Microsoft Teams and teambuilding activities in a remote office, culture and diversity training, mindfulness and financial planning.

Registration for the EagleCast Webinar Series is always free and open to the public. To register for an upcoming webinar or to view past webinars, visit [aub.ie/opcewebinar](http://aub.ie/opcewebinar).

## Faculty Outreach and Engagement Council and Community of Practice

The Office of Faculty Engagement convened the Faculty Outreach and Engagement Council, or FOEC, to serve in an advisory capacity and champion, advocate, promote and support Auburn University faculty, staff and student outreach, community/public/civic engagement, extension and engaged scholarship. The Outreach and Engagement Community of Practice is a collective of Auburn University faculty, staff, administrators and students from each college, school and outreach unit who share passion and concern for the outreach, community engagement, applied research, extension and engaged scholarship. The group interacts regularly to learn methods of improving their services. The groups meet jointly on a quarterly basis to learn about active programs and projects, share best practices and lessons learned, engage in networking and the sharing of resource information and collaboratively develop advocacy steps to further advance the institutionalization of community engagement at Auburn University. Visit the Faculty Outreach and Engagement Council web page to learn more about how you can be a part of it all at <http://www.auburn.edu/outreach/facultyengagement/council.htm>

## Outreach Launches AuburnVotes

AuburnVotes is a NONPARTISAN initiative designed to encourage all Auburn University students to participate in America's democratic process by voting. [www.auburn.edu/outreach/auburnvotes.htm](http://www.auburn.edu/outreach/auburnvotes.htm)  
#auburnvotes

## Elizabeth Haeussler Retires

Elizabeth "Liz" Bass Haeussler, executive assistant/business manager for the Vice President for University Outreach retired after more than 30 years of service.

A resident of the Beauregard/Opelika area for 35 years, Haeussler grew up in Tallassee and graduated from Reeltown High School. She joined the staff of Auburn University working in the Graduate School in 1990. Haeussler gained valuable experience working 14 years in the Business Office before transferring to University Outreach in 2005. In that role, Haeussler managed the financial, human resources and budgetary responsibilities for the division. She was also involved with special programs such as All In All Pink Breast Cancer Awareness and the Ghana Healthcare program.



"Being a part of Auburn University Outreach and witnessing outreach making a difference in communities has been so very rewarding to me. Auburn University has been such a wonderful place to work," said Haeussler. "I am thankful for having such supportive and exceptional leaders like Dr. Royrickers Cook, Mrs. Marcie Smith, Mrs. Shawn Asmuth, Dean Dorenbos and Mrs. Linda Hatchett. Even though I am moving on to other adventures, Auburn University, University Outreach and the special friends I have worked with on campus will always be a part of me."

Haeussler has two children, Tiffany and Harrison, who are her heart. After retirement, she plans to spend more time with them, her mom, other family and friends, travel, take art and piano classes and eventually open a boutique.

## 2021 Survey of Public Faculty Engagement

Faculty will soon have the opportunity to contribute what is presently known about publicly engaged scholars at Auburn University. Validated last year by the reaffirmation of Auburn University as a Carnegie Community Engaged institution, this more current profile will further highlight faculty at Auburn who produce significant and impactful community-engaged teaching, research, outreach and service. Data collected

from this year's survey will be compiled and presented online as a real-time map of engagement and shared with department heads and chairs, deans, community groups, stakeholders and partners to showcase and recognize all that is being accomplished. Faculty will be able to complete the survey at [www.auburn.edu/facultyengagement](http://www.auburn.edu/facultyengagement).

### The GEAR UP Corner

University Outreach welcomed 21 GEAR UP Alabama students to the Auburn Family. One of those students is **Romen Calvin**, graduate of Stanhope Elmore High in Millbrook Alabama. Although he is currently undeclared, Calvin is interested in majoring in mechanical and electrical engineering. He is a member of the Academic Excellence Program, or



AEP, the National Society of Black Engineers, or NSBE, and the Tiger Excellence Scholars Program, or TESP, on campus.

The GEAR UP program is a grant that was secured by the University of Alabama at Birmingham and the state of Alabama, enabling students in 21 school districts representing 51 schools across the 17 Alabama Black Belt counties to gain early awareness and readiness for undergraduate programs. GEAR UP Alabama is a seven-year project which has 9,020 students. The project began with students in the sixth and seventh grades during the 2014-15 school year, following the cohort of students through high school and into their first year of college. GEAR UP is currently in year six. Auburn University has served as co-principal investigator on the GEAR UP Alabama grant for the past six years, and the Center for Educational Outreach and Engagement, or CEOE, has provided summer enrichment camps, tutoring and other college readiness programs for the cohort.

### Interdisciplinary Team Receives IGP Grant

A partnership between Auburn University and Lee County Youth Development Center titled "Fostering Communities in the Kitchen and Garden" was awarded a 2020 Intramural Grants Program, or IGP, Interdisciplinary Team Research Grant.

Fostering Communities provides foster youths with cooking skills, nutrition education, horticultural training and digital narrative journalism techniques. The program supports young adults who leave the foster care system and transition to independent living in Lee County, Alabama. Fostering Communities is a community-engaged, research-based evaluation and teaching initiative developed by a team of Auburn University faculty. Team members from across campus include **Onikia Brown** in nutrition, **Rosetta Giuliani Caponetto** in foreign languages and literatures, **Joan Harrell** in journalism, **Jennifer Jettner** in social work, **Carolyn W. Robinson** in horticulture, **Chippewa Thomas** in University Outreach and Danilea Werner in social work.

The Auburn University IGP is a comprehensive and coordinated competitive grant program committed to the advancement of knowledge through basic and applied research, to the enrichment of society through creative initiatives, to promoting faculty research in all disciplines and recognizing that scholarly activity can take different forms across disciplines. The program is designed to support faculty in becoming competitive in securing external funding and sponsorship. Projects are expected to result in appropriate scholarly products which increase the national and international recognition of the awardees, their programs and the university.



From top, left to right: Rosetta Giuliani Caponetto, Joan Harrell, Jennifer Jettner, Danilea Werner, Carolyn Robinson, Onikia Brown and Chippewa Thomas.



## New Faculty: An Invitation to Engage!

Despite the uncertainty that this new academic year has started with, one thing is certain. Auburn University faculty are dedicated to the work of delivering world-class education, conducting cutting-edge research and providing compassionate service, all while being thought leaders in their respective disciplines. Outreach welcomes the new faculty and invites them to join in the mission of outreach! The Office of Faculty Engagement invites all new faculty to explore ways to apply their expertise to critical opportunities to serve while contributing vital community-engaged scholarship. The office produces the Guide for Faculty Engagement, which contains information about University Outreach.

Visit the Office of Faculty Engagement web page to view a video message from Royrickers Cook, vice president for University Outreach and associate provost, and Chippewa Thomas, director, Office of Faculty Engagement. To learn more, go to [www.auburn.edu/facultyengagement](http://www.auburn.edu/facultyengagement).

## GEDI Announces Retirements of Leslie Hamby and Maria Tamblyn

The Government and Economic Development Institute, or GEDI, is wishing a fond farewell to **Leslie Hamby** and **Maria Tamblyn** who are retiring effective Feb. 1, 2021.

In July 2010, Hamby joined the Center of Governmental Services which subsequently merged into GEDI. Hamby has served as Training Program Coordinator for GEDI, coordinating classes, workshops and conferences, handling course registrations and customer service for participants. In 2016, Hamby was a recipient of the Auburn University Spirit of Excellence Award.

“I’ve thoroughly enjoyed my tenure with this department and all the persons I have engaged with throughout the State of Alabama in this position. It has been a tremendous opportunity to serve government employees and elected officials as they participated in their professional education and certification courses offered through GEDI”, Hamby said. She is looking forward to pursuing personal goals and caring for family.



Maria Tamblyn came to Auburn Outreach in 2000. She has served as manager of Human Resources Consulting, a unit that assists counties, cities, government agencies and municipalities with human resource policies, procedures and regulatory compliance. Tamblyn also engaged in governance at the university level and as a course instructor.

“I’m proud of the work we have done and will continue to do. There is no other organization doing the type of work we do on this level. There is so much need out there, and I’m proud of the service our HR Consulting unit has been able to provide for local governments to enable their municipalities and communities to grow and thrive,” Tamblyn stated.

GEDI thanks Hamby and Tamblyn for their years of dedicated service. They both leave behind outstanding legacies of service to Auburn University and the state of Alabama.

## Arthur Appointed Director of GEDI

Jeremy L. Arthur has been named director of the Governmental and Economic Development Institute, or GEDI. Arthur is currently president and CEO at Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama and will assume the role of GEDI director in February.

A lifelong Alabamian, Arthur is a two-time Auburn graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in political science, and an MPA in public administration. He currently has completed coursework towards his Ph.D.

in public administration and public policy at Auburn. Arthur has worked as a research assistant at the Economic Development Institute in University Outreach and as an instructor in Auburn’s Department of Political Sciences. After 8 years with the Prattville Area Chamber of Commerce, Arthur assumed his current position as president of the State Chamber of Commerce Association in 2012. He also serves as an instructor for U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s Institute for Organization Management in Washington, D.C.

“Working for Auburn as GEDI director is an exciting opportunity to serve my home state and to give back to my alma mater,” says Arthur. “I’m looking forward to working with the GEDI and University Outreach teams to promote economic and governmental best practices for public officials and citizen stakeholders all across Alabama as part of Auburn’s great mission of Outreach.”



## Passages – A *Beyond Auburn* Appreciation

As I look back over 31-plus years at Auburn University, one of my most meaningful experiences has been assisting with the production of *Beyond Auburn*. Published by my Office of Public Service colleagues Joyce Thomas-Vinson and Janie Echols-Brown, converted to online by Karen Rankin and Katey Nelson and with generous editorial cooperation of the Office of Communications and Marketing, *Beyond Auburn* is Auburn's chronicle of the land-grant mission of Outreach. After 14 years, 26 issues and 821 feature stories, the magazine is still going strong, much like the outreach engagement work that it highlights.

Shortly after his appointment to lead the University Outreach division in 2006, Royrickers Cook had given us a simple charge – develop a regular publication “to highlight the many ways our communities and state benefit from Auburn University’s mission of outreach.” *Beyond Auburn* was the result, the first university publication dedicated to the greater scope of academic outreach and faculty engagement campuswide. Our purpose was not to simply report on organizational activity, rather the magazine focused intentionally on community impact – hence the name “Beyond Auburn.” Each issue featured innovative outreach responses to a wide range of critical issues and how university engagement was making a difference in people’s lives. Eventually “making a difference ...” became *Beyond Auburn*’s de facto motto, appearing in every welcome message from Dr. Cook.

*Beyond Auburn* is an exercise in networking, with many of the stories submitted directly from campus communicators in the schools and colleges, units and centers and occasionally from individual faculty, students and even community partners. My contribution was as ghost writer-at-large, compiling special features; these total some 88 pages of content over the years, only a 10th of total material published in the magazine since 2006. Among those features, it was particularly enjoyable to compose the profiles of the annual faculty outreach excellence award recipients, highlighting the exemplary engagement of these most eminent scholars, as well as the special reports for Auburn’s 2010 and 2020 Carnegie Community Engagement designations, which constitute some of the most comprehensive reviews of the university’s outreach enterprise ever published.

Writing about such a diversity of scholarly outreach and community engagement gave me a great appreciation for my Division of University Outreach colleagues, as well as faculty, students, extension professionals and community

partners doing the good work of outreach. By “good” I don’t just mean high quality, but work that is deliberate and impactful in serving the public good. It’s what the Auburn Creed calls the “human touch” – extending our educational resources beyond campus to elevate the quality of life for all. Auburn is one of 359 institutions of higher education nationally that hold Carnegie’s community engagement classification, and notably one of only 71 which hold both Carnegie research “R1” and engagement classifications. That’s a powerful affirmation for Auburn outreach mission; one need only read the Spring 2020 *Beyond Auburn* Carnegie report to appreciate the real and extensive impact Auburn is having statewide through its outreach mission.

Over three decades, I also had the challenge of writing what I called “passages” for *Beyond Auburn*, retirement reflections and sometimes memorials on the careers of Auburn’s wonderful faculty and administration who contributed to the university’s outreach mission. The first was in 2007; the most recent was last issue. These features did not get easier to write, but I saw them as an important duty to honor people who engaged their talents, elevated Auburn’s land-grant mission through their outreach and in turn, made a difference in someone’s life.

After my own July retirement, I received so many kind notes from across campus. Thus, I wanted to contribute this one last item to *Beyond Auburn* to say thanks to the many people who made my “passage” at Auburn rewarding and meaningful. I spent my entire Auburn career in University Outreach, and I am greatly honored to have been awarded the university’s emeritus designation for that service to which so many contributed. In 1988, the Martin administration was establishing a new division to advance outreach work at Auburn, and I was among the first hires in the vice president’s office. From there, and in later appointments within University Outreach, I had the opportunity to meet and work with colleagues across campus, the state and nation. I am grateful to count so many of these individuals as friends and to have been included in their outreach work. I am particularly blessed to have worked with the leadership and staff of my University Outreach family, who, between “just us,” embodies the finest of the Auburn spirit. You truly make a difference!

War Eagle!

Ralph

(*Emeritus, Assistant Vice President for University Outreach and Public Service*)





[www.auburn.edu/outreach](http://www.auburn.edu/outreach)



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