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FALL 2010

Armstrong

**The Inauguration of
Linda M. Bleicken as
Armstrong's Seventh President**

INSIDE:

*A Growing Tradition of
Community Outreach*



A magazine of Armstrong Atlantic State University

About this issue

The 1998 spring/summer issue of this university's magazine was the last one to bear the *Armstrong Magazine* name on its cover before *Compass* was introduced. Six issues of *Armstrong Magazine* were published starting in the summer of 1994. In this issue, we return to using the name *Armstrong Magazine*. Armstrong, after all, is how we are known in the community and how alumni remember us.

Inside you can read about President Linda M. Bleicken's inauguration as Armstrong's seventh president. Presidential inaugurations are a time-honored tradition in academia and the September event brought to campus several dignitaries and university presidents from the University System of Georgia and the region, many distinguished alumni and hundreds of faculty, staff and students.

In the spirit of the 75th anniversary, we include a story about Armstrong's first Day of Service that included hundreds of student volunteers providing service at various nonprofit organizations in town.

A story about community outreach offers a glimpse of Armstrong students' growing involvement in the region.

Tennis coaches Simon Earnshaw and David Secker, who have six national championships under their belts (Pirates' tennis have a total of eight), help us trace the winning history of our tennis teams.

Please send us your comments or ideas for future stories to Francisco.Duque@armstrong.edu.

—Francisco Duque



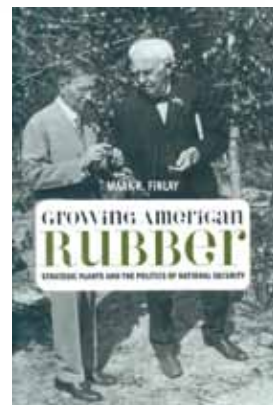
campus NEWS

Assistant Dean Wins National Award

Mark R. Finlay, professor of history and assistant dean of the College of Liberal Arts, received the 2009 Theodore Saloutos Memorial Award for his book, *Growing American Rubber: Strategic Plants and the Politics of National Security* (Rutgers University Press, 2009). The Agricultural History Society presents the annual award to the author of a book voted the year's best on any aspect of agricultural history in the United States.

Growing American Rubber traces the country's search to identify a dependable source of domestic rubber during tense decades of the twentieth century. Researched over a period of eight years, the book weaves the stories of national figures, including Thomas Edison and Henry Ford, and provides an analysis of the intersection of military and economic national security and access to rubber—a vital strategic national resource.

Finlay is the author of numerous articles on the history of science and technology, including "chemurgy," the intersection of agriculture and industry.



J. Scott Joyner

Joyner is New VP of Advancement

J. Scott Joyner began his duties as Armstrong vice president for advancement on July 1. He comes to Armstrong after serving as associate vice president of university advancement and director of development at Coastal Carolina University since 2007. His fundraising experience spans 16 years and includes serving as director of development at the University of North Carolina-Wilmington.

"I am excited to be a part of the Armstrong family and to have the opportunity to build on a great foundation of dedicated and supportive alumni," said Joyner. "I look forward to working with our friends and supporters to further strengthen ties with our community and continue to offer an exceptional education to our students."

Joyner's areas of responsibility will include the Office of Advancement, the Office of Alumni Relations and the Office of Marketing and Communications. He will work closely with the AASU Foundation Board of Trustees chaired by John C. Helmken II and with the Armstrong Alumni Association Board chaired by Renee Connolly. He can be reached at 912.344.2519 or Scott.Joyner@armstrong.edu.

Honoring Alumni

Alumni Harriet Konter '44 and Steve Smith '75 '86 were honored at the 2010 Distinguished and Outstanding Alumni Awards reception held on campus earlier this year.

Konter, a past president of the Alumni Association, received the 2010 Outstanding Alumni Award in recognition of her contributions and support of the university. She is past president of the Savannah Board of Realtors, former director of the National



Harriet Konter



Steve Smith

Association of Realtors and was the first woman to serve as president of the Georgia Association of Realtors.

Smith received the 2010 Distinguished Alumni Award, which recognizes alumni who have provided leadership and achieved distinction through community involvement and professional expertise. Recently appointed as the U.S. Marshal for the Southern District of Georgia, Smith is a 28-year veteran of the Savannah Police Department and a decorated Vietnam War veteran.

The Alumni Association also honored additional alumni as part of Armstrong's 75th Anniversary. The 75th Anniversary Notable Alumni, chosen for their achievement and success, were honored during a special reception on the week of President Linda M. Bleicken's inauguration. For additional information about the Alumni Association, contact Beth Crovatt at 912.344.2586 or Beth.Crovatt@armstrong.edu.



Philip Sparke

Dual World Premieres for the 75th

In celebration of Armstrong's 75th anniversary, the Department of Art, Music & Theatre (AMT) is orchestrating the world premiere performance of an original work by composer Philip Sparke. Savannah Winds, the community wind ensemble in residence at Armstrong, will perform the 15-minute long *Savannah Symphony* at 7:30 p.m., November 30 in the Armstrong Fine Arts Auditorium. Mark B. Johnson, Savannah Winds' music director, will conduct. The ensemble

includes college and high school students and other members of the community.

In September, AMT opened its 11th Southeastern Choral Arts Festival with the Armstrong Singers and Armstrong Chorale performing the world premiere of Vijay Singh's *Proclaim The Day*.

Pirates on the Run

The 5k Armstrong Pirates on the Run/Walk hosted in downtown Savannah in September attracted some 300 runners and raised scholarship funds for students of merit. Hosted by the Office of Advancement, the race started and finished at the north end of Forsyth Park near the historic Armstrong House. The route took participants south around Forsyth and then north on Bull Street, past five city squares, before heading south again on Bull Street.

"We had participants running and walking in downtown Savannah to support Armstrong on a beautiful Saturday morning," said Suzanne Ansley, Armstrong annual fund coordinator. "How appropriate for the event to start and finish in front of the Armstrong House where classes began 75 years ago."



Defining the Armstrong Brand

Last year the university partnered with Crane Metamarketing, a company that focuses on higher education marketing. The goals included gauging the perception of Armstrong among various groups and recharging external communications. Subsequent surveys and focus groups involving alumni, students, faculty, staff, parents and community leaders who attended Armstrong revealed that Armstrong is highly regarded. The majority of those surveyed said that they would choose Armstrong again—be that for another degree or to further business/community relationships. The research also revealed a very strong connection between the university and the community. What is not so clear to many is the issue of what it is that we do best. The resulting marketing push already on its way will address that. "Through different marketing strategies we will be communicating to our audiences the fabulous work being done by our students and faculty, the high quality of our academic programs and our strong roots in Savannah," said Brenda Forbis, director of marketing and communications.

History of Armstrong Published

Janet Stone, Armstrong professor of history emerita, has published *From the Mansion to the University:*

A History of Armstrong Atlantic State University 1935-2010.

The book is available at the Armstrong Atlantic State University Bookstore and can be purchased online at www.bookstore.armstrong.edu or by calling 912.344.2603. It will also be available at E. Shaver Bookseller on Madison Square in Savannah.



The Inauguration of Linda M. Bleicken

— The Seventh President —



Photo by Russ Bryant

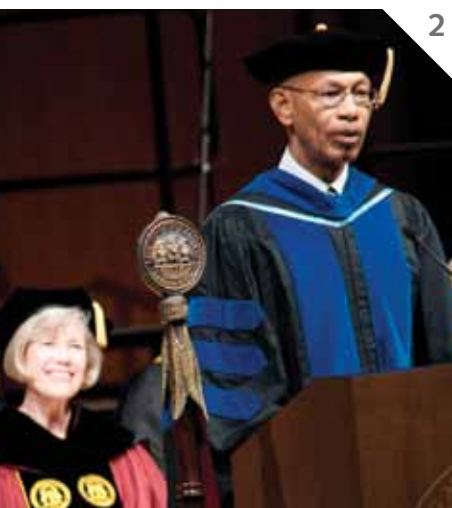


Photo by Russ Bryant



President Linda M. Bleicken was inaugurated as Armstrong Atlantic State University's seventh president on September 17, during a formal ceremony in the Armstrong Fine Arts Auditorium. The timing of the event carried a special significance for the university community, as it marked, to the day, the 75th anniversary of the start of classes in the historic Armstrong House in 1935.

The ceremony attracted academic dignitaries from across the region including University System of Georgia Chancellor Erroll B. Davis, Jr. who officiated over the installation ceremony.

Making a surprise appearance after altering his plans was Savannah Mayor and Armstrong alumnus Otis Johnson, who took the podium to congratulate Bleicken.

"I am proud to know the president of this great institution," said Johnson. "I know it is a great institution because when it was over on Gaston Street, I had the opportunity to be a student there and graduate in the class of 1964. I have the double honor today to say, on behalf of the city as its mayor, that we wish the president all the success and to say, as an alumnus of this great institution celebrating 75 years, that I'm sure that next 75 years will be as glorious as the past 75."

Speakers included Felton Jenkins, vice chair of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia; John C. Helmken II, chair of the Armstrong Foundation; Renee H. Connolly, president of the Alumni Association; Robert LeFavi, president of the faculty senate; Corine Ackerson-Jones, chair of the Staff Advisory Council; and Zerik K. Samples, president of the Student Government Association.

Bleicken, who took over as president in July 2009, thanked those in attendance and pledged to continue to build on the history of the institution.

"I firmly believe that our best days are yet to come," she said.

1. President Bleicken shares a laugh with University System of Georgia Chancellor Erroll B. Davis, Jr.
2. Savannah Mayor Otis Johnson brought greetings from the City of Savannah.
3. The stage party listens to President Bleicken.
4. Faculty from the colleges of education and liberal arts process toward the Fine Arts Auditorium minutes before the start of the ceremony.

A Notable Reception

More than 150 alumni honorees, faculty, staff and guests turned out for the 75th Notable Alumni reception hosted by the Armstrong Alumni Association the night before President Linda M. Bleicken's inauguration. The wine-and-cheese affair on campus attracted the young and the young in spirit, who shared memories and filled the Student Union's Ballroom with laughter. "This was a great opportunity for many alumni to return to campus," said Beth Crovatt, alumni relations coordinator. "We had alumni representing several decades in Armstrong's history and many who came from around the country to join us for this special occasion."

1. Pete Mellen (theatre), Cully Long '01 and Tosha Fowler '02.
2. Student Government Association President Zerik Samples '11 got to know 1937 Armstrong alumnus Alva Lines.
3. Paul Mamalakis, David H. Dickey '74 and his wife Catherine Dickey.
4. Ray Gaster '72 and Yassaman Saadatmand, chair of economics, smile for the camera.
5. Andres Escobar '05, Melanie Mirande '08 and Juan Aragon '05.





aye give back

Pirates Lay Siege to Savannah in Day of Service by Bill Dawers

In the months leading up to her September 17 inauguration as president of Armstrong Atlantic State University, Linda M. Bleicken repeatedly emphasized Armstrong's ongoing and future involvement in the broader Savannah community.

So it was especially fitting that the Saturday after Bleicken's inauguration was designated as the Treasure Savannah Day of Service. Both the name and tagline for the day—"Aye

Give Back"—were obviously inspired by the university's Pirate mascot.

On the morning of Saturday, September 18, nearly 400 volunteers—including Armstrong students, alumni, faculty and staff—worked with local nonprofit organizations with a proven track record of service.

Volunteers worked at the resurgent West Broad Street YMCA, while dozens of others assisted Keep Savannah Beautiful with a cleanup of the MLK

Corridor, sorted cans and stocked shelves at America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia, supported programs at Union Mission, and helped out with maintenance projects at Hospice Savannah and Savannah Urban Garden Alliance.

Some volunteers also spent the morning on campus cleaning up the grounds and repainting bike racks. Pirate Athletics hosted a basketball clinic for school children.

"Armstrong was founded by the City of Savannah," noted assistant director for Student Union and Activities Chris Nowicki, "and on our 75th anniversary this was an opportunity for Armstrong to give back to the people of Savannah."

As co-chair of the committee that organized the Treasure Savannah Day of Service, Nowicki added, "This day really showed the community that Armstrong is part of the Savannah and not only do we educate the people of Savannah, but we are involved in the Savannah community."

Nowicki sees the service day as an annual event, as do other organizers.

Co-chair Jason Tatlock, assistant professor of history and founder of Armstrong's Initiative for Civic Engagement (I.C.E.), put the day of



service in the broader context of the university's ongoing involvement with the community. "The day embodied what the campus has already been doing: utilizing the resources at our disposal to enhance the area in which we live and

work. It was a day that highlighted what we do week after week, month after month, year after year."

"Volunteerism has been, and is, alive and well on campus," added Tatlock.

Committee member Corine Ackerson-Jones, coordinator of recruitment and retention for the College of Health Professions, struck a similarly inclusive note: "People may see Armstrong as a separate entity, but we are the community."

Student Government Association President Zerk Samples had been familiar with myriad community service projects during his first three years on campus, but he was still thrilled by the scale of the September effort.

"I never thought that a community service project of this caliber would ever become reality," he observed. "Armstrong truly treasures Savannah!"

In its first 75 years, Armstrong has evolved



Photo by Russ Bryant



Photo by Russ Bryant

from a segregated junior college serving a limited geographical area into a diverse campus attracting students from around the state, the country and the world.

For all those involved, the Treasure Savannah Day of Service was a moment for both looking back at a long history of community involvement and looking forward to an even richer future of involvement with the city and the region.

Opposite page top: the Armstrong Pirates posed for a nearly-400-strong group shot before departing the campus on the morning of Treasure Savannah Day of Service.

Far left: Naomi Coffman (left) and Sonya Anderson (right) polish up Mike Howard's chair as part of a wheelchair cleaning and maintenance program sponsored by the Department of Physical Therapy.

Above: Beth Crovatt, alumni relations coordinator, joins students, alumni (including Herbie Griffin '42, second from bottom), faculty and staff at America's Second Harvest of the Coastal Empire.

Above right: President Linda M. Bleicken joins student Kelly Lewis during a stop at America's Second Harvest.

Right: Students Paige Joe, Craig Macintosh and Hetal Bhatt join Keep Savannah Beautiful to clean up a stretch of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.



Growing Outreach

As the number of resident students swells to more than 1,400 with the addition of Windward Commons, the new freshman residence hall, opportunities for students to engage in community outreach are also growing. A desire on the part of students to be more active in the local community is fueled by the satisfaction they get from helping others.

"Students love outreach and community service and taking time to give something of themselves to help others," said sophomore and Student Government Association senator Kwame Phillips. "It is also important that our citizens see that Armstrong is involved locally and that we are using our knowledge and resources to benefit the community."

Phillips, an economics major, serves as chairman of community service within the SGA and helps organize ongoing community service projects that include mentoring children at local schools and helping senior citizens.

The more than 85 student organizations on campus also provide abundant community service opportunities.

"The majority of student organizations do some type of community service," said Al Harris, director of student activities. In addition, "all of the Greek organizations are required by their national chapters to participate in community outreach projects."

The efforts are well received by organizers of local nonprofit organizations like John Kendricks, executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Coastal Empire. In the fall of 2009, the organization pushed to get Armstrong students involved as mentors of children at risk of failing school.

"I like the level of maturity of Armstrong students and the high degree of dedication that they show toward their little ones," said Kendricks. "We love our relationships with Armstrong and want to build on it."

After graduation, some students

choose to pursue local careers with nonprofit organizations. Alea Bird, a 2010 English major from Atlanta, is helping to feed some 2,000 school children every day as coordinator for Kids Café, an enrichment program of America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia. As one of three full-time staff members with Kids Café, she helps to coordinate the work of more than 30 volunteers who help out in after school programs at 34 different sites across four counties.

"I wanted to work in the nonprofit sector because these organizations and the work they do strengthen the community and help people," said Bird.

For many years, Armstrong students, faculty and staff have provided countless hours of community service. The campus also has stepped up in support of national causes. In fall 2009, the local Light the Night event in support of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society attracted a large Armstrong coalition that raised nearly \$20,000, the largest amount collected by any community organization.

More recently, the university joined efforts with the City of Savannah as it prepares to implement a Cities of Service Coalition grant that will help harness the power of volunteers to solve local problems. The national initiative is funded in part by the Rockefeller Foundation. Jason Talock, assistant professor of history, serves on the advisory board working with the city.

"The university has the opportunity to participate in the Cities of Service project at the developmental stage, thereby contributing to the process as strategic initiatives are formed and implemented," said Talock. "Armstrong employees and students will have the chance to join specific programs for which they have an interest."

Kendricks, the Big Brothers Big Sisters executive director, welcomes any additional support from the university.

"We make gains in the community with the help of students from Armstrong," he said. "You are a beacon of light."



The Light the Night event last fall enjoyed strong support from Armstrong students, faculty and staff who raised nearly \$20,000 in support of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

A Story of Possibility for Common Read

Waddie Welcome lived most of his life in Savannah, his every day existence challenged by cerebral palsy. A black man reared in the Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood, Welcome never learned to stand or walk, never stepped inside a school or learned to read or write. His story, as told by two Savannahians, Tom Kohler and Susan Earl, is as much about Welcome as it is about the power that common individuals can have when working in growing circles of friendship to help a neighbor.

Waddie Welcome & the Beloved Community, published in 2005, illustrates an ideal espoused by Rev. James Lawson, whom Rev. Jesse Jackson called the “teacher of the civil rights movement.” According to Lawson, the beloved community is “a place where barriers between people gradually come down and where citizens make a constant effort to address even the most difficult problems of ordinary people.”

The book includes more than 50 photographs and the authors’ reflections on 10 years of efforts by many community members, including themselves, to return Welcome to his beloved neighborhood. After outliving his parents and a brother who served as his caregiver, Welcome was shuffled around to various nursing homes, including one in Abbeyville, Ga., three hours away. The book tells the story of his return to his community and quiet rise to prominence.

Jane Rago, Armstrong instructor of English, successfully lobbied faculty and administrators on campus to make “Waddie Welcome” the book of choice for this year’s campus common read. The book will be studied and discussed in freshman classes during fall and spring semesters. Both authors will visit the campus during the fall semester to discuss the book with students, faculty and staff.

“There are so many connections among people in Savannah and between the university and the city in this book,” said Rago. “This will make for an extraordinary common read for students. It involves a man with cerebral palsy, the breakdown of the healthcare system, citizen advocacy, and ordinary people doing extraordinary things.”

The book touches on many aspects of Savannah, including people like the late Addie Reeves, a resident of Yamacraw Village and friend of the Welcomes, who over the years crafted a telephone book with letters and numbers cut out from magazines to include the phone numbers of people important to her—in a way, her circle of friends, her beloved community.

Savannah attorney Lester Johnson, a former president of the Savannah Bar Association, acted as Welcome’s citizen advocate.

Publication of the book was a labor of love for many in Savannah, including former Armstrong faculty member John Duncan, who pointed to a photo of Reeve’s phone book from among several options as the final choice for the book cover. Linda Wittish, publisher of *Savannah Magazine* and former director of public relations at Armstrong, helped edit and proof the manuscript.

For their effort, Welcome, Reeves, Johnson and a host of other Savannahians received the 2005 Collaboration Award from the International Association of People with Severe Handicaps.

A 1997 documentary, *Waddie Welcome: A Man Who Could Not Be Denied*, produced by the University of Georgia, won the same award and received honors at three film festivals nationwide.



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

— Margaret Mead, U.S. anthropologist

A Growing Story

Church and community groups in New Mexico and Indiana who want to use the book as a teaching tool have approached the authors. Kohler, who attended Armstrong from 1970-72, is helping to organize a common read for the book that will span several countries. It is being planned for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, on January 17, 2011.

“Our goal is that this book can help bring an added appreciation for Savannah and provide a different perspective of our city as a place where the beloved community is alive,” said Kohler. “This story is about the power of possibility and we see Armstrong as the beginning of a bigger experience in terms of the blossoming of the book’s power.”

Kohler helped raise several thousand dollars from individuals in the community to offset some of the cost of the book for students. As a result, incoming freshmen received a coupon that reduced the cost per copy from \$16 to \$11.

Earl, the co-author, finds in the book the notion that common people like Waddie Welcome and Addie Reeves serve as teachers. “It relates to the unexpected teachers and how much we are able to learn from them and what really is important to them. It is about how you should treat people and about being respectful and not making assumptions about people,” said Earl.

For more information, or to join in the worldwide MLK read, go to www.waddiewelcome.com.

International Racket

Former English Players-Turned Coaches Build a Powerhouse Tennis Program with a decidedly European flavor.

The May culmination of the 2010 tennis season for the Armstrong Pirates was a roller coaster of emotion that went from a low point following the men's loss to Barry University in the quarterfinals to joyous celebration after the women's clincher of their third consecutive national championship against No. 3 ranked Brigham Young University-Hawaii.

Recognized in Division II tennis circles as a lasting powerhouse, the Pirates have piled up eight national championships since 1995, including five since 2008. Not surprisingly, as the 2010 season unfolded, the pressure on players and coaches mounted and, inevitably, the question of whether the Pirates would do it again grew legs on the minds of many. It is a price that coaches and players pay as a result of sustained success.

Head coach Simon Earnshaw, sidestepping the guessing game, chooses to focus on the day-to-day challenges of building winning seasons. A native of Huddersfield, England, he arrived at Armstrong in 1998 as an assistant coach after a 5-year career playing at Georgia College and State University. He inherited a tennis program with two women's national championships under its belt, but it took him five years to clinch his very first national title in 2005. It is a feat that remains as his

most memorable accomplishment with the Pirates.

"We had great teams that first year," said Earnshaw. "The previous coach, Andreas Koth, was in his last year and as a recruiter he had built both



Assistant coach David Secker, left, and Head Coach Simon Earnshaw hold three of the five national titles they have won since 2006. During their coaching careers at Armstrong, Earnshaw has won six and Secker has picked up five national titles.

programs up, particularly the women's in the 1990s."

In 2003, David Secker, a young player and compatriot to Earnshaw, joined the men's squad at a time when the team ranked in the top 20 in the country. A couple of years later, Earnshaw decided that it was time to lean on his assistant coach Zsofi Golopencza and two of his best players, including Secker, to ratchet up the level of the men's game. It worked.

"By the time I was a junior, we were ranked No. 2," said Secker who stayed on with the Pirates after earning a psychology degree and completing a graduate assistantship under Earnshaw. He took the job of assistant coach in 2006.

Under Earnshaw and Secker, a trademark of the Armstrong program has been its reliance on international players. After all, both coaches first came to the United States as international players from Europe

and have maintained ties to the tennis community there.

"We are better known in tennis circles in Europe than we are in America," said Secker, referring to the knowledge that aspiring college players have about Armstrong.

The fact is that for the Pirates, it has proven successful to attract and

retain talented international students, rather than compete for the top American players who are easily wooed by larger universities with a national brand and deeper pockets. But, there have been exceptions and American players have included Kristen Kelly, a Savannahian who played for three seasons starting in 2004 and was on the 2005 championship team, and current team member Kathleen Henry, from Anderson, S.C.

Since 2006, the year Secker took the spot as assistant coach, the Pirates have added five additional championships. Now, once again, they find themselves at the start of another season, looking at the oncoming challenges and downplaying the expectations that



David Secker, playing as a senior, returns a shot at Bacon Park during the 2006 season.

bubble up within the Division II collegiate tennis community, where the Pirates stand as the giant to beat.

“We take it one day at a time,” said Earnshaw.

In July, with the summer heat baking the vacant tennis courts on campus, Earnshaw and Secker sat in their offices in the Sports Center and talked about the most pressing issue of the upcoming season: the need to recruit five new players—including four women—who exited the university after graduating in May. The departing seniors leave a huge gap because they are, by definition, the most experienced and dominant players.

Take, for example, the case of Gabriella Kovacs, a four-year player and May graduate, whose deft moves on the court won the match points that sealed the women’s championships in 2009 and 2010.

“The biggest challenge is recruiting new players and working with the remaining players to get them to understand that they need to show leadership,” said Earnshaw.

It is a drill that Earnshaw and Secker have nailed down time and again.

“We’ve been very fortunate and I’m amazed that we’ve been able to take both teams to the level where they are now,” said Earnshaw.

For those new players starting out—as well as for returning ones—the challenges of physical training and the need to balance the demands of academics and tennis will be trials and tribulations that they will have to own in the upcoming season.

“For them, it is going to be hard,” said Earnshaw.

PIRATE'S TREASURE



by Andy Carter, Athletics Director

As we embark on a new academic year, I feel that there are many reasons to have high expectations of our student athletes and programs in the coming months. Based on our students’ performance on and off the fields last year—and for that matter for several years before that—the 2010-2011 season should be yet another outstanding one for the Armstrong Pirates. Let me briefly recap last year’s successes, which without a doubt will serve as a foundation for future accomplishments.

Out of 171 student-athletes in the 2009-2010 season, 53 percent of them carried a 3.0 GPA or better. Seventy-seven of them—the equivalent of 45 percent—were named to Peach Belt Conference Presidential Honor Roll. Collectively, the Armstrong Pirates finished third of 13 Peach Belt Conference institutions in the Commissioner’s Cup standings, bolstered by Peach Belt titles in men’s and women’s tennis, as well as second-place finishes for volleyball, women’s golf, and women’s soccer.

At the national level, our women’s tennis team once again proved to be at the top of their game by bringing home the national title for the third consecutive year. The men’s tennis squad reached the quarterfinals in the race for the national title.

Overall, the Pirates finished in the top 25 percent—54 of 233—in NCAA Division II institutions in the Learfield Sports/National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics DII Director’s Cup standings. The Pirates earned more points than many institutions fielding a much larger number of sports programs than we do.

These are all tremendous accomplishments that speak highly of our student-athletes, our athletic programs and the university as a whole.

We are not, however, taking anything for granted. As we enter a new season, our coaches will continue to work very hard with our athletes to help them reach their full potential as students and as players. In addition, we will continue to focus on the essential but very important goals that reflect the mission of Armstrong athletics. They include maintaining academic integrity, meeting all rules of compliance, maintaining a commitment to equity and diversity, and developing our fiscal capacity so that we can provide a first-class, preferred NCAA Division II intercollegiate athletic experience for our students.

I invite you to catch Pirate fever. You can follow our teams on aasupirates.com and visit the campus to catch a game. To learn more about the Armstrong Pirates or about giving opportunities that will support our deserving student athletes, please contact me at 912.344.2730 or Andy.Carter@armstrong.edu.

Armstrong Alumni Make a World of Difference

Two recent Armstrong graduates and one current student bring their skills and passion to their chosen fields. From helping feed and tutor school children in our region, to working with an organization in Washington D.C. that promotes national security, to preparing for a career in health care, they are members of the Armstrong family whose accomplishments we are proud to share.

ALEA BIRD '10 | Major: English | Hometown: Atlanta, Georgia



Alea Bird is helping feed 2,000 Savannah children every day through her work with Kids Cafe, an America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia enrichment program, which provides hot meals, nutrition education and tutoring to low-income children at public schools, Boys & Girls Clubs, local churches, and community centers across the region.

Bird is one of three full-time staff managing some 30 volunteers at Kids Cafe who provide meals to youngsters in after-school programs at 34 different sites across four counties.

Her interest in helping others started in high school, where she did mission work with her church restoring used bicycles to give to the needy and even traveling to New Orleans to help in the post-Katrina cleanup efforts.

At Armstrong, Bird's initial involvement with nonprofits involved an internship with the American Diabetes Association; the experience blossomed into a five-month volunteer position with the organization.

Bird took an interest in America's Second Harvest after working with the organization as part of a class, "Writing for the Nonprofit Sector," taught by instructor Christy Mroczek. She helped to prepare a grant proposal and that relationship segued into a three-month volunteer opportunity and, eventually, a full-time job.

Now, as Kids Cafe is poised to expand the number of meals served to 5,000 daily following the completion of a large community kitchen, Bird is looking to Armstrong as a resource for dependable student volunteers.

"There is always a need for volunteers," she said. "Armstrong students have an opportunity to tutor at the sites and develop personal relationships with the children and serve as a good influence in their lives," she said.

The gains are there for all to reap.

"The children look forward to a hot meal and to having activities provided by the volunteers," Bird said. "And as a volunteer you know that you are making a difference in the life of a young child."

MINDI MEBANE '06 | Hometown: New Orleans, Louisiana | Major: Political Science

Mindi Mebane, a 2006 political science major, made many meaningful friendships while at Armstrong, including some with professors who ignited her interest in international affairs and political science.

"From the start, a number of political science professors opened my eyes to political structures, global events and places like sub-Saharan Africa, which suffer from a host of issues related to a lack of rule and effective governance," she said.

Professors such as John Kearnes, who is now retired, and William Daugherty helped her discover her passion for constitutional law and foreign policy.

After graduating from Armstrong, Mebane earned a master's in public and international affairs with a concentration in global security from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 2010. She also worked as a legal assistant at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, a global law firm with offices in Washington, D.C.

Most recently she joined the New York City-based Markle Foundation to help open and manage a new office in Washington, D.C. Mebane is assisting the managing director of the national security program at Markle and will help develop research and writing projects.

"Markle's national security program focuses solely on ensuring the protection of Americans while preserving their privacy and civil liberties," Mebane said. "That really resonates with me. I have studied these issues in depth and I'm looking forward to working on these issues more closely."

There were two "big things" that Mebane took away from Armstrong and that helped her get where she is now. "Certainly in all political science classes they demanded hard work and expected the best. Also, I learned to be engaged with the issues of constitutional law and foreign policy, and I made a very good friend in Dr. Daugherty. When someone takes the time and treats you like an equal, it gives you the confidence to accomplish your goals."



SAREH SABRIPOUR '11 | Major: Radiation Therapy | Home: La Ceiba, Honduras



Growing up, Sareh Sabripour learned to adapt to life without running water, electricity or paved roads—lacking conveniences for villagers in the Mosquitia region in coastal Honduras, where the rainforest meets the Caribbean Sea.

Not the child of an indigenous family, Sabripour instead was one of three children of an Iranian couple—her father a medical doctor and her mother a nurse—who had moved to Honduras to provide charity medical service to impoverished residents.

As her parents worked to help the sick and injured in a clinic they helped establish, young Sareh, starting at age 3, grew up sleeping in hammocks, living in a minuscule seaside village and being home schooled before entering fourth grade at a school in a nearby town. Her life experiences up until the age of 17, when she arrived in Atlanta to finish high school, were far removed from the lives of her new classmates.

"It was complete culture shock," she said. "I had visited the U.S. every other summer, but had not lived here. I honestly missed Honduras for about five years straight. I could not get over it."

After high school, she volunteered in the Dominican Republic for one year, teaching children, and later graduated from the Georgia Institute of Technology with a degree in molecular biology. At Armstrong, she is working on a degree in radiation therapy and is scheduled to graduate in May 2011. Her goal is to work closely with cancer patients. The American Society of Radiologic Technologists recently took notice of her sustained 4.0 GPA and awarded her a \$5,000 scholarship. She has also found that Armstrong offers some things she has come to appreciate.

"In clinical rotations you see patients every day. I also enjoy very close relationships with my professors, and that is very nice to have."

class notes

'70s

William Scarborough '75, '77 received the certified management accountant (CMA) professional designation from the Institute of Management Accountants. He works in Washington, D.C. as an associate chief accountant in the Enforcement Division of the Securities and Exchange Commission. Prior to joining the SEC, he was a senior manager for an Atlanta accounting firm.

'80s

Debbie L. Frankenthaler Gaskin is pursuing a master of arts in teaching in special education at Armstrong. She was initiated into Phi Kappa Phi and Kappa Delta Pi honor societies. She has two children in college, including her youngest daughter, who also attends Armstrong.

'90s

Terry M. Samuels '94 and **Chandra Cooper-Samuels '98** have been married for 10 years. They have a 6-year-old son named Maurice. Terry has been a self-employed family counselor in Georgia for six years. Chandra has been a registered nurse at Emory Hospital for 10 years.

'00s



Brian J. Dawsey '03, '05 is the assistant director of admissions for recruitment at Savannah State University.

Sharon F. Beasley '04 was named director of the nursing program at the Technical College of the Lowcountry. She holds a master's in nursing administration from Armstrong, a bachelor's in nursing from the University of South Carolina-Columbia and an associate degree in nursing from TCL.

Samuel Mendoza '05 serves in the field of military intelligence with the U.S. Army.



Charita N. Hardy '08 was the recipient of the Armstrong Atlantic State University Outstanding Advisor Award in recognition for her service to the Iota Tau Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. She is the head

coach for cheerleading and a newly elected member of the Staff Advisory Council at Armstrong.

engagements

Thomas Clapper '08 to wed Alicia Johansky.

Elizabeth Ashmore Green '09 to wed **James Andrew Muenckler '07** on August 7, 2010.

in memoriam

Louise Mayhew '37*
March 26, 2010

Robert Penn McCuen '37*
June 29, 2010.

Jeanne Hipson Bedinger '39*
After graduating from Armstrong, she earned a degree from the University of Georgia. She was a professional pilot until she retired in her 60s, but continued to fly until she was 85 years old.
August 7, 2010

Elizabeth "Betty" Bainbridge Pittman '40*
She was the first woman to graduate from the School of Business Administration at Armstrong Junior College.
August 1, 2010

Marjorie McFarland Hester '42*
May 30, 2010

Lawrence David Allen '48*
April 15, 2010

Y. Allen Beall '48*
August 4, 2010

John Henry Murphy '48*
June 5, 2010

Sidney Thomas Nutting, Jr. '48*
May 6, 2010

George William "Bill" Harrell, Jr. '51*
July 25, 2010

Catherine G. "Kitty" Daugherty '53*
May 28, 2010

Robert Edgar "Bobby" Stanley, Jr. '56*
July 21, 2010

Samuel Joseph "Joe" Ward '56*
March 9, 2010

Robert "Bob" C. DeLoach, Jr. '61
June 21, 2010

Frances Wong '72
June 26, 2010

Katherine Nicoll Lee '75
March 28, 2010

Erwin C. Gaspin '84
March 31, 2010

Mary Ann Lanier '85
March 23, 2010

Elizabeth "Beth" Teresa Harris '96
April 21, 2010

April Dawn Williams Rockett '06
May 10, 2010

Robert Peen Mobley
undergraduate at Armstrong
March 5, 2010

Douglas Britton Strauser
sophomore at Armstrong
March 12, 2010

Col. Henry James Kennedy
He taught the first computer class at Armstrong State College in 1960.
March 30, 2010

Mary Elizabeth Pound
She was a former faculty/staff member at Armstrong State College
April 15, 2010

**Golden Graduate (1937-1959)*

Memorial Scholarship Honors Mary Witt Wexler



Savannahian Mary Witt Wexler '75, '77 was a wife, mother, grandmother, retired career Georgia Air National Guard officer and family nurse practitioner when she passed away on November 28, 2009. Her memory and legacy, however, will live on at the Armstrong campus through the Lt. Col. (Ret.) Mary Witt Wexler, USAF Nurse Corps, Memorial Scholarship to benefit nursing students.

Wexler, who reached the rank of lieutenant colonel before retiring in 2001 with 25 years of military service, served as one of the region's first certified family nurse practitioners in private practice and with Candler Medical Group. Her husband of 42 years, Col. Edward I. Wexler, who also retired from the U.S. Air Force/Air National Guard, established the scholarship in her memory.

"The scholarship is a nice way for my wife to be remembered, serves as a way to help nursing students and provides an immediate incentive to those who may be struggling financially to further their education in nursing. Interestingly, Mary was also a recipient of a scholarship for nursing students at Armstrong. This really helped us a lot in those early days as we were raising a family," said Col. Ed Wexler.

For Mary Wexler, furthering her nursing education was a lifelong dedication. After graduating from Armstrong with associate and bachelor's degrees in nursing, the Savannah High School graduate went on to earn a master's degree in health services management from Webster University and received her certification as a family nurse practitioner from Georgia Southern University.

"She was devoted to her profession and was highly respected by other nurse practitioners, her patients and medical professionals in the community," said Col. Wexler.

Her military career began as a commissioned officer with the 165th Tactical Hospital, Georgia Air National Guard, Savannah International Airport in 1975. During her career she had various stateside assignments and deployments to different corners of the world, including Germany, Peru and the United Kingdom. She earned many awards over the years, including the USAF Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Commendation Award, Air Force Achievement Medal, and Humanitarian Service Medal for duty in Macon, GA during the 1994 middle Georgia floods. She coordinated medical support for athletes competing in sailing events in Savannah during the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. She volunteered for deployment and extended duty in 1991 during the first Iraq war. She was nationally recognized as the Air National Guard Nurse of the Year in 1985.

To learn more about giving opportunities that support Armstrong students of merit, contact Gail Rountree, director of advancement, at 912.344.2710 or Gail.Rountree@armstrong.edu.



Service in Latin America

At least two study abroad programs this past summer exposed Armstrong students to different cultures, while providing them the opportunity to engage in service projects benefiting small local populations.

Rachel Green, professor of art, led a group of four study abroad participants, including two Armstrong students, to the Province of Salta in Argentina and the town of San Antonio Cobres, a former mining outpost that now relies heavily on tourism. The town is well known for its traditional weaving and knitting industry that traces back hundreds of years. Armstrong students presented art activities for 15 children in a local special needs school and donated art materials. Green presented a lecture at a seminar organized to provide local artisans with information on how to maintain cultural identity, increase product quality and improve marketing and sales. The project was in partnership with Luis Touceda, a lecturer on sustainable tourism at the Catholic University of Salta.

Becky da Cruz, assistant professor of criminal justice, was among four faculty members who led a group of 11 students to La Serena, Chile. The service component involved a visit to a local orphanage, Hogar Redes, housing children ages 2 to 12. The group of students painted, made light repairs to the building, played with the children and donated toys and school supplies. The program, which has been running for almost a decade, included students and faculty members from Georgia Southern University, North Georgia College and State University and Tulane University.

Pictured (back row from left): Andrew Robinson, Armstrong student; Gaines Robinson, North Georgia College and State University student; Cristian Harris, NGCSU faculty member; and Sister Patricia Baez Reyna, director of Hogar Redes. Front row: Jose da Cruz, Armstrong faculty member and NGCSU student Sergio Rolon, Brittany Ruiz, Charles Beard and Kristopher McNally.



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75.armstrong.edu
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To get involved or to learn more about the Armstrong Alumni Association, contact
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