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Message to Campus

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Dear students, faculty and staff,

Thanks to you, our fall semester is off to a great start. Let me share with you some of the exciting things that I know you are doing. These speak volumes to the level of engagement that AASU sustains in this community.

The AASU Initiative for Civic Engagement (ICE), headed by Jason Tatlock, was inaugurated on Constitution Day, September 17, with a lecture by Professor Harry Boyte at the University of Minnesota. Jason reports that ICE will provide direction and cohesion to campus community outreach efforts, while building into the curriculum an intellectual awareness of social responsibility. The goal is to help faculty, staff and students form stronger connections with the local and global community and to understand the importance of public service.

One recent example of Armstrong's involvement in the community occurred in October, during the Light the Night fundraiser for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society at Forsyth Park. Armstrong brought 15 teams representing students, faculty and staff. The goal for the university's teams is to raise \$25,000 for the victims of leukemia and lymphoma. That fundraising effort will continue through the fall.

In September we received the good news that AASU was awarded a \$1.5 million grant from the state for an energy conservation project related to the airflow system in the Science Center. That project, to be completed over 21 months, is projected to save the university \$343,383 per year in energy costs. Congratulations to David Faircloth and his team for spearheading this project.

We also celebrated with our dear friend Joe Buck, former vice president for student affairs, when he was one of five community leaders honored by the King-Tisdell Cottage Foundation, which works to disseminate African American history and culture in our region. Joe, a well-respected leader of this community and the current president of the school board, was recognized for his tireless efforts over many years in the area of education.

Also in September, I had the opportunity to meet once again with our newest faculty members and their counterparts at Savannah State University. SSU President Earl Yarbrough and I spent an evening with the faculty in the beautiful and culturally significant structure that houses the Georgia Historical Society. I was pleased to continue what has become a tradition of bringing together AASU and SSU faculty.

The cost-saving ideas box that we initiated in August through this page received 55 suggestions by the end of September. The ideas cover a wide range of possibilities, from energy savings and cost reductions in several areas, to thoughts about furloughs and ways to improve some administrative processes on the campus. With the help of Andy Clark in institutional research, these suggestions have been categorized and directed to three groups on campus: the facilities, budget and planning committee of the faculty senate, the staff council and the president's council. These groups are reviewing each idea carefully and will recommend ways to incorporate them to generate savings for the university. Thank you to all who submitted suggestions.

Finally, I want to leave you with an invitation to take part in the ongoing Soul of a People: Writing America's Story. Historian June Hopkins provided the opening lecture at the Bull Street library on October 3. AASU faculty are involved in presenting a series of four additional programs, through November 5, exploring the legacy of the Federal Writers' Project under FDR's New Deal work relief program.

Thank you for all of your good work.

Sincerely,

Linda Bleicken