AUBURN’S RESEARCH VISION

Auburn University is on the move with a drive to inspire, innovate and transform in our community, the state of Alabama and throughout the nation and world. We are doing so by elevating research that offers real-world solutions, taking student leadership to new heights and expanding our role as a partnership university.

Auburn research is yielding innovations that protect people, keep populations healthy and make communities better places to live. As part of a distinctive group of land-, sea- and space-grant institutions, Auburn has provided instruction, research and outreach to benefit the state of Alabama and nation for more than 160 years. Moving forward under the leadership of President Steven Leath, Auburn is furthering that vision with a bold plan to inspire as a premier model of engagement and a leading provider of life-changing research in the pursuit of achieving Carnegie 1 research status.

At Auburn, our tradition of innovation serves as a launchpad for entrepreneurs, industry leaders, government officials and others as we improve quality of life and strengthen economic opportunity. Through a heightened focus on interdisciplinary research, a dramatic expansion planned for our research faculty and scholarship expertise in the next five years and an emboldened graduate student population, we aim to elevate our research and development programs to address some of society’s most challenging issues. Such an ambitious drive includes an emphasis on advancing knowledge in health sciences, improved sustainable resources, advanced manufacturing, cyber security, military defense, agriculture and bioscience systems, robotics and radio frequency identification.

Indeed, it is an exciting time of collaboration and discovery at Auburn as we push forward with new innovations and opportunities toward a commitment to excellence and earning a national reputation for engaging, inspiring and leading.

“Our vision for Auburn is to become a world-class academic, research and service university in the true spirit of our land-grant heritage—and to be recognized as an undisputed go-to destination for that special caliber of student, faculty, staff and development partner driven to make a meaningful impact on the state of Alabama, the nation and the world.”

-President Steven Leath

“We want others to know about Auburn’s research and scholarship that deliver real-world benefits. And we want others to know about Auburn’s outreach and engagement that serve the social good.”

-President Steven Leath
INNOVATIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE RESEARCH

Auburn University’s new Vice President for Research will lead a strong, committed faculty in pioneering, life-changing research to meet national and global challenges while taking the university to the Carnegie 1 designation.

The university is implementing an ambitious vision as a partnership university that empowers faculty, students and entrepreneurs to develop transformative ideas and inventions to improve lives.

A new Presidential Awards for Interdisciplinary Research program, or PAIR, is providing $5 million in the next three years to support 11 groundbreaking projects such as housing affordability, advanced manufacturing of medical implants, rural health disparities in poverty-stricken areas, treating the hallmarks of Alzheimer’s disease, neuroscience research and graduate education, reducing carbon dioxide emissions or using them for other means and other critical areas of human and environmental health.

Auburn is enhancing its efforts by hiring 500 faculty by 2022, targeting a broad range of disciplines, strengthening Auburn as a world-class academic, research and service university. This transformational commitment will facilitate scholarship growth, improve faculty/student ratios and increase partnership capabilities.

NSF HERD 2017 Survey

Auburn’s Research and Development Expenditures
$190 million

46.2% from internal institutional investment into the research enterprise
29.2% from federal sources
17% from state and local government sources
4% from other various sources
2.6% from industry
<1% from nonprofits

25% Growth 2016 to 2017
29% Growth over past 5 years (2013-17)

Sponsored Awards
23% increase over the past 5 years (2013-17) from $100 million to $123 million
In 2014, Auburn began a strategic hiring initiative designed to hire faculty in areas representing the university’s research strengths and to align future research growth with national priorities. The five clusters are identified as Climate, Human, and Earth System Sciences; Health Disparities; Omics and Informatics; Pharmaceutical Engineering; and Scalable Energy Conversion Science and Technology. Approximately 39 of the 50 targeted hires have been made, covering all five strategic clusters.

In addition to strong support for faculty research, the university’s new Presidential Graduate Research Fellowship program is funding $3 million toward research and innovation by doctoral students. Auburn undergraduates engage and lead at extraordinarily high levels, too, as they explore everything from mobile apps to cyber currency to health care products.
A key aspect in the university’s research and economic development efforts is the 174-acre Auburn Research Park that creates opportunities for convergence in research, innovation, entrepreneurship, health care and the arts. Among the partners are the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine; Northrup Grumman; the Center for Advanced Science, Innovation and Commerce (CASIC); Auburn’s Food Systems Institute; the university’s Office of Innovation Advancement and Commercialization and East Alabama Medical Center, which partners with the university on a 3T clinical MRI and a 7T research MRI. The Vice President for Research will serve as a board member of the Auburn Research and Technology Foundation, a university-affiliated 501(c)(3) entity that manages the park. He or she will also collaborate with the Vice President for Economic Development and Industry Relations on projects connecting Auburn research to faculty development of intellectual property and commercial opportunities.

Auburn also has many centers and institutes, including the Huntsville Research Center that connects research capabilities with the needs of Huntsville’s government agencies and industries. The center has developed partnerships with the U.S. Army, NASA, Missile and Space Intelligence Center, Missile Defense Agency and the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology, among many others.

Administratively, the Office of the Vice President for Research will move the university forward through its Office of Sponsored Programs, Office of Proposal Services and Faculty Support, Office of Research Compliance and Research Integrity and Office of Electronic Research Administration and Data Analytics, as well as a core business unit for financial management and human resources.

Auburn research is on the move.

“Auburn researchers and scientists are generating breakthroughs in cybersecurity, threat detection, next generation transportation, agriculture, health disparities, targeted gene therapy and architectural design—to name just a few.”

–President Steven Leath
A LEADING PROVIDER OF INSTRUCTION, RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

■ With a $5.4 billion economic contribution to the state, Auburn has more than 300,000 graduates and provides 140-plus degree programs to more than 29,000 graduate and undergraduate students.

■ U.S. News & World Report has ranked Auburn among the top 50 public universities in the U.S. for 25 consecutive years, and Kiplinger’s has named Auburn one of the 100 Best Values in Public Colleges.

■ Forbes ranks Auburn as the top university in the state of Alabama for delivering a meaningful return on investment.

■ Named one of Money's Best Colleges for Your Money, Auburn is also the top-ranked university in the state of Alabama.

■ Auburn is the first university in the state to raise $1 billion in a comprehensive fundraising campaign and recently achieved this more than a year earlier than projected.

■ Auburn is listed with Distinction on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, honoring dedication to civic engagement, service-learning and outreach.

■ Auburn has been designated an Innovation and Economic Prosperity University by the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, and in 2015 received the organization's Place Award for excellence in community, social and cultural development work.

■ The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education identifies Auburn as a Doctoral University with Higher Research Activity.

■ The Auburn Research and Technology Foundation and the Auburn Research Park bring together the research and business communities to complement the research and economic development initiatives of the university. In addition to facilitating the commercialization of university technologies and the formation of industry-university partnerships, the research park offers employment opportunities for Auburn's students and graduates. The Auburn Business Incubator is designed to help launch, nurture and accelerate the development of entrepreneurial companies by providing them with the expertise, networks and services they need to succeed.

■ Auburn is home to one of the world’s leading research centers in the area of radio frequency identification (RFID) technology. Many retailers and grocers rely heavily on microchip RFID tags to improve on-shelf availability, detect and prevent theft, find a product's present location, verify its sell-by date and track quantities sold.

■ Auburn is one of a handful of institutions in the U.S. that has been designated by the National Security Agency as a Center for Academic Excellence in Cyber Operations, Cyber Defense and Information Assurance.
OUR CAMPUS

With an initial master plan crafted by architect Frederick Law Olmsted, who designed Central Park in New York City, there's no question that our campus is beautiful. But it's more than beauty that captures the hearts of students and faculty here. It’s a sense of belonging, community and a welcoming spirit that makes this place home. We have the resources of a large research university set on a collegial, open campus.

The university has 80 major academic buildings, combining historic red-brick buildings, such as the iconic Samford Hall constructed between 1888-90, with modern, active-learning classroom facilities like the new, 69,000-square-foot Mell Classroom Building that opened in fall 2017.

Known as “The Loveliest Village on the Plains,” Auburn has a true town-and-gown relationship with the City of Auburn, coming together at the famed Toomer’s Corner intersection.

Quick Facts

Location: Auburn, Alabama
Auburn Population: 63,973
Auburn-Opelika MSA: 161,604
Enrollment (2017-18 Academic Year):
  Total: 29,776
  Undergraduate: 23,964
  Graduate: 4,707
  Professional (Pharmacy & Veterinary Medicine): 1,105
Male: 50%
Female: 50%
International undergrad students: 2,688 representing 95 countries

2017 Freshman Profile:
  Average ACT score: 27.3
  Alabama residents: 58%
  Out-of-State: 42%
Retention rate: 91.5%
6-year graduation rate: 76.6%

Faculty and Employees (2017-18 Academic Year)*:
  Full-time faculty: 1,330
  Faculty with terminal degree: 90%
  Student/faculty ratio: 19:1
  Full-time non-instructional employees: 3,779

Athletics:
  Charter member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC)
  9 Men’s Division I-A sports and 12 Women’s Division I-A Sports
  Student-athlete GSR: 82%

* Employee counts include the Auburn main campus, the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station and the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service.
OUR COMMUNITY

The Auburn-Opelika area is filled with scenic natural beauty and a wealth of possibility. It has much to offer in education, recreation, nature, history, culture and more.

Auburn is a small, friendly university town in the rolling hills of east-central Alabama, with a population of approximately 63,000. Conveniently located along Interstate 85, Auburn is less than 60 miles northeast of Alabama’s capital city of Montgomery; about 30 miles west of Columbus, Georgia; and 100 miles southwest of Atlanta. The pristine, sandy-white beaches of Alabama’s Gulf Shores can be reached in less than four hours.

The university has a special relationship with the City of Auburn, including partnerships such as the Yarbrough Tennis Center and the Auburn Research Park. The famed Toomer’s Corner marks the spot where the city and university intersect and is a destination for the city and university communities to gather in celebration.

Auburn residents overwhelmingly rate the city as a great place to live, work and raise children. Forbes has consistently ranked Auburn on its lists for Best Places to Retire and Best Small Places for Business and Careers. Auburn’s public schools have consistently been ranked among the best in the state and nation. In 2018, Auburn was listed among the Top 100 Best Places to Live in the U.S. by Livability.

Residents have access to a number of city parks and recreational programs, as well as Chewacla State Park’s 696 scenic acres, including a 26-acre lake, waterfall and trails. Opening in fall 2019 across from the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, the Jay and Susie Gogue Performing Arts Center will be a destination for world-class performances. The Gogue Center and museum will create a vibrant arts district for the campus, community and region.

Opelika, Auburn’s sister city, is full of small-town charm, rich in heritage and offers a high quality of life for its nearly 30,000 residents. Opelika is the county seat for Lee County, the 8th most populous county in Alabama and the home of Auburn University.

Opelika is home to the Opelika SportsPlex and Aquatics Center; Opelika Performing Arts Center; East Alabama Medical Center; Southern Union State Community College, one of 27 institutions in the Alabama Community College System; and the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Grand National.
MISSION STATEMENT

Auburn University’s mission is defined by its land-grant traditions of service and access. The university will serve the citizens of the state through its instructional, research and outreach programs and prepare Alabamians to respond successfully to the challenges of a global economy. The university will provide traditional and non-traditional students broad access to the institution’s educational resources. In the delivery of educational programs on campus and beyond, the university will draw heavily upon the new instructional and outreach technologies available in the emerging information age.

As a comprehensive university, Auburn University is committed to offering high-quality undergraduate, graduate and professional education to its students. The university will give highest priority for resource allocation for the future development of those areas that represent the traditional strengths, quality, reputation and uniqueness of the institution and that continue to effectively respond to the needs of students and other constituents. Consistent with this commitment, the university will emphasize a broad and superior undergraduate education that imparts the knowledge, skills and values so essential to educated and responsible citizens. At the same time, the university will provide high-quality graduate and professional programs in areas of need and importance to the state and beyond. To accomplish these educational goals, Auburn University will continue to compete nationally to attract a faculty distinguished by its commitment to teaching and by its achievements in research, both pure and applied. The university will strive to attract a faculty that will bring distinction and stature to the undergraduate, graduate and professional programs offered by the university.

Because research is essential to the mission of a land-grant university, Auburn University will continue development of its research programs. The primary focus of this research will be directed to the solution of problems and the development of knowledge and technology important to the state and nation and to the quality of life of Alabama citizens. The university’s research programs will make important contributions to instructional programs through the involvement of graduate and undergraduate students and the renewal of the faculty. Research will also provide the knowledge base for outreach programs. In carrying out its research mission, the university will emphasize established areas of strength and will focus available resources in those areas of research and doctoral study that are, or have the potential to, develop into nationally and internationally recognized centers of excellence. Extension and outreach programs are fundamental to the land-grant mission because these programs directly affect the lives of all citizens in the state. The university will maintain the strengths of its traditional outreach programs and will increasingly involve the broader university in outreach programs that respond to the changing needs of the society in which we live. The university will continue to seek new and innovative ways to reach out to the people it serves.
Auburn University seeks a strategic, creative, collaborative leader and scholar to serve as Vice President for Research. The Vice President will be responsible for all aspects of research across the university and will report directly to the Senior Vice President/Provost. The selected candidate will be responsible for the strategic advancement of research at Auburn.

Primary responsibilities will include:

- Elevating the research mission of the university to Carnegie 1 status
- Coordinating research activities and enhancing collaboration across the university and with regional partners
- Engaging key components of the university, including the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, the Vice President for Economic Development and Industry Relations, academic units, and institutional research centers and institutes
- Coordinating research initiatives involving state, federal and private stakeholders
- Promoting intellectual property and innovation
- Promoting and marketing Auburn research, in conjunction with administration communications, to prospective partners, peer universities, government audiences and the news media.

The Vice President for Research will serve as a member of the President's Cabinet as the chief academic research officer for the university as shown in the administrative organizational chart. Campus units reporting to the Vice President for Research include Sponsored Programs, Proposal Services and Faculty Support, Research Compliance, University Veterinarian and Electronic Research Administration.

Auburn University is a nationally ranked land-grant institution recognized for its commitment to world-class scholarship, interdisciplinary research and an undergraduate education experience second to none. Auburn is home to more than 29,000 students, and its faculty and research partners collaborate to develop and deliver meaningful scholarship, science and technology-based advancements that meet pressing regional, national and global needs. Auburn's commitment to active student engagement, professional success and public/private partnership drives a growing reputation for outreach and extension that delivers broad economic, health and societal impact. Auburn's mission to educate, discover and collaborate drives its expanding impact on the world.

The city of Auburn is a thriving, nationally acclaimed community, with a moderate climate and ready access to major cities and recreational areas. Situated along the rapidly developing I-85 corridor between Atlanta, Georgia, and Montgomery, Alabama, the combined Auburn-Opelika and Columbus, Georgia, statistical areas host a population of over 500,000, with excellent public school systems, outstanding recreation facilities and advanced medical services.
Qualifications for the position include exceptional performance in providing strategic, innovative, and operational leadership to a comprehensive research enterprise. The successful candidate must have an earned doctorate or equivalent and a distinguished record of scholarship and institutional service that would support an appointment to the academic rank of professor with tenure. Requisite skills must include effective multidisciplinary engagement, excellent communications skills, commitment to scholarly advancement and a record of productive relationships with a variety of funding entities. Because of the diverse and occasionally sensitive nature of Auburn University’s research portfolio, the successful candidate must be a U.S. citizen and must obtain federal security clearance upon appointment.

Salary and benefits will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Electronic submissions of all nominations and applications are encouraged. Those with interest in this position should submit a curriculum vitae and a letter of application referencing the position description to:

Search Committee – Vice President for Research
Attention: Managing Director
Breckenridge Partners
Email: mek@breckenridgepartners.com

Initial review of candidates will begin after September 1, 2018, and will continue until a qualified candidate is appointed.

Auburn University is an EEO/Vet/Disability Employer.