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Auburn University named to President's Higher Education Community Service honor roll

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AUBURN - Auburn University was recently named to the 2010 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with distinction, a recognition of the nation's leading colleges and universities for their dedication to civic engagement, service-learning and volunteering.

"There's perhaps no better honor for our campus than to be recognized for helping others," Jay Gogue, president of Auburn University, said. "We applaud students, faculty and staff for their dedication to public service."

The honor, which is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service in collaboration with the Department of Education, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Campus Compact, and the American Council on Education, began in 2006.

Of this year's 851 applicants for the award, 641 colleges and universities were admitted to the Honor Roll, with 114 of those institutions receiving Honor Roll with distinction. Auburn University was one of two universities from the state of Alabama and one of three from the Southeastern Conference to be named to the honor roll with distinction.

"This is among the most significant recognitions a university can receive because it is national in scope and focuses on the institution's outreach mission as a whole," Ralph Foster, director of the Office of Public Service, said. "Many Auburn outreach programs have been honored with individual awards. This is an institutional award that recognizes the whole of Auburn's engagement activity."

Foster credits this recognition to Auburn's extensive support for service throughout the mission, culture and structure of the university.

"We're a land grant university, so outreach is in our charter," Foster said. "Public service is also stressed in our creed, which has been so thoroughly embraced by the Auburn family as the core values of the university. In addition, Auburn also has an organizational structure to support outreach, as well as civic engagement heavily integrated throughout the curriculum."

All of these qualities were integral to the application process, which considered the scope and innovation of service projects; the extent to which service-learning is embedded in the curriculum; the school's commitment to long-term campus-community partnerships; and measurable community outcomes as a result of the service.

Another requirement was placement of at least 7 percent of work study students throughout the community, a requirement which Auburn filled four-fold with 30 percent placed in off-campus outreach positions.

The Honor Roll recognition comes on the heels of the university receiving the Carnegie Foundation's "Community Engagement Classification," the highest recognition in higher education for a university's outreach in the community.

"What makes this award important to Auburn is this is yet one more recognition of the university's special status as an engaged institution," said Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach. "It's nice to see Auburn recognized in the same year by both the nation's premier educational foundation and by this significant federal program."

(Written by Katie Horn.)

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