Thank you for taking the time to read the annual report of the Auburn University Student Government Association. On behalf of the Student Government Association’s Executive Council, Cabinet, and Student Senate, it has been an honor and privilege to serve our great university over this past year. The accomplishments of our time are reflections of the hard work of countless Auburn students and administrators who desire to see our university improve each and every day.

The SGA’s mission is “serving and promoting the individual student; unifying all that is Auburn.” At the start of our term, we spent time creating a vision for how we wanted to fulfill this mission. We formulated five strategic priorities – improving late night transportation, improving the Auburn football game day experience, assisting the university’s senior administration in increasing the four-year graduation rate, advocating for our international students on campus, and creating a comprehensive student-feedback system for our peers. In addition to projects that helped accomplish these strategic priorities, this report includes many other programs and projects that were completed throughout the course of the year.

We are grateful to have had the opportunity to serve a university we so deeply love and appreciate. Though a short amount of time in Auburn’s long history, we hope that our time serving through student government has left Auburn an even better university than it was a short year ago. We are excited to see SGA continue to serve, promote, and unify students, and we are grateful for how this organization has shaped our time at Auburn University.

No matter your role in the Student Government Association, thanks to each of you for your contribution in serving our school. This year was a team effort, and we are grateful to have had you by our side.

God Bless & War Eagle!

Logan Powell, President 2014-2015
Student Government Association
The mission of the Student Government Association is to promote the individual student and unify all that is Auburn. Keeping this statement in mind, this year’s Student Government Association Executive Officers worked to overhaul student feedback with AuburnAnswers, revamp the late night transportation system with Tiger Ten, and improve underrepresented students’ experience by hosting open forums to gather input specific to their needs. SGA is the voice of students, promoting cooperation and communication with the faculty, administration, the Auburn City Council, and the state legislature.

SGA’s Programs fulfill an important statement in our mission - to unify all that is Auburn. Hey Day, one of Auburn’s oldest and most cherished traditions, brings students together for a day bonding with members of the Auburn family. Homecoming is another SGA program that serves as a celebration for both students and alumni, including the Homecoming Parade and float competition, the election of Miss Homecoming, and the Auburn Homecoming football game. SGA’s Initiatives carry out another important component of our mission statement: serving and promoting the individual student. Our initiatives teams lobby for students to the administration in areas such as parking and transportation, dining, academic affairs, and political affairs. The Student Government Association Senate is the legislative branch of the SGA and is responsible for drafting and voting on legislation that affects student life at Auburn University. All programs and initiatives serve to enhance the social and academic life of Auburn students.
THE BIG EVENT

The BIG Event is a student-run volunteer day for Auburn University students to give back to the local community and thank them for making Auburn a great place to live and learn. At the 2014 event, there were 2,238 volunteers and 170 job sites, including homes, churches, parks, and schools. The BIG Event staff, led by four directors, was made up of five members of Freshman Forum, 37 student leaders, and 82 project coordinators.

HIGHER EDUCATION DAY

On February 27th, 2014, 50 Auburn University students traveled to Montgomery to represent our institution and advocate for greater financial support for higher education. Auburn students joined peers from other institutions across the state to rally for increased support and investment into education.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES FAIR

The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Fair was hosted by the SGA Undergraduate Research Board in collaboration with Auburn University’s Undergraduate Research Program. The event was held during Auburn Research Week and provided students with the opportunity to browse different colleges and departments on campus to become exposed to the research that is being done in a variety of disciplines. This year, a record 250 students participated in the event.

FINAL LECTURE

Each year, students vote in the Spring Elections to choose a professor to give the Final Lecture. This year’s Final Lecturer was Dr. Donna Bohanan, a professor in the history department who was also chosen to give the Final Lecture in 2010. Many students attended the lecture and enjoyed Dr. Bohanan’s words of wisdom.

UP ALL NIGHT

At the end of each semester, SGA celebrates Finals Week by passing out free donuts, orange juice, and scantrons at midnight to students studying in the library and student center. This is a great opportunity for SGA to serve the student body and listen to any ideas or questions those students might have.

CABINET SELECTIONS

Every spring semester, Cabinet applications are released through AU Involve and students are encouraged to apply for a position that best suits them. After an extensive interview process, the 2014-2015 SGA Cabinet was chosen and announced on March 20.
CAMP WAR EAGLE

SGA welcomed new students to the Auburn family this summer by hosting a pep rally for each of the ten Camp War Eagle sessions. At these pep rallies, Auburn’s incoming freshman class was greeted by SGA members, the Auburn University Marching Band, AU Rhythm, Tiger Paws, and Auburn Cheerleaders who introduced them to the traditional fight song and cheers.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT OUTREACH

In July, SGA held a town hall meeting with international students. After gathering feedback, they were able to create a proposal on improving the experience of Auburn’s growing body of international students.

TIGER PAW PAINTING

This summer, SGA members met at Toomer’s Corner and on South Donahue Drive to repaint the Tiger Paws that lead to campus. These Tiger Paws welcome visitors to Auburn and are a beloved part of our community.

SEC EXCHANGE

On July 18 & 19, SGA hosted the annual SEC Exchange conference. All 14 of the Southeastern Conference student governments traveled to Auburn in order to network, share ideas, and learn from each other. Leadership groups from each institution also had the opportunity to discuss their organization’s unique programs.

LOWDER LOUNGE

On August 8, the new Lowder Lounge officially opened. This area, which includes a full-service Starbucks Coffee, provides students on the north side of campus with a comfortable space to study, relax, or connect with friends.

ASK ME

For the first week of each of the fall and spring semesters, SGA members took to the Haley Concourse to answer students’ questions and listen to any concerns they may have. Members wore bright neon shirts and encouraged students to stop by and ask them anything. This year, the Ask Me program was expanded to allow all members of SGA to participate, increasing the number of students reached by the program.

AUBURN ANSWERS

This fall, our Communications team launched a new system for obtaining student feedback, AuburnAnswers. Through the AuburnAnswers website, auburnanswers.org, students can submit feedback about campus life, dining, facilities, transportation, academics, the game day experience, and more. Since the launch on September 8, we have received over 250 feedback responses from the website, mobile site, and three iPad kiosk locations in Village Dining, the student center, and Ralph Broun Draughon Library. Once a student submits feedback to AuburnAnswers, it is forwarded to the appropriate cabinet and senate members, university department, and administrators to insure that all student concerns are being heard. After an item has been discussed the team generates a response that addresses the concern with the most current information.
HOMECOMING
Auburn’s Homecoming took place on September 27. The weekend kicked off with a parade featuring the Auburn University Marching Band, Auburn Cheerleaders, and the War Eagle Girls and Plainsmen. There were 11 floats and 31 organizations in the parade. That evening, Auburn SGA hosted Friday Night Lights, a concert for the Auburn community featuring Trotline and the John Wilkris Trio.

FRESHMAN FORUM
This year over 1,200 students applied for the Freshman Leadership Program. From that group, 45 freshmen were selected to serve through Freshman Forum. This year, Freshman Forum members were placed in Senate, the High School Leadership Conference, The Miss Auburn University Scholarship Program, The Big Event, Pep Rallies, Blood Drives, Auxiliary Services, Facilities, Aubie Program, Academic Affairs, Finance, Communications, Marketing, Student Interests, and Elections Council mentorships. Members of Freshman Forum gained valuable experience and developed personal leadership skills through working within SGA.

CAPITOL ON THE PLAINS
On September 11, Governor Robert Bentley visited Auburn for Capitol on the Plains, an annual SGA event that allows students to discuss politics with state legislators. The event aims to foster political awareness and enthusiasm in all Auburn students through conversation and education.

MISS HOMECOMING
Prior to Homecoming Week, five Auburn University senior women were chosen via an interview process to run for Miss Homecoming. All five women presented their platforms and campaigned during the week to raise awareness for their campaigns. At the culmination of campaign week, students voted and Francie Harris won the title of Miss Homecoming 2014. Through her platform, Francie was able to raise more than $6,000 for pediatric cancer research.

HEY DAY
The Hey Day theme this year was “Saying Hey in Every Way” with an emphasis on celebrating campus diversity. Approximately 5,800 nametags were distributed and 900 T-shirts were sold. Highlights from the event included appearances by Aubie, the Auburn cheerleaders, and a baby tiger! This year, the Hey Day team also started a new “Say Hey” campaign to honor on-campus dining employees.
PIZZA WITH THE PROVOST

On October 8, SGA hosted Pizza with the Provost: an open discussion for students with Provost Timothy Boosinger. This new tradition fostered excellent communication between students and campus leaders, and helped to educate students on the resources available from the Provost’s office.

VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE

In the fall, the Political Affairs division of SGA held a voter registration drive on the concourse. More than 100 Auburn students who had never previously participated in an election took advantage of this excellent opportunity and became registered voters during the drive.

BETTER RELATIONS DAY

Better Relations Day started in 1948 as a chance for student leaders from Auburn University and The University of Alabama to foster friendly cooperation between the two rival schools. Representatives from The University of Georgia are now also a part of this tradition. The University of Alabama hosted members of Auburn SGA for Better Relations Day on November 5, 2014, and The University of Georgia hosted Auburn for their Better Relations Day on November 14, 2014.

ORGANIZATIONAL SEATING PROGRAM

The Organizational Seating Program exists to reward student organizations with rows in the Organizational Seating Block at football games. This year, SGA changed the system to support the Finish in Four initiative by relying on GPA instead of Ignited Points.

MILITARY APPRECIATION PEP RALLY

On November 7, SGA hosted a pep rally to promote the military appreciation game against Texas A&M and honor those serving in the military. Several special guests were in attendance, including The Auburn University Marching Band, Auburn Cheerleaders, Tiger Paws, Aubie, Jay Jacobs, and Cadet Daniel Barnes from the Air Force ROTC. Many visiting alumni and family were able to attend as well. The pep rally was able to bring together not only the student body, but also the Auburn community in honor of the men and women who continue to fight for our freedom.

LATE-NIGHT TRANSPORTATION

SGA relaunched Tiger Ten with more efficient routes geared towards safely transporting students from late-night destinations. SGA launched a large marketing campaign through extensive work with the Office of Public Safety and Tiger Transit. Our goal was centered on providing an effective and efficient system that meets student demand. After the overhaul, the Tiger Ten saw a 56% increase in ridership.

100 THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU LEAVE AUBURN

This year, SGA began compiling a list of 100 Things To Do at Auburn University. Students, staff, and campus organizations gave ideas of places to go, events to attend, and things each student should do before graduation. In the future, all freshmen students will receive this list at Camp War Eagle, which will serve as a checklist during their time at Auburn.
The SGA Senate serves as the legislative branch of SGA. Senators are elected from the 12 schools and colleges on Auburn’s campus. They serve on one of the six standing committees, which are: Academic Affairs, Budget and Finance, Code of Laws, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, Student Affairs, and Sustainability and Environmental Affairs. Senators write and pass legislation that affects Auburn’s campus in a myriad of ways. This year, Senate has passed legislation to fund improvements to the Wi-Fi infrastructure in the student center and to support the alteration of the final exam structure. In addition, it has worked to better mental health awareness and sustainable efforts around campus. Senators also approved a $300,000 funding request from the SGA reserve fund for the development of a new Auburn Memorial. This year’s senators have also proven their commitment to the student body by serving a total of 442 hours in their colleges and around campus.

BLOOD DRIVES

SGA held four blood drives this year, including the Beat Bama Blood Drive on November 11. Overall, 661 blood donations were received for the American Red Cross, enough to impact 1,983 lives!

VENISON BRAND AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

The Verizon Brand Ambassador Program promotes the partnership between Auburn University and Verizon Wireless. This year, for the first time, Verizon Ambassadors expanded their outreach to new areas such as the International Student Orientation and the Graduate Student Orientation as well as demonstrating a larger presence at traditional events such as Camp War Eagle, Hey Day, and Homecoming. The Verizon team also executed the 2nd annual Verizon Loves Auburn Day to link Verizon and Auburn in the minds of prospective and current students. Due to this increased promotion and the targeting of new groups, activations were up 5% for the year.

RING NIGHT

Auburn’s newest tradition, Ring Night, was hosted for the first time on December 4th, outside of Langdon Hall, marking the beginning of a long-lasting tradition. At every Ring Night, each class ring is placed on the Auburn Seal to gain the Auburn spirit, but also becomes cursed when it touches the Seal. At the Ring Ceremony, ring recipients will dip their ring in a bowl of water from the President’s fountain, reversing the curse, but keeping the Auburn spirit that their ring represents. In Fall, sales increased 10% from the previous semester. This spring, fueled by the new ring tradition, sales were up more than 30%. The Official Ring Program has been positioned for continued future growth as this proud tradition continues to become part of the fabric of the Auburn experience.

WI-FI UPDATE

SGA worked with the Office of Information Technology to advocate for improvements to the Wi-Fi in the student center. SGA facilitated a three-way financial partnership with Student Affairs and the Office of the Provost to pay for the $100,000 upgrade with each group paying for a third of the cost. The upgrade was the first improvement of Wi-Fi since the student center was built in 2008. This upgrade was completed in January and improved internet connectivity by more than 20%.
MISS AUBURN UNIVERSITY

The Miss Auburn University Scholarship Program, a preliminary to Miss Alabama in the Miss America system, provides scholarship opportunities for young women to assist in furthering their education. The pageant earned the title of Most Outstanding Large School Preliminary Pageant 2014. This year, there were 19 participants, and Jessie Garrison was crowned Miss Auburn University 2015.

NEW WOMEN’S CLASS RING

This year, SGA introduced a brand new Auburn University women’s class ring from Balfour. This redesigned ring features a meticulously crafted replica of the Auburn Seal that resides in front of Langdon Hall. About 50% of the class rings sold this spring were the new women’s ring, which is an increase from previous years in which female students made up just 25% of those who purchased rings.

ELECTIONS

On February 10, the 2015 Spring Elections were held. While the three major executive officers ran uncontested, students were given the opportunity to vote on the next on-campus dining venue. With 8,318 students voting SGA maintained its traditional ranking of being in the top 1% for student voter turn out around the country. Walker Byrd was named SGA President, Justin Mathews was named SGA Vice President, and Brett Walton was named SGA Treasurer. Lauren Jones won the title of Miss Auburn 2015. Voters also selected Einstein’s Bagels to be the newest dining venue, arriving in the new Mell Street Academic Success Center.

HIGH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The goal of High School Leadership Conference is to serve high school leaders and further their leadership abilities. This year’s two day leadership conference was themed “Everyday Heroes,” took place on February 10–11, 2015. There were 66 Auburn students on staff, 180 high school students and 42 advisors from 35 high schools.

AUBIE

Aubie attends every home football, basketball, baseball, soccer, and volleyball game and also makes frequent stops at softball, tennis, swimming, and equestrian. In addition to being the biggest fan of Auburn Athletics, Aubie also attends over 800 events a year, sharing and igniting the pride and passion that Auburn University represents.

Aubie has also become known for his success in the UCA National Mascot Competition, where he has won twice as many championships as any other mascot and has finished in the top 3 in 18 of the 25 years that the competition has taken place. Aubie’s unmatched success was recognized in 2006 when he became the first collegiate mascot ever inducted into the Mascot Hall of Fame. During Aubie’s tremendously successful past year, he won the Capital One Mascot Challenge and received $20,000 for his program.

Women love him, children adore him, and men want to be him. He is often imitated, but never duplicated. He is the spirit that encompasses all things Auburn. He is Aubie the Tiger!

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2014–2015

By the Numbers

492

Student leadership positions in SGA

8,318

Students voted in spring elections, representing 33.59% of the student body

661

Blood donations this fall at SGA blood drives, which could impact up to 1,983 lives

250+

Responses submitted on AuburnAnswers

180

High school students attended the 2015 High School Leadership Conference

800+

Aubie appearances this year

442

Hours served by SGA senators in their colleges and around campus

5,800+

Nametags distributed to Auburn students on Hey Day

2,238

Student volunteers at The Big Event in 2014

31

Organizations participated in the 2014 Homecoming parade

65,000+

Shakers distributed in Jordan-Hare Stadium by the Organizational Seating Program

56%

Increase in late-night transportation ridership

It is truly an honor to have the chance to serve Auburn and the student body as the 2015-2016 Student Government Association Executive team. We are extremely humbled to step into these roles and are excited to represent such an incredible university.

Auburn University does a remarkable job empowering students to let their voices be heard. It is our goal, as SGA, to ensure that student voice is always at the forefront of any decision-making process, and we want to be the avenue for students to be heard. Over the next year, we will work to enhance the academic experience for students to make them more successful in the classroom, to provide students with new and better dining options, and to make SGA more accessible to students.

We look forward to listening and working with students and administrators over the next year as we strive to make Auburn the best student experience in the country!

War Eagle!

Walker Byrd, President
Justin Mathews, Vice President
Brett Walton, Treasurer
Olivia Tofani, Chief of Staff
Jesse Westerhouse, Executive Vice President of Initiatives
Michael Waldrum, Executive Vice President of Programs
Ivy Sibley, Executive Vice President of Marketing and Engagement