Dear Friends -

I am truly honored to be sharing this newsletter with you as chairman of the University of Georgia Foundation. As I am sure you know, a dedicated group of people who served on the boards of the Arch Foundation and the University of Georgia Foundation worked diligently to bring the two organizations together effective July 1.

We are now operating as a single entity, under the University of Georgia Foundation name, with a clear focus on raising and managing funds to enhance the university's academic mission. Specifically, we are working with the university in support of its ten-year strategic plan to sustain undergraduate and post-graduate education while advancing its reputation as a global leader among research institutions.

As we move forward, the Development and Public Affairs Committee will be looking at ways to improve and enhance foundation communications. Thus, in the months ahead, changes will be made to our outreach materials, which means your quarterly newsletter and other communications may look a bit different. I might also note that our website has been revised and I encourage you to take a moment to visit www.ugafoundation.org.

Our board, which includes all trustees from both foundations, will have its first board meeting in Athens on September 15 and 16. We have a full slate of committee meetings and activities both days. A couple of highlights will be a full trustee orientation on September 15 followed by a full day of committee meetings. On September 16, the trustees will participate in the dedication of a statue honoring Abraham Baldwin, the university’s founder and author of the charter that established UGA in 1785.

There is much more that will take place at the fall meeting and I look forward to seeing all of our trustees in Athens for this very important session.

To you, our donors, I want to express my gratitude for the unwavering support you have provided to the university over the years. I also want to assure you that as a unified organization the University of Georgia Foundation is committed to assuring your gifts are managed in a manner that provides maximum benefit to the university.

Sincerely,

Bill Young, Jr., Chairman

Horticulture focus of Education Abroad
Maymester trip to UK, France

During Maymester 2011, Drs. Tim Smalley and Marc Van Iersel of the Horticulture Department led 12 students through gardens and cultural sites in Ireland, Great Britain and France to study the influences of climate, topography, history, politics, literature and art upon garden plant selection and garden design.

In Shannon, Ireland, the group learned well the influence of weather and soil on plant growth, as they searched for unusual plants sheltered from the wind in the eroded limestone bedrock that embraces the Gulf Stream as it arrives in Ireland.

After roaming the Scottish highlands chasing exotic Chilean and South African plants, the group visited the rock garden at the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh. This was the perfect place for a lesson on how plants adapt to the high light, poor soil and short growing season of the alpine environment.

During the two-week tour, the group also visited important historic gardens and plant collections in England and France.

The final reflective essay in Paris related how gardening ideas of other periods were modified in creating post-modern gardens of old elevated train tracks (Promenade Plantee), the front of a four-story building (the vertical garden of Mur Vegetal), and an old car factory (Parc du Andre Citroen).

By the end of the trip, class members realized that the course was really about helping to develop students with elevated aspirations, greater understanding of other cultures, and more sensitivity to diverse viewpoints.

According to class participant Sarah Carleo, “The experiences and memories I have from the gardens I have seen, the foods I have tried, the people I have met, and countryside and cityscapes I have seen will forever remain an invaluable source of personal motivation to strive for great things.”
Honors Program welcomes 17 Foundation Fellows, five Ramsey Scholars

The University of Georgia Foundation in April announced that seventeen incoming freshmen have been selected to receive its prestigious Foundation Fellowship, and that five incoming freshmen will receive its Bernard Ramsey Honors Scholarship.

The class of 2015 Foundation Fellows earned an average GPA of 4.2 and an average SAT score of 1559. The class of 2015 Ramsey Honors Scholars boast an average GPA of 4.15 and an average SAT score of 1560. All 22 of these students also have resumes that reflect extensive and meaningful extracurricular involvement.

Established in 1972, the Foundation Fellows program covers the full cost of tuition at the University of Georgia. Fellows also participate in travel-study programs, research conferences and dinner seminars with faculty from the university, and are mentored by faculty members and senior Foundation Fellows.

The Ramsey Honors Scholarship, named for the university's most generous individual benefactor, Bernard Ramsey, was established in 2000. The scholarship provides students a variety of academic and cultural opportunities through the Honors Program. Students participate in study-abroad, peer and faculty mentoring programs and are mentored by faculty members and senior Ramsey Scholars.

All Foundation Fellows and Ramsey Honors Scholars may renew the scholarships for an additional three years as long as they maintain a 3.5 GPA and remain in good standing with the Honors Program.

The Foundation Fellows program graduated 36 students in 2011; 23 Foundation Fellows and 13 Ramsey Honors Scholars.

Due to programs like the Foundation Fellowship and Ramsey Honors Scholarship, the University of Georgia Foundation continues to prove itself to be an avenue of choice for donors who wish to see their funds handled responsibly and effectively, while supporting the academic careers of truly exceptional student-scholars.

NeSmith Named Board of Regents Vice Chair

UGA Foundation Emeritus Trustee William “Dink” NeSmith Jr. was recently elected to a six-month term as vice chair of the University System of Georgia Board of Regents. NeSmith, who was appointed in March 2008 to the Board of Regents by Gov. Sonny Perdue representing the Tenth Congressional District, will serve as the board’s vice chair through December 31, 2011. NeSmith is co-owner and president of Athens-based Community Newspapers, Inc., which publishes several dozen newspapers in Georgia, Florida and the Carolinas. A native of Jesup, he is a 1970 graduate of The University of Georgia and chairman of the Richard B. Russell Foundation. He is past president of UGA’s Alumni Association.

Albany Herald features Willson’s farm operations

As one of the oldest land grant universities in the United States, the University of Georgia has a long and proud history in agricultural sciences. The state of Georgia as well has a long history of producing numerous crops that are prized not only in the U.S., but increasingly, around the world. At the nexus of Georgia agriculture and UGA one can find foundation trustee Jane Willson, owner of Sunnyland Farms in Albany. A recent story in the Albany Herald highlighted Willson’s operation as a top producer of Georgia pecans -- which of late have been in great demand in China. Willson also is a great example of how the foundation works to enlist trustees who have professional experience in areas vital to UGA and its students.

Pierce’s research helps fight against breast cancer

In the fight against breast cancer, new research by Dr. Michael Pierce has found that blocking the action of an enzyme called GnT-V significantly delays the onset and spread of tumors in mice with cancer very similar to many types of human breast cancer. Pierce holds the George E. and Sarah F. Mudter Professorship in Cancer Research, managed by the UGA Foundation, and is director of the UGA Cancer Center. The research was published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The University of Georgia Foundation accepts and manages gifts to the university according to donor wishes. For more information, please call (706) 542-6677 or visit the foundation’s website at www.ugafoundation.org.