

Resolution Honoring University of Alabama Student Members of the 2004 USA Today All-USA College Academic Team

WHEREAS, four University of Alabama students have been named to the 2004 *USA Today* All-USA College Academic Team. UA came in second only to Harvard which had five team members and tied Northwestern at four in total number of students on the prestigious academic team. A total of 82 students nationwide were selected for this year's team; and

WHEREAS, students selected for this annual "best of the best" list are chosen for their grades, awards and activities, leadership roles and their ability to use their academic skills outside the classroom. Since 1991, The University of Alabama has placed 26 students on the list; and

WHEREAS, named to the Second Team were Cody Locke, a sophomore biology major from Boaz, and Abigail Smith, a junior speech communication major from Tuscaloosa. Robert Davis, a senior aerospace engineering major from Montgomery, was named to the Third Team; and Kristin Robinson, a senior social work major from Birmingham, received Honorable Mention; and

WHEREAS, only a college sophomore, Cody Locke, who plans to become a molecular and cellular biology professor, has already established himself as a successful and talented researcher in the field of cellular biology. Locke conducts research on the molecular basis of epilepsy in the lab of UA biology professors Guy and Kim Caldwell. A student in UA's innovative Computer Based Honors Program, Locke has successfully combined his biological research with his expertise in computer science. Locke is a co-author of research selected as one of only 15 works, chosen from more than 1,300 abstracts, to be highlighted in the 2003 American Society of Cell Biology Press Book. He is also co-author of two articles that have been submitted for publication in scientific journals; and

WHEREAS, Abigail Smith, who plans to practice civil rights law, is an accomplished debater, an advocate for social justice and a founding member of a multicultural sorority at UA. Smith overcame numerous obstacles, including dropping out of high school, to pursue her college education. A debater at Contra Costa Community College in California, she was recruited to UA to join the debate team by UA debate coach Edward Lee. As a member of the McNair Scholars Program, which provides undergraduate students the opportunity to participate in research experiences, Smith conducted research on a triple-lynching that occurred in Tuscaloosa in 1933 and explored the historical and cultural implications of that incident in a paper that has been submitted for publication; and

WHEREAS, Robert Davis, who plans to be a NASA engineer, has received many awards and honors, among them: National Collegiate Honors Council Portz Scholar, 2003, one of three scholars awarded annually and the first recipient in UA history; Blount Presidential Scholar, 1999, one of the University's most prestigious academic scholarships; first Place in the annual University of Alabama System Honors Research Day, 2002 and 2003; and the Department of Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics Outstanding Undergraduate Research Award, 2002. A member of the University Honors Program and the Computer Based Honors Program, Davis has been the principal author of four papers researching the performance of projectiles for the U.S. Air Force based on work done at UA with Dr. Stanley Jones, Cudworth Professor of Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics. His papers have been published in the *Journal of Mechanical Engineering Science* and have been presented at national and international conferences; and

WHEREAS, a member of the UA Honors Program, Kristin Robinson, who plans to be a social worker, holds a perfect 4.0 grade point average in social work. Involved in many programs at the University including the Avanti Orientation Team, the Anderson Society honorary, Elliott Society service honorary, and Phi Alpha social work honor society, she was the 2003 recipient of the John Fraser Ramsey Award, one of UA's four "Premier Awards," honoring a student "with broad humanistic interests who has exerted a positive influence on his or her contemporaries." In 2002, Robinson saw a need for a support system for foster children and families, so she created Tuscaloosa Foster Friends, which provides time off for parents and college-age friends for the children. Foster Friends meets in conjunction with the local Foster Parent Association one evening a month. While the parents work with Department of Human Resources administrators, Robinson and her volunteers mentor their children through activities such as reading and playing with toys;

WHEREAS, critical in the process of placing students on the *USA Today* All-USA College Academic Team are faculty members who teach and identify competitive students, invite them to apply, help craft the applications, and mentor them through the process. This year's faculty mentors included Drs. Guy and Kim Caldwell, professors of biology; Edward Lee, associate professor of communications and director of UA's debate team; Dr. James C. Hall, director of New College; Dr. Stanley Jones, Cudworth Professor of Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics; and Dr. Kathleen Bolland, Chair of the Bachelor of Social Work program; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Faculty Senate of The University of Alabama that it commends these four students for their excellence in academics, service and leadership and congratulates them on their being named to the *USA Today* All-USA College Academic Team.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate also expresses its gratitude to the faculty who aided and mentored these outstanding students to achieving the honor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution be included in the permanent minutes of the Senate.

Adopted by the Faculty Senate

April 20, 2004