



Auburn Ph.D. to release book in June

By Jessica Jernigan | Staff Writer | 2 hours ago



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From teaching in both a Japanese private school and a penitentiary, to surviving cancer and now working as an associative dean at Faulkner School of Law, Allen Mendenhall has led quite a life.

The Auburn doctorate holder in English will release his new book *Of Bees and Boys* in June, detailing his southern roots and unique experiences. The collection of essays reflects the need to slow down and contemplate the profundities of everyday life, Mendenhall said.

Mendenhall is not new to the literary world, having authored hundreds of academic publications. Along with his publications, he also has two books under his belt, one being a literary critic on economics and literature and the other a rewrite of his Auburn doctoral dissertation about former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.

Of Bees and Boys, however, is his invitation to the reader to enter his world.

“You could say, without much exaggeration, that the book is in large part my attempt to figure out what I’m doing in life and why,” Mendenhall said.

When writing *Of Bees and Boys*, Mendenhall did not realize he was writing a book at first. He chose to write each essay for different reasons.

“I wrote the essay about having cancer, for instance, because that illness changed my life in ways I needed to think through,” Mendenhall said. “I think more clearly when I put pen to paper, or fingers to keys, so that’s what I did: I wrote.”

Along with his Ph.D. in English, he has received his J.D and LL.M in transitional law and has worked as a staff attorney for Chief Justice Roy S. Moore of the Supreme Court of Alabama.

Mendenhall said his most rewarding academic experience came from working with students in his first semester at Auburn.

“I still remember the faces of most of my students,” Mendenhall said. “They were the first students I ever taught, and I labored over their papers and assignments. I’ve received emails or messages from many of them over the years, so I trust that at least some of them found that semester to be rewarding as well.”

Every graduate course Mendenhall took at Auburn resulted in a published paper in either a peer-reviewed journal or a law review—with the exception of a class on fiction that provided him with material for that novel he says he’s always hoping to complete but almost never working on.

The southern lawyer can always be found working on something new. Right now, he said, he is working on several projects –probably too many. He’s not sure whether they’ll result in books or essays or articles.

“Read and write without ceasing,” Mendenhall said. “Everything else will fall into place.”

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