

Freshman Class Breaks Enrollment Record

Newcomers abound at Southern Adventist University this school year with a freshman class of 758 students—the university’s highest freshman enrollment ever.

“We are so excited to welcome the largest freshman class in our history,” said President Ken Shaw, EdD. “Our enrollment team has done a remarkable job sharing the good news about Southern. I also believe that as young people visited our campus over the past year, they sensed the genuine friendliness of our community and experienced our mission being lived out in their interactions with staff, faculty, and students.”

Fall 2011 set the last freshman enrollment record at 652, meaning this semester is the first time a freshman class at Southern has not only reached but also exceeded 700 students. At 2,827, the institution’s current undergraduate class is one of its largest ever, second only to 2,896 in 2012.

“I praise the Lord for blessing our team to be able to share Southern’s story across the country and the world,” said Jason

Merryman, vice president for Enrollment Management. “It is an honor to contribute to the university’s mission of equipping students to embrace biblical truth and embody academic and professional excellence. I’m thankful every day that God allows us to do this work.”

The university’s annual Southern Serves Day, previously known as Freshman Service Day, immediately engages new students in a variety of projects in the local community, and this fall’s event saw more participants than ever before. Cheryl Craven, Christian Service director, was deeply impressed by students’ dedication to serve from dawn to dusk.

“Some individuals persevered past 4 p.m., helping out at the Samaritan Center and cranking out bunk beds for Sleep in Heavenly Peace,” she said. “They completed 74 beds for local children ages 3-17 who would otherwise be sleeping on couches, blankets, or even floors.”

“I’m thrilled about high enrollment, because it means more students now



Alex Gil, freshman nursing major, (left) is greeted by Dain Ochoa, junior physical therapist assistant major, during the freshman welcome party.

have an opportunity to grow in their relationship with the Lord and discover how their individual talents can ultimately serve Him,” Merryman said. “I believe there is no better place on earth to accomplish these things.”

- by Amanda Blake

New, Searchable Endowment Website Launched

Over the years, many alumni and friends of Southern Adventist University have chosen to invest in Christian education through scholarships and endowments. One such couple began an endowment with \$5,000 at Southern in 1989. Thirty-four years later, with additional gifts and interest, that endowment is currently valued at nearly \$100,000 and provides close to \$4,000 in scholarships to students each year.

“Endowments provide a continuity of giving and offer underlying stability to an organization,” said Ellen Hostetler, vice president for Advancement. “As

our endowment grows, so does the potential to need less government funding. And because of compounding interest, an endowed gift has the potential over-time to generate income far beyond the initial investment, outlive the donor, and continue to make an impact on student lives.”

With the launch of Southern’s new searchable endowment website, it’s now even easier to contribute or start an endowment of your own at southern.edu/endowments.

Southern has more than 250 endowed scholarships, created by people who are

passionate about Southern, and each is tailored to help students in specific areas, such as international students, theology students, students who demonstrate leadership, or students who work while going to school.

As a result of these endowments, Southern gives more than \$2 million in scholarships to students each year.

For more details on how to establish an endowment, contact Advancement at 423.236.2829 or advancement@southern.edu.

- Staff Writer

Southern Breaks Ground for Ruth McKee School of Business

Community members joined Southern Adventist University’s Board of Trustees along with students, employees, alumni, and donors to break ground for the new Ruth McKee School of Business facility on September 29 in Collegedale, Tennessee.

Located just off University Drive in front of Mabel Wood Hall, the site is the first thing visitors see when arriving on Southern’s property.

“This location sets the tone for the professional, quality education that all enrolled students receive,” said Ellen Hostetler, vice president for Advancement. “With 50,000 square feet, the new building will provide nearly five times the current space for this academic area and is set to be completed by 2025.”

“Lives are going to be changed,” said board member Jim Davidson, executive secretary of the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, who welcomed the audience and opened the service with prayer. “That ripple effect will go on and on for eternity.”

Flanked by a backhoe, forklift, bulldozer, and excavator, Davidson joined Southern’s President Ken Shaw, ’80, EdD, and Stephanie Sheehan, ’05, PhD, dean of the School of Business, in lifting up golden shovels of dirt to mark the beginning of construction.

“For students, this ceremony is the symbol of opportunities that lie ahead,” said Roman Johnson, senior management major. “Space to gain knowledge, cultivate creativity, and prepare ourselves for the competitive business world.”

With a 10% increase in enrollment over the past five years, the School of Business—the second-largest academic discipline on campus—welcomed its largest class of 133 new students this



Jim Davidson (left), Ken Shaw, and Stephanie Sheehan, joined by Southern’s Board of Trustees, dig into the dirt during the groundbreaking ceremony on September 29.

fall. Currently, more than 450 business and applied technology majors are enrolled within 16 graduate and undergraduate degree programs.

“The new name for the School of Business honors the co-founder of McKee Foods, best known for Little Debbie snacks, who embodied integrity, wisdom, acumen, and beneficence—the same qualities we strive to instill in each of our graduates,” Sheehan said. “We are equipping the next generation of top-tier business leaders and fostering an environment for Christian business principles to be experienced and practiced.”

Brittany (McKee) East, ’12 and ’13, explained how her great-grandmother was “ahead of the times” as a well-rounded female entrepreneur with a powerful voice and a legacy that lives on

through the family and the company, as well as the university.

The four-story structure will house a spacious auditorium, an innovation lab, and an investment lab with computers for analyzing real-time financial market data—all to enhance cross-departmental innovation, entrepreneurship opportunities, and networking between the community and students.

More than 80% of the campaign goal of \$20 million, which also includes a program endowment, has been raised through donations and commitments. Ground preparation is underway, with construction soon to follow. See southern.edu/gobusiness for ongoing developments.

- by Alexis Dewey