

the magazine of Southern Adventist University

fall 2021

columns



Welcome Home!

New president Ken Shaw and his wife, Ann, return to their roots | page 12



Photo: Ryan Pierce

50 Years That Started at Southern

The first vespers this school year included a special surprise for Beverly (Stephens) Sorensen, '73. Exactly five decades before, on August 27, 1971, she and her husband, Mark (attended), met for the first time following a vespers program at Southern. After 48 years of marriage, Mark brought her back to where it all began for a commemorative vespers date. Unbeknownst to her, Mark had coordinated with Alumni Relations to have Joseph Khabbaz, vice president for Spiritual Life, bring the couple on stage to share their story with students. He concluded with a prayer of blessing for the couple.

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This summer, 45 years after becoming a student at Southern, Ken Shaw, '80, EdD, returned to campus as president—the first alum to serve in this role. He is accompanied by his wife and fellow alum, Ann, '79. Together, they fondly reminisce about the past and look ahead as God continues to lead them into the future.

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The popular phrase “It takes a village” encapsulates campus life well. Through the roller coaster of good times and challenges, students, faculty, and staff form a tight community, providing support, prayer, and encouragement to each other.

20 | Student Center(ed)

After more than two years of construction, the Bietz Center for Student Life opened to great fanfare this fall.

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The Southern family came together in person and virtually for Homecoming Weekend 2021.

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Cover caption: Any stroll on Southern's campus is a walk down memory lane for new president Ken Shaw and his wife, Ann.

Ryan Pierce, photographer

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Employee Expressions of Creativity

All across campus, faculty and staff demonstrate creativity and talent that expands beyond their primary job skills. Here are just a few examples of the many ways Southern employees express their artistic gifts. All photos contributed unless otherwise indicated.

1: Dusty Miller, Talge Hall maintenance supervisor – Metal Work. Sponsor of the Southern Smiths, a student blacksmithing club, Miller created this steel, hand-forged rose, which he used to propose to his wife.

2: Mitch Menzmer, PhD, professor in the Chemistry Department – Acrylic on Canvas. While taking an art class at Southern a few years ago, Menzmer painted this 24x24-inch work titled "Family."

3: Ben Thornton, PhD, professor in the Biology Department – Photograph. The contours of this driftwood on Rialto Beach, Washington, captured Thornton's attention.

4: Keith Snyder, PhD, Biology Department chair – Woodwork. Following the local 2020 tornadoes, Snyder began making clocks from the reclaimed wood he helped clear from yards, mostly to share as gifts.

5: Ellen Hostetler, vice president for Advancement – Acrylic on Canvas. Representing Hostetler's imagined cabin in the New Earth, this 16x20-inch painting shows Dream Lake in Estes Park, Colorado.

6: Kimberly Bobenhausen, director of Planned Giving – Cross Stitch. While homeschooling her children, Bobenhausen took up cross stitch, which allowed her to be productive while being accessible. This piece took approximately two years to complete.

7: Todd Wever, landscape supervisor – Woodwork. Since attending a dulcimer workshop several years ago, Wever has handcrafted 10 of the instruments, which both he and his wife play.

8: Giselle Hasel, '04, associate professor in the School of Visual Art and Design – Watercolor. Hasel captures travel memories in her sketchbook using watercolors.

9: Eve (Parker) Knight, '97, administrative assistant for Academic Administration – Pen and Ink on Paper. Titled "Heron," this is one of three works that hang in Knight's office depicting local wildlife; she hid the columns of Southern's logo in each picture.

10: Doug Jacobs, '73, DMin, research professor in the School of Religion – Woodwork. Many years ago, Jacobs began this hand built skin-on-frame kayak in a woodworking class at Southern. His goal is to complete it this year.

11: Braam Oberholster, DBA, professor and AdventHealth Endowed Chair of Business Administration – Photograph. In his travels around the world, Oberholster captures the beauty of God's nature through photography.

12: Donald Keefe, MFA, associate professor in the School of Visual Art and Design – Oil on Canvas. Titled "The Creative Temptation of St. Anthony," this 40x32-inch piece won the 2021 "Best in Show" award at the Association for Visual Arts in Chattanooga annual juried exhibition.

13: Laura Racovita, PhD, School of Social Work dean – Paper Craft. As special gifts for those around her, Racovita makes handmade greeting cards and envelopes that incorporate techniques such as die cutting, embossing, and her own cross stitching.



Photo: Ryan Pierce

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Photo: Ryan Pierce



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Southern Welcomes New Vice President for Advancement

Southern is pleased to announce Ellen Hostetler as the new vice president for Advancement. Hostetler is no stranger to the university; since 2017, she has served as an adjunct instructor in the School of Business. She most recently served as director of development for It Is Written, a faith-based media ministry headquartered in Ooltewah, Tennessee. Additionally, Hostetler holds a master's degree in entrepreneurship from the University of Florida.

"I'm thrilled that Ellen will be heading up our Advancement team and serving as an important member of Southern's administration," said President Ken Shaw, EdD. "As I have gotten to know her, I am impressed with Ellen's passion and enthusiasm for growing the philanthropic support for Southern, building and nurturing strong and lasting relationships

with our alumni and friends, and maximizing the potential of each member of the Advancement team."

Originally from Minnesota, Hostetler enjoys snow skiing, mountain hiking, and baking sourdough bread, and she recently took up acrylic landscape painting. She describes herself as falling in love with Jesus every day.

"I'm excited to combine my passion for education and ministry as I partner with the friends, alumni, and investors of Southern Adventist University in reaching a world for Christ through Christian education," Hostetler said. "It's a wonderful honor to watch former students and friends of the university see their passion and initiatives realized as the next generation of leaders is trained and equipped through their generosity."

— by Staff Writer



New vice president for Advancement, Ellen Hostetler, is no stranger to Southern.

New Programs Expand in Digital Fields

Two new degrees and several additional concentrations in digital fields such as web design and cybersecurity give Southern students more academic options this fall. These options were developed in response to high demand by prospective students and employers and are included in Southern's academic master plan.

"The new programs add breadth to Southern's academic portfolio, allowing us to better meet the needs of our constituents," said Robert Young, PhD, senior vice president for Academic Administration.

The School of Visual Art and Design

is growing students' skills in user experience and web design through a new Bachelor of Fine Art in Web and New Media Design.

"This new program builds on our strong graphic design program and combines it with the specific technical skills needed in this field," said Randy Craven, '99, MFA, dean of the School of Visual Art and Design. "We anticipate that this combination will be highly desirable."

Additionally, the School of Computing has added a new Master of Science in Applied Computer Science degree, which includes a choice of three certificates: Data Analytics, Cybersecurity, and Web

Development. At the undergraduate level, two new concentrations—Security and Web Development—are available as part of several degrees, including the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science.

"Skills in cybersecurity and web development are highly valuable in today's market," said Rick Halterman, PhD, dean of the School of Computing. "Southern's computing graduates have always been desirable to employers, and now these options will provide students with skills that are immediately needed by companies."

— by Madison Reinschmidt

Engage Worship Starts Streaming Music Student-Led Outreach Changes Lives

The student-led Engage Worship team (previously Engage Ministries) at Southern began developing music videos for churches last year amid the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Ryan Becker, '15, who oversees Engage as ministry coordinator for Admissions, these videos inspired him to begin sharing Engage's music on audio streaming platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music.

"When our ability to travel was limited, it was a way for us to still benefit students, families, and churches who need music," Becker said. "I'm excited to build relationships with people and to put Southern's name in places it hasn't traditionally reached."

According to Becker, Engage helps connect high school students with Southern, especially those enrolled in non-Adventist education. By sharing their music on streaming platforms, Becker hopes Engage will become a source of worship music for these young adults and Adventist churches throughout the North American Division.

According to Austin Bates, junior religious studies major and Engage Worship student director, the team is thrilled about this new opportunity.

"As an artist, it's exciting to have your music on a public platform," Bates said. "Plus, it's an innovative recruitment technique; it's just overall exciting for our bands."

Becker anticipates releasing more music throughout the year. He points out that listening to Engage's music on streaming platforms directly supports the students involved, who will receive royalties from the streaming platforms.

To learn more about Engage Worship and for links to their music, visit southern.edu/engage.

— by Amanda Blake

This summer, 14 Southern theology students conducted several evangelistic series in North Carolina, resulting in 21 baptisms. The team was led by School of Religion professor David Hartman, '82, DMin; they partnered with Roger Hernandez, ministerial and evangelism director for the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The students observed Hernandez for one week while he conducted a Revelation seminar, before splitting up to hold their own meetings at nine churches in the area. For four weeks, the students preached using materials developed by the Voice of Prophecy.

"The goal of this exercise is for the students to taste and experience evangelism firsthand," Hartman said. "They're not just watching someone else do it; they feel the excitement of preaching and see people make decisions to get baptized. I'm excited that these young people are going to catch God's vision, be empowered by the Spirit, and prepare this generation for Christ's return."

Edgar Escobar, junior theology major, had the unexpected blessing of partnering with his wife, Daphne, to reach people for Christ. While preaching at High Point Seventh-day Adventist Church, he realized there were Spanish-speaking attendees who desired to join the services but struggled to understand the English preaching. Escobar asked his bilingual wife to translate the meetings each day. Although seven months pregnant, she agreed, and the two worked together to share the gospel in both English and Spanish.

"We were happy to be doing ministry together and to see the Holy Spirit working on people's hearts," Escobar said.

By the end of the series, five people requested baptism. The church members and attendees were so touched by the experience that they threw the Escobars a baby shower after the last sermon.

"This experience showed me the impact that I can have when preaching," Escobar said. "It's important to see how God is working in our lives constantly. It solidifies the idea that God is with you during everything; it solidifies your spiritual calling."

— by Madison Reinschmidt



Through Engage Worship, student-led praise teams travel to other schools and churches to lead out in worship.



Professor David Hartman and his theology students helped lead 21 people to baptism.

Students Conduct Research at Oak Ridge National Laboratory

This summer, two Southern physics majors helped conduct research at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). Vola Andrianarijaona, PhD, a physics and engineering professor at Southern, invited Timothy Suzuki, senior physics major, and Arian Dovald, junior physics major, to help with two of his research projects. Located in Eastern Tennessee, the laboratory is the largest (by size) science and energy national laboratory in the Department of Energy system. Research access is mostly reserved for those working at the doctoral level.

"This is a big deal for undergraduate students," Andrianarijaona said. "These students are very likely to write a science poster with the research results from their own work, not just the results of someone else's work. That's real-life experience for the researcher."

During their time at ORNL, the students worked on two main projects. The first involved building a specific square wave using a multi-pulse generator to ensure that the ion beam would send a specific number of pulses. The second involved achieving an ultra-high vacuum environment within the merged ion beamline, checking for leaks in the system to reach desired vacuum pressure.

"The work is very engaging, requiring critical thinking and good problem solving," Dovald said. "This is an important step toward entering the world of physics research, and it inches me closer to the graduate school of my choice."

Suzuki had dreamed of working at ORNL and was thrilled to be invited by Andrianarijaona.



Timothy Suzuki (left) and Arian Dovald were grateful for a unique research opportunity.

"This opportunity granted me valuable experience in experimental physics, with many practical applications that can apply to nuclear physics," Suzuki said. "The most important lesson that I learned from working at the lab was that in real life, problems do not have simple solutions, and that to overcome these challenges, a flexible mind is absolutely necessary."

— by Madison Reinschmidt

Professors Research Ethnic Changes in Adventist Churches

School of Religion professor Alan Parker, DTh, is leading a research group studying the influence of race, ethnicity, and culture on Seventh-day Adventist conferences and churches across the North American Division (NAD). This Southern group includes Nina Nelson, PhD, associate professor of social work; Alva Johnson, assistant professor of journalism and communication; Raul Rivero, '08, associate director of Southern's Pierson Institute of Evangelism and World Missions; and Tracey-Ann Hutchinson, a graduate student earning her master's degree in counseling.

According to Parker, their research is intended to help churches understand and navigate ethnic and cultural changes. Parker, who grew up in South Africa and pastored churches there when apartheid ended, explained that these changes and their effect on churches have been important issues to him for a long time.

"I saw what happened in South Africa when we allowed our differences to divide us, as well as when different races were able to come together," Parker said. "What I would love to see is how a Christian perspective actually brings us

closer together because we are different."

Parker began to research ethnic changes in South African churches while working on his doctoral dissertation. Then, two years ago, he expanded that research at Southern in collaboration with the other researchers. According to Parker, working with others who have different cultural backgrounds and church experiences has significantly improved the research process.

"Working together has enabled us to expand our networks," Parker said. "It has given us a different worldview and lens in which to look at our data, so the insights are much richer."

With financial support from both Southern and the NAD, the group has conducted numerous interviews with conference leaders and pastors. They also plan to conduct focus groups with students and members of multicultural churches and to survey 40 to 50 randomly chosen churches in the NAD.

The group anticipates completing the research by the end of next summer. Parker plans to present the findings at next year's Southern Union Evangelism Conference and NAD year-end meetings. Based on the research, he has already begun developing anti-racism training in collaboration with Stephanie Guster, senior advisor for diversity at Southern, and hopes this training will be used by other Adventist institutions in the NAD. Parker explains: "I think Southern should be a showcase for what can happen when, in spite of our differences, we come together to develop a multicolored future."

— by Amanda Blake

New Feature Film Gives Hands-On Experience

The School of Visual Art and Design is in the post-production process for a new feature-length film, *All the Wrong Ingredients*, anticipated to be released soon. Under the direction of Nicholas Livanos, '07, associate professor of film production, 18 Southern students made up the main crew, with production lasting four weeks in June and July. Eight alumni participated in various leadership roles, and several students from the University of Tennessee in Chattanooga rounded out the crew.

The film features a chef trying to climb to the top in the world of fine dining, while struggling to balance other aspects of his identity: being a husband, a friend, and a son. Livanos hopes that this theme resonates universally.

"As people watch the film," Livanos said, "I hope they not only recognize its key values but also have a lot of fun."

Creating a film gives students the opportunity to put the knowledge they have gained in the classroom to use in practical, tangible ways. Michael Moyer, senior film production major, has been part of the film's production team from the beginning of the writing process. Working on this project has not only equipped him with technical skills for his future career, but also helped him learn to manage stress under pressure and to handle deadlines.

"At the beginning, working on a feature film was very intimidating to me," Moyer said. "I had not been part of a project this big before. It has not been easy, but the process has really helped me grow."

The School of Visual Art and Design produces a feature film every few years in order to give film students the opportunity for real-world experience in their industry, working with professors who share a Christian perspective.

"My dream is that every film student at Southern Adventist University has the opportunity to be a crew member in a feature film," Livanos said. "The beauty of filmmaking is being part of something that is bigger than you."

— by Stefanie Green



The crew of students, faculty, staff, and alumni finished filming the new project in July.

» by the numbers

45

Seventh-day Adventist churches are located within a 20-mile radius of Southern's campus.

20

Consecutive years Southern has been recognized by U.S. News & World Report "Best Colleges" rankings.

700

New students arrived on Southern's campus for the Fall 2021 semester, including 571 freshmen—the largest freshman class in 10 years.

100

Hours per week the Bietz Center for Student Life is open for students to relax, study, and connect.

135

Cardio and strength-training machines, plus suspension trainers and other exercise equipment in the Hulsey Wellness Center, help keep the campus fit.

4th

In the nation according to College Choice, Southern's automotive degree program has trained students for nearly 30 years.

Inviting God to Take the Driver's Seat

by Madison Reinschmidt, junior mass communication major

For Raiden Eastland, there was never a doubt that he would become a mechanic. He developed a passion for the work early on while fixing up old cars with his dad, and he dreamed of opening his own auto mechanic shop.

During high school, Eastland began modifying cars to be faster, racing them on the street. Although he grew up Adventist, he lost interest in God as his passion for cars and racing grew. Then, one day someone stole his favorite car from his driveway in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

"That was a wake-up call," Eastland said. "The Holy Spirit was pressing on my heart and telling me that my passion for cars had become my god. That's when I decided to stop modifying cars and racing in order to focus on God."

Eastland continued toward his goal of becoming a mechanic, earning an associate degree and eventually working with his father to open a shop—fulfilling his childhood aspiration. It was hard work, but he loved it. Then, at the end of one fast-paced shift, Eastland felt intense lower back pain. The cause was a herniated disk in his spine.

"The doctor told me I needed intense therapy and had to change my career field to one that would be easier on my back," Eastland said. "Before entering mechanics, I hadn't sought God's counsel; I did it because it was what I wanted. Now, I had to get on my knees and ask Him, 'What do You want me to do?'"

Speaking Through a Stranger

Eastland researched different career paths, but many of his interests would stress his back injury. Door after door seemed to close, and he didn't know what to do next.

At church one Sabbath, he met a family he had never seen before. During potluck, he visited with them, and his struggles to find a new career path



Photo: Elias Zabala

An unexpected sequence of events brought Raiden Eastland from running a mechanic shop to studying at Southern to become a pastor.

came up. The man's response shocked him.

"He told me that his friend had the same story as me," Eastland said. "The friend was a mechanic who ended up with the same back injury that I have and didn't know what to do with his life. However, after praying, he felt called to become a pastor."

"I've gone through ups and downs, but God was with me the whole time."

The man suggested that Eastland should pray about whether or not God was calling him to become a pastor. Eastland began praying, and later that week, he received a text from an old friend out of the blue. As they caught up, Eastland shared about his challenges, and his friend responded, "I could see you as a pastor!"

"This caught my attention, because my friend didn't regularly practice his faith, yet he saw potential in me," Eastland said. "I told God that if this was what He wanted me to do, He would have to pick the school and help me graduate debt-free."

The Road to Southern

Eastland began the application process for both Southern and a university closer to home. Before he had even submitted the applications, he received a call from Southern's Admissions office about attending. He took this as a sign of where God wanted him, and he was accepted at Southern shortly afterward.

At this point, God had answered his prayer of where to attend, but his finances were still up in the air. Then Eastland's pastor approached him and said that he and the church were willing to help pay his costs to study theology at Southern. Between the church's help and Eastland's qualification for financial aid, everything fell into place.

Now Eastland is on track to graduate with his bachelor's degree in theology in 2024. He has found a spiritual community at Southern, serving as a LifeGroup coach in the Office of Ministry and Missions. The road to finding God's calling was never easy, but he is grateful to experience God on a personal level.

"I've gone through ups and downs, but God was with me the whole time," Eastland said. "I told God that I didn't just want to learn what was being taught at Southern, but ultimately the thing I want is to see who He truly is. I don't care where I go, as long as that's where God wants me." ■

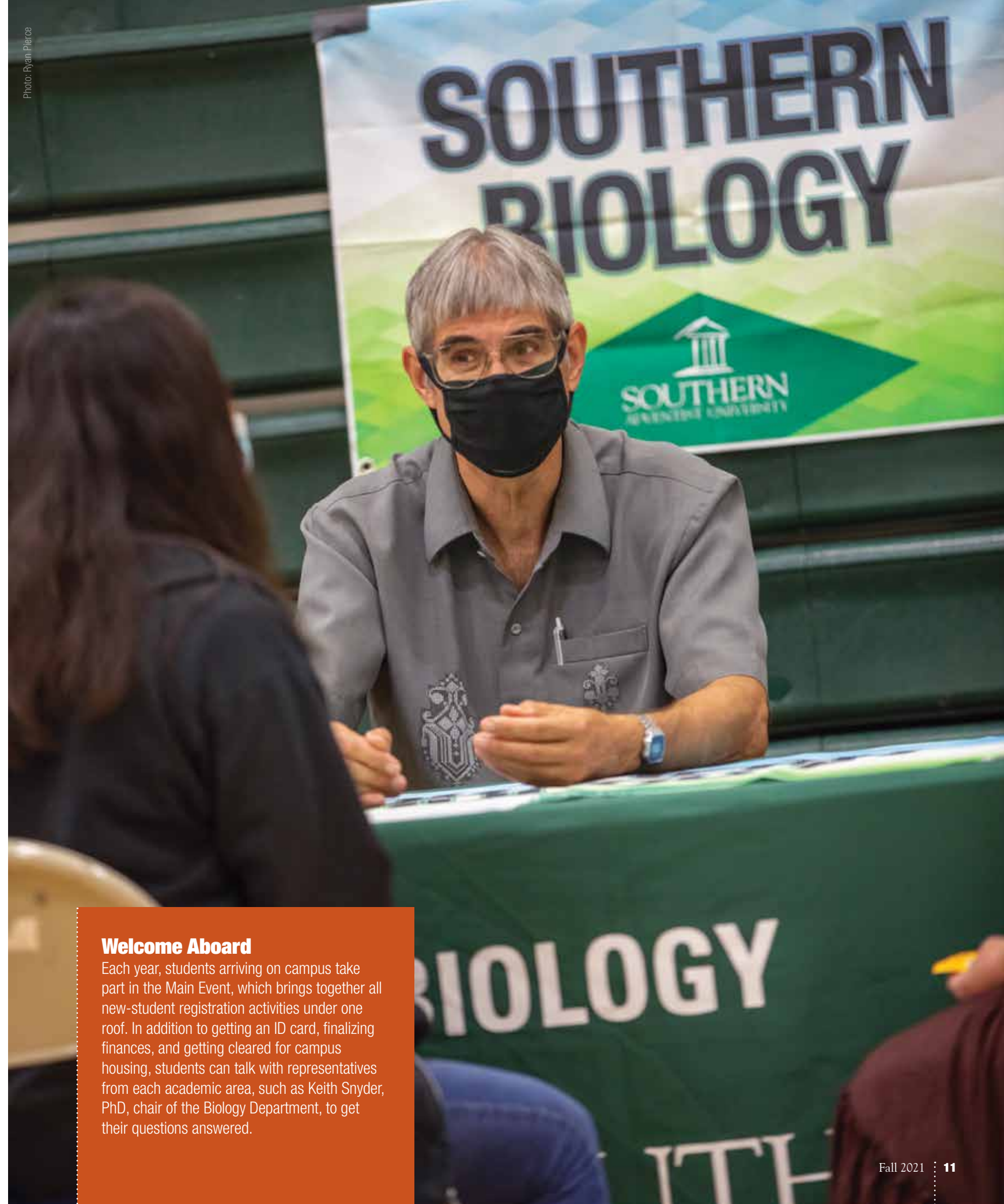


Photo: Ryan Pierce

Welcome Aboard

Each year, students arriving on campus take part in the Main Event, which brings together all new-student registration activities under one roof. In addition to getting an ID card, finalizing finances, and getting cleared for campus housing, students can talk with representatives from each academic area, such as Keith Snyder, PhD, chair of the Biology Department, to get their questions answered.

Welcome Home!

This summer, 45 years after becoming a student at Southern, Ken Shaw, '80, EdD, returned to campus as president—the first alum to serve in this role. He is accompanied by his wife and fellow alum, Ann, '79. Together, they fondly reminisce about the past and look ahead as God continues to lead them into the future. by Angela Baerg, '06

When Ann (Kennedy) and Ken Shaw first met in 1974, she vowed she would never date him. They were students at Little Creek Academy in Knoxville, Tennessee, and their siblings were dating. Ann told Ken she would never like him, because it would just be too awkward. Gradually, through persistence and many long letters, Ken won her over.

The two dated for their remaining two years together at Little Creek. During that time, they both found the careers they wanted to pursue. Ken discovered a passion for education while tutoring some of his classmates. His goal in teaching was to find ways to make the concepts simpler than the instructors had, and he enjoyed the challenge of finding different ways to express an idea so that each student could understand.

“I loved seeing students’ lightbulbs come on as they had ‘I get it’ moments,” Ken remembers. “They would say, ‘I wish the teacher had explained it like that.’ That’s when I realized that maybe I should be a teacher.”

Ann’s parents owned and operated an assisted living facility,

where she worked from a very early age. There she discovered how much she loved helping people who were going through difficult times. Two of her siblings were studying nursing at Southern, and Ann was inspired by their examples. She saw that they were thriving, and they told her the college professors were good.

“I thought that if they could do it, so could I,” Ann says.

Southern Bound

Ken also had a brother studying at Southern and was excited to follow in his footsteps, with Ann by his side. The couple quickly discovered that they loved walking to classes in the cool morning air perfumed by Oatmeal Cream Pies, as well as going on dates to get 39-cent tacos at Taco Bell. On the weekends, they would drive up Lookout Mountain and watch the hang gliders or go hiking at Fall Creek Falls.

“Ann could find a four-leaf clover like nobody’s business,” Ken remembers.

While at Southern, Ken played tennis and always loved a



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1. Ann was by Ken's side as he graduated in 1980.
2. As newlywed students, Ken and Ann lived in Carolina #4.
3. Band was an important part of Ken's life as a student.
4. Ken and Ann prioritize connecting with students.
5. Ken is excited about partnering with local civic and business leaders.
6. Always up for an adventure, Ken didn't hesitate to enjoy the recent surprise zipline provided by Outdoor Leadership.



4



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6

good pick-up game of football on Friday afternoons. Both he and Ann quickly got involved in the music program. Ken had begun playing piano at age 5, and during his sophomore year at Little Creek, he picked up the baritone horn. At Southern, he continued playing the baritone in the band, where he made many friends. He particularly enjoyed going on band trips to New England and Canada and meeting guest performers whom conductor Jack McClarty invited to perform with the band.

Ann had begun playing the piano at age 6, the marimba in fifth grade, and the organ in seventh grade. At Southern, she continued honing her skills as she took classes and accompanied voice students on piano.

"Professor Judy Glass was an exceptional teacher in organ and was extremely understanding of students' needs," Ann says. "She went extra miles to help us."

In addition to campus life, Ann and Ken found that the academic programs did not disappoint. Ann thoroughly enjoyed her nursing classes, developing a particular passion for obstetrics. Her professors were as good as her siblings had promised, and every class inspired her to do her best as a nurse.

Initially Ken signed up as an English major, and he found that he also really enjoyed religion classes such as eschatology, Daniel, and Revelation. However, after taking a course in precalculus, he knew math was his path.

One of the professors to leave a lasting impression on Ken was Ray Hefferlin. Besides his physics course on Issues in Science and Religion, which caused Ken to think deeply about current affairs, Hefferlin invited Ken to help crunch data for his research on diatomic molecules, a unique learning experience Ken still vividly remembers.

Ken fondly recalls other professors, too, and how even the courses that he did not expect to enjoy broadened his horizons.

"I dreaded taking American History," Ken says. "But Ben McArthur was the best history teacher I have ever had, inspiring me to enjoy history to this day."

Spreading Their Wings

Ken and Ann married in 1979. After graduating from Southern, Ann worked as a labor and delivery nurse while Ken went on to teach at Madison Academy, the University

of Georgia, and Florida State University (FSU). Along the way, he earned his master's degree in mathematics at Middle Tennessee State University and his doctorate in mathematics education at the University of Georgia.

"Our daughter, Kate, was born when I was in graduate school at the University of Georgia," Ken says. "I remember holding her in my lap while working on my dissertation research. Our son, Martin, came during my first full-time university job at FSU Panama City."

As a professor, Ken's goal was to always make his classes fun. He incorporated as many hands-on experiments into the classroom as possible. One time he brought his Hot Wheels cars into class and had students use a quadratic equation to estimate how far the cars would go off a jump.

Another time, he invited accident investigators to his class; they staged a mock accident, and a highway patrolman came to the classroom and said:

Memories and Well Wishes

Carroll Wheeler, '80

Little Creek Academy and Southern Classmate

Ken was one of the brightest students in our class and as fine a friend as you could hope to have, even-tempered and kind. When Ken and I roomed together during our senior year at Little Creek, we were across the hall from the piano room, and we spent many a happy time in there with Ken on piano and me on violin. Since my parents lived in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), I didn't get home often, and he would invite me to his home on breaks. We would play "Name That Tune" on trips back and forth to his home in Greeneville, Tennessee.

I am thrilled to see he has made the trip full circle back to Southern, this time as president. The university is truly blessed to have both Ken and Ann on board.

For a story about Ken's adventures visiting Rhodesia with Carroll, visit southern.edu/columns.

Bob Moore, '75

Southern Math Professor from 1979-2006

I met Ken when he enrolled in my mathematics teaching methods class at Southern. It was the first time I taught the course, so Ken and I learned from one another. I was impressed with his eagerness to become a great math teacher, and he did!

Half a dozen years later, we were classmates in the mathematics education program at the University of Georgia. Ken and I studied mathematical problem solving, and he has applied his problem-solving skills to other areas of life, such as service to his church, teaching, and administration. As a man of action, he focuses on finding solutions and applying them to solve problems—prayer and action, not just talk. I admire his Christ-centered optimism, creativity, teamwork, and feet-on-the-ground approaches to the issues of education.

May God richly bless Ken, Ann, and Southern!

Dear Dad,

What a journey. I will always remember the dedicated help you gave me with my homework and your undying patience for a kid who just wanted to know the answers. There is no doubt in my mind you have been called to this work. I know your passion for education and students runs very deep, and I pray this is readily apparent to those you serve. For all that you will be recognized for, I am so proud. However, nothing you do or accomplish will ever change who you are to me and my precious family. To the best Dad and Pops I know!

Love, **Martin**

Meet the President: Ken Shaw

When Ken Shaw isn't working, he enjoys pursuing a variety of interests, such as golfing and traveling, and has a special fondness for ham radio. This hobby began in seventh grade, when members of his local Pathfinder Club in Greeneville, Tennessee, had the opportunity to learn Morse code and get their Novice licenses. Several students, including Ken and his brothers, passed the exams and acquired small Heathkit radios. With about 75 watts of power, they began communicating with other ham operators around the United States and Canada. Ken loved having this unique way to connect with people far away, in an age before the internet.

"Sometimes my brothers and I would even use Morse code verbally so others around us didn't know what we were saying," Ken recalls.

Music has been a constant presence in Ken's life from childhood. He loves many music genres but has a special affinity for brass. In fact, while Ken lived in Nashville and worked as a teacher at Madison Academy, he and several other recent Southern graduates formed a group. They called themselves "The Nashville Sounds of Brass" and performed at churches and local events for several years.

Ken's favorite Bible verse is Isaiah 40:31 (KJV): "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." And if he had a time machine and could go back in time to any event, he would love to sit in the heavenly grandstands and observe the marvelous week of creation.



Photo: Ryan Pierce

2021 Presidential Timeline

February 28

The Southern Adventist University Board of Trustees votes unanimously for Ken Shaw to become the 27th president.

June 1

Shaw assumes the office of president.

August 9

Shaw shares his institutional goals with faculty and staff during the university's annual Colloquium meetings.

September 23

Alumni supporters host a reception introducing Shaw to area business leaders.

September 30

Shaw is formally inaugurated as Southern's new president.

October 3

Shaw shares his first presidential report with the Board of Trustees.

"There's been an accident outside. We need your math skills."

"I said, 'Well, you've come to the right place,'" Ken remembers. "These students are training to be mathematicians. They will measure those skid marks and help you estimate how fast that vehicle was going before it crashed into the tree."

While at FSU, Ken constantly looked for ways to plug the university into the surrounding community. For example, he helped launch a civil engineering

program there, and the school partnered with 13 firms that each endowed a scholarship. Senior students in the program partnered with those firms as they worked on their senior design projects, and most of the students were hired before graduating.

Ken worked as an academic dean and associate professor at FSU until 2014, when he became president of Southwestern Adventist University in Keene, Texas. Ken and Ann stayed at Southwestern for seven years, where they worked hard and were happy to watch God bless the university. The couple had just downsized and moved into a house that they had designed themselves when the opportunity arose to return to Southern.

"God has a sense of humor sometimes," Ken says. "We had just unpacked and put away everything. Then we accepted the position at Southern and moved again, uprooting twice in six months. It was a big change, but we're not worried. When God calls, He will enable and equip you."

Home Again

As Ken and Ann look back, it seems like only yesterday that they strolled Southern's promenade together as students. Years later, their children graduated from Southern as well. Today, Ken is enthusiastic to be back at Southern in his new role as university president, becoming the first Southern graduate to hold this position.

Ken has big plans for his time at Southern. For one thing, he wants to meet as many students as possible and holds monthly events at different locations on campus, where he hands out treats and visits with those passing by.

Connecting with the surrounding community is also important to Ken. In talking with local community and business leaders, he has heard glowing reports of Southern's reputation, and he hopes to help this positive impression become even better known in the greater Chattanooga area.

Additionally, he hopes to grow the school's endowment fund, strengthening the school's financial foundation and making the Southern experience available for more students. It is critical to Ken that Southern continues offering a solid Adventist education for all constituents in the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and beyond. At the same time, he would like to increase awareness that students of all denominations can receive a wonderful Christian education at Southern.

"I want to be a good neighbor and citizen in the Chattanooga area," Ken says. "Ann and I are happy to be back at our alma mater. We feel like we've come home." ■



Photo: Ryan Pierce

Meet the First Lady: Ann Shaw

Ann Shaw is a renaissance woman. She is a mother, nurse, artist, musician, and interior designer. She is as comfortable assisting in delivering a baby as she is on the stage performing in a five-grand-piano concert. While Ken was in graduate school, she learned to play the harp.

Ann loves creating new spaces and improving old ones. During their time at Southwestern Adventist University, she furnished and decorated the entire newly constructed nursing and administration building.

Painting was a passion she discovered a little later in life, but in every place that Ken has been dean or president, she has painted a landmark to hang in his office. Most recently, to commemorate his new position as president at Southern, she painted a picture of Wright Hall and the fountain on University Drive.

Wherever they work, Ann loves connecting with students and employees. She loves to bake bread to buoy the spirits of those around her and has an ambitious plan to make cookies for every student. Additionally, she is participating in a note-writing ministry, sending messages to students, alumni, and employees who are going through rough times.

"If they're sick, I want to reach out to them. If they're grieving, I want to be of some support," Ann says. "I feel like God has blessed us, and we need to bless others."



We Give Thanks

The popular phrase “It takes a village” encapsulates campus life well. Through the roller coaster of good times and challenges, students, faculty, and staff form a tight community, providing support, prayer, and encouragement to each other. As the following notes of thanks demonstrate, frequently it is seemingly small gestures that leave a lasting impression. During this time of gratitude, what are you thankful for? Visit southern.edu/columns to let us know.

To: Kathryn (Martin) McGrath, '00, associate professor of education

From: Ben Schnell, '09, web development manager

On my birthday, I received an unexpected message and a fun happy birthday song video from Kathryn. At the time, I would have said we were more acquaintances than friends, so it was extra nice of her. The pandemic was raging, and people weren't getting together, so nothing was really happening for birthdays. The gesture may seem small, but I was very encouraged and really appreciated it.

To: Janice Cosme, '15 and '18, enrollment counselor
From: Danica Antoine, current graduate student in social work

Thank you, Janice, for always being so kind in ways you could not imagine. Your caring heart has contributed greatly to my success here at Southern!

To: Pablo Fernandez, assistant professor of journalism and communication

From: Cassidy Hope Connolly, freshman journalism major

I'd really like to thank Professor Fernandez for always encouraging his students and having our backs. It's one thing to be a professor, but he is also a friend.

To: Religion Professors

From: Tina (Frist) Smith, '89, project manager for Marketing and University Relations and current graduate student in religion

More than 30 years after graduating from Southern with my bachelor's degree, I felt led to begin working on a Master of Ministry degree. The School of Religion professors and adjunct teaching staff for my graduate classes have truly been exceptional! Martin Klingbeil, DLitt; Stephen Bauer, PhD; Philip Samaan, DMin; Marla (Samaan) Nedelcu, '02, PhD; Eric Bates, '99, DMin; Jennifer Jill Schwirzer; Alan Parker, DTh; and Nicole Parker masterfully capture and hold students' attention, impart expertise and wisdom, provide practical application, and reflect the love of Jesus in each and every interaction. I'm so thankful to be learning from godly people who have impacted my spiritual life along with my academic understanding in powerful ways.

To: Unknown

From: Kimberly Bobenhausen, director of Planned Giving

When I was going through a divorce, someone anonymously slipped a card under my office door. The front read, “Courage, dear heart.” Inside, the card said that kind person was praying for me. Whoever you are, thank you!

To: Candy Dolcy, assistant professor of social work
From: Tricia (Tyson) Foster, '73, Master of Social Work program manager

Thank you, Candy, for praying for me right before I had to present for a training session. “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective” (James 5:16).

To: Dionne Felix, PhD, associate vice president for Academic Administration, and Ruth Williams, PhD, professor of education and psychology

From: Ashley Salyer, sophomore psychology major

Thank you to Dr. Felix and Dr. Williams for showing me what a strong, independent woman looks like. Both ladies have been such an inspiration to me, and I aspire to be as passionate for Christ as they both are!

To: Ben Schnell, '09, web development manager

From: Jenifer (Jones) Anderson, '87, nursing faculty support secretary

I want to thank Ben for his patience and professionalism in working with me to update and maintain the School of Nursing's website! I started this job with so much to learn, and he's been there for me every step of the way. Each of my questions, no matter how trivial, have been met with a prompt, patient, and kind response. He has gone above and beyond to help us get information posted in a timely manner. It is truly a pleasure to work with Ben!

To: Cindy (Secrist) Rima, '87 and '18, DNP, professor of nursing

From: Kellie (Walker) Azor, '92, current graduate student in nursing

I had a family emergency and had to leave in the middle of Professor Rima's class. I was quite upset and stressed. She was very understanding and told me to go take care of the situation, and that we would figure out making up the class material later. She prayed with me as I left and said she would ask the class to pray, as well. She was so kind and caring, and it made such a huge difference for me.

To: Southern's Students and Employees
From: Eliana H., high school student

I was visiting the campus for a college tour, and everyone I met either prayed with me or asked for something they could pray about, and it really made me feel so, so loved by everyone.

To: Unknown
From: Dana McGrew, freshman medical lab science major

To the girl who held the door open for me when I was still five feet away, thank you. You made me feel special.

To: Our Supporters
From: Stephen Ruf, associate professor of journalism and communication

Here's a BIG thank you to all the students, faculty, alumni, and friends of the university who financially contributed to our School of Journalism and Communication Giving Day project. Your generosity helped us shatter our fundraising goal and build a new television news set in Brock Hall. Our communication majors can't wait to sit at the anchor desk, which looks like the real thing. It's so much more than just lights in a box; this tool helps us enlighten our campus community with stories that inspire and inform.

To: David Hartman, '82, DMin, professor of religion
From: Joseph Htoo, freshman theology major

Thank you, Dr. Hartman, for helping me, especially during my first few weeks of the semester. You are such a good advisor and professor to all of us!

To: Alex O'Connor, junior computer science major
From: Hannah Wailgum, sophomore liberal arts education major

I want to thank my boyfriend, because he has given me the opportunity to know what happiness really feels like. He also has helped me build a better relationship with Christ, and I love and appreciate him for that, because it is something I struggle with.

Student Center(ed)

Photo: Ryan Pierce

BIETZ CENTER FOR STUDENT LIFE

After more than two years of construction, the Bietz Center for Student Life opened to great fanfare this fall. Southern's newest facility—three floors encompassing more than 42,000 square feet—earned immediate accolades from smiling students, affirming the immense amount of prayer, planning, and philanthropy committed to its creation. Here are just a few highlights from the building. Visit southern.edu/columns for an expanded list of Bietz Center features. by Lucas Patterson, associate director of strategic partnerships

FIRST FLOOR

Farrow Family Lodge

The Bietz Center for Student Life has been dubbed the “campus living room” for good reason. It incorporates multiple comfortable seating areas, including the Farrow Family Lodge. Gabby Razzouk, sophomore biology major, swings by every weekday to relax there with a small group of friends.

“I could easily go to my dorm room, but I’m glad there’s more than one place on campus where I can go to unwind,” Razzouk said. “Plus, the big fireplace here reminds me of being back at home with my family in California.”

The stone fireplace, complete with heat-free flames and crackling sounds, is only one reason students return to this space. Planners created the room to be intentionally low-tech, with no TV monitors on the walls, and the floor-to-ceiling windows provide 180-degree views of Southern’s beautiful campus. Every detail points to a slower pace. In fact, the oversized sofas and chairs, specifically selected for the Bietz Center by students as part of an extensive user-centric design process, not only allow for the occasional nap, but they invite it.

The Portal: Digital Game Room

The Bietz Center puts a premium on fun, as evidenced by the inclusion of two game rooms on the first floor and additional games in the lobby. The Portal is a digital game room with multiple options, but one truly unique feature is the only augmented climbing wall of its kind in the country. The 9x13-foot ValoClimb unit features a projector that casts different climbing routes and activities onto fixed holds, offering a variety of gaming experiences for individuals and groups. A 12-inch-thick pad at the wall’s base protects students from injury in the event of an earlier-than-planned descent. During the first week of school, the system recorded more than 1,500 games completed by students!

“I think it’s important that we stay active,” said Katelyn Kelch, a freshman physical therapist assistant major who stops by The Portal several times each week. “This climbing wall provides a quick and fun full-body workout.”



Photo: Ryan Pierce



Photo: Justin Serban



Photo: Ryan Pierce



Photo: Ryan Pierce



Photo: Calvin Spason



Photo: Calvin Spason



Photo: Ryan Pierce

Jimenez Family Hangout

For students interested in a more low-key indoor/outdoor experience, the Jimenez Family Hangout offers a backyard atmosphere amid the busy Bietz Center lobby. Clear pod seating is suspended by chains from heavy wooden beams similar to those in a pergola. Strings of crisscrossed patio lights shine from above in this alcove, positioned right beside a large bay of windows.

“I was shocked at all of the awesome things they were able to do with the Bietz Center,” said Hannah Hagan, freshman health science major. “I especially like the Hangout because of the pods’ versatility. I can either curl up inside them and escape after a hectic day, or I can lean forward and chat with my friends. Sometimes I even take my shoes off while in the seats and stretch my legs out just to touch the grass below.”

Grass? Almost correct! Covering the floor beneath these swinging pods is an artificial turf with long, synthetic blades of greenery. An added bonus, especially for students who work at Landscape Services, is that this grass doesn’t need mowing—unlike so much of Southern’s verdant 1,300-acre campus!

SECOND FLOOR

CK2

Friends and food are often linked when alumni recount their favorite Southern memories, making it imperative that the Bietz Center—designed to be the hub of student activity—would have its own eatery. Located on the second floor, CK2 (short for Campus Kitchen II) includes menu items and photographs that pay homage to the original Campus Kitchen, an iconic Fleming Plaza eatery no longer in operation. A team of 70 student workers keep the food flowing at CK2, which is open until 10 p.m. on weeknights, providing fuel for late-night study sessions. What’s the most popular CK2 menu item?

“Everybody loves our French fries,” said senior psychology major Barry Horne, a supervisor at CK2. “But I’ll take a

quesadilla or cream cheese pretzel over that any day!”

After customers grab their orders, they can go anywhere in the building to enjoy the food; no public space is off limits. Horne prefers heading outdoors for his meal breaks, frequently visiting the large Bietz Center patio that extends nearly all the way to McKee Library. The tables with large umbrellas offer a peaceful and scenic change of pace before he needs to head back inside. After all, the Lomino Sandwiches and Bietz Burritos aren’t going to make themselves.

McKinney Family Slide

When Bietz Center architects and administrators were in the early stages of planning for the building, they routinely utilized student focus groups to ensure the new facility would be user-friendly. When presented with the option of a slide, the students’ sentiment quickly became clear: they wanted the slide.

In fact, students need this kind of fun. The combination of rigorous academics, work, and relationships (to say nothing of a pandemic, social unrest, or political turmoil) creates moments of stress for even the most well-balanced student. Addressing this was a key concern for the alumni family who helped fund the slide, and they specifically requested “Experience Joy” signage be placed above the slide’s entrance.

Mission accomplished. Leroy Cox, junior health services and senior living administration major, works in the Bietz Center and has a close-up view of how students interact with this unusual addition to a college campus.

“I see students using the slide all the time, most frequently as a group of friends,” Cox said. “They always come out at the bottom with a big laugh and a big smile, because what may seem simple at first glance definitely isn’t when you get inside. The speed and twists and turns are amazing!”

Cox said the excitement of the slide doesn’t diminish after the initial rush; he goes down it at least once every week.

THIRD FLOOR

Jack Blanco Chapel

The Bietz Center’s third level hosts a quieter, but no less critical, collection of activities than the spaces below. Offices for Counseling Services, Life Calling and Career Services, and First Year Experience represent just some of the transformative work taking place on the top floor. Centered among these departments is the Blanco Chapel. The special space was named by a collection of alumni donors to honor Jack Blanco, PhD, for the many ways this retired dean of the School of Religion demonstrated his love for God and students. They appreciated him not only as a thought-provoking professor but also a well-known writer and a philanthropist who has given sacrificially toward Southern scholarships.

During early conversations about the chapel, Becky Djernes, Southern’s interior designer, asked Blanco: “If you had only four verses to share the gospel with someone, what would they be?” His answers (Jeremiah 29:11, John 3:16-17, John 14:1-3, and Revelation 22:1-3) are printed in their entirety on large panels. Additionally, the backlit panels showcase copies of Blanco’s hand written Bible study notes that eventually became *The Clear Word* paraphrase.

Study Rooms

Arantxa Coa, sophomore nursing major, began the fall semester by forming new study habits in the Bietz Center. She’s not alone. The building’s three study rooms are often booked days in advance as students make good use of the central location, technology (laptops can connect wirelessly to wall-mounted monitors), and of course, proximity to food.

“These rooms were a great idea,” Coa said. “I appreciate their design, placement, and practicality.”

Additionally, the study rooms function as a gallery of sorts. Approximately 50 trees were removed to make way for the Bietz Center, but the university repurposed many of them within the new building, including as table tops for the study rooms. They also can be seen in wooden accents such as wall paneling on all three floors and treads on the grand staircase.

The attention to detail demonstrated in this small act of resource management testifies to a greater guiding principle behind the entire Bietz Center’s construction process. The university has been blessed—with students, employees, finances—and takes to heart its responsibility for stewarding gifts well to ensure that future generations will enjoy the fullness of our shared Southern experience. ■

Bringing the Bietz Center to Life

It’s clear how much fun students are having in the new building. Additionally, behind the scenes, a talented group of Southern employees and a loyal community of Southern donors beamed with pride as this labor of love—nearly 10 years in the making—opened its doors.

Before construction could begin, Southern needed to raise funds for this ambitious \$14 million project. As part of the Campaign for Excellence in Faith and Learning—a \$54 million effort, considerably larger than anything previously undertaken at Southern—

the university made sure all constituents were invited to join in this critical work. By the time the Bietz Center opened, more than 600 individuals had contributed to its construction. In response, Southern built a Wall of Gratitude on the second floor, which highlights the names of those who responded to the call for action.

“Alumni and friends of Southern have come together to generously support the university in an enduring and tangible way,” said Ellen Hostetter, vice president for Advancement. “The fruits of their gifts will impact student lives for eternity.”

The total price tag for the Bietz Center could easily have been higher. Marty Hamilton, associate vice president for Financial Administration, oversaw the entire project. He estimates that Southern saved 20% in construction costs by buying its own materials and using its own employee experts for much of the project work. Key members of Southern’s internal team included: Fred Turner, lead architect; Becky Djernes and Annette Ronaszegi, interior designers; Bill Cruttenden, construction director; and Dan Ford, project superintendent.



COLUMNS magazine played a key role in bringing Associate Professor Nina Nelson to Southern.

A Passion to Serve

by Madison Reinschmidt, junior mass communication major

Growing up in Jamaica, Nina Nelson, PhD, associate professor in the School of Social Work, always knew that she wanted to serve others. In college, she tried several majors, but none felt like the right fit until she landed on social work and discovered a passion for helping families and communities in the field.

After completing her master's degree at the University of the West Indies and gaining experience in family court in Jamaica, Nelson began teaching at Northern Caribbean University.

"I never thought I would end up in teaching, but I have valued teachers in my life who took an interest and cared for their students," Nelson said. "What I've enjoyed most about being a teacher are the opportunities to connect with students and hear what's going on in their lives."

Nelson eventually moved to the United States and earned her doctorate at the University of South Carolina. Through the years, she has had many opportunities to make an impact, often combining her passion for children with her knowledge of social work.

"My mission is to use my gifts, talents, resources, and education to serve," Nelson said. "My prayer is that people see in me that there is a caring, loving God, and that despite the hardships of this world, we can still experience love, joy, and growth. We can have the best life possible while we are here, but something better is coming."

Called Through COLUMNS

Several years ago, Nelson decided that she wanted to return to Jamaica to continue working at the Adventist university, but God had other plans. She could never get her application and a position vacancy at the university to sync. Instead, God used COLUMNS magazine to inspire her next step.

"What particularly impressed me about Southern as I read COLUMNS was the

community of students, faculty, and alumni serving others," Nelson said. "The magazine drew me in to see how people, as professionals and students, were using their gifts to make a difference. It appealed to me to be a part of a community that was serving others through education."

After realizing that Southern's environment and community could be the perfect fit, Nelson began searching for job advertisements at Southern in *Southern Tidings* magazine and was hired as a social work professor in June 2016.

"My experiences with Dr. Nelson have been overwhelmingly positive," said Meg Jarman, a Master of Social Work student. "She is very sensitive to students' feelings and attentive to their individual needs. While she is brilliant in so many ways, she is also humble, patient, and kind as she encourages her students to grow in their knowledge."

Jesus in Loving Action

Since joining the School of Social Work faculty, Nelson has actively nurtured that spirit of service, encouraging others to serve through internships, Southern's food pantry, and other community outreach activities. She believes that by taking a Christ-centered approach to teaching, students will grow as spiritual individuals who have a passion to serve.

"Dr. Nelson's classes stood out to me, because she applied the content to daily life and made the classes engaging," said Samir Khalil, an MSW candidate. "She taught me that no matter how educated you may be, you can always be willing to learn from those around you; she was willing to learn from us, even though her role was to teach us."

Nelson is inspired by the strength of her students as they face adversities and appreciates the mutual friendships she has formed as a professor in the School of Social Work.

"I value the opportunities for personal connections with students; at Southern, we can have a mutual experience of praying and investing in each other's lives, which is priceless," Nelson said. "Social work is Jesus in loving action. Being able to use my profession to show unconditional love and service to people, no matter their backgrounds or differences, is a wonderful thing to experience." ■

Celebrating His Blessings

HOMECOMING WEEKEND 2021

The Southern family came together in person and virtually for Homecoming Weekend October 28-31. Although different from previous Homecomings, when Southern welcomed more than 1,000 alumni and guests back to campus each fall, the university's doors still opened wide with hospitality to provide space for reminiscing and reconnection.

520 alumni attended in person and nearly 100 participated virtually. Through live streaming and video conferencing, alumni from all over the country and the world were able to take part in class reunions, worship services, presentations, departmental open houses, and a concert performed by Deep 6, an alumni lower brass ensemble. During a special dinner hosted on Thursday evening, six alumni received awards.

The Alumni Golf Tournament hosted 115 golfers on Sunday morning, with proceeds going to the Dave Cress Memorial Endowed Scholarship fund, which has provided students with yearly tuition assistance since 2005.

To view more photos from Homecoming, visit southern.edu/columns.

1. On Thursday evening, President Ken Shaw, '80, EdD, greets guests at the Alumni Awards Dinner.
2. Anthony WagenerSmith, '03, shares God's Word with students and alumni during Friday night vespers.
3. Alumni Council member Raymond Liu, '13 and '16, visits with Chris Hansen, '89, director of Institutional Research and Planning at Southern.
4. Southern Lady of the Year Award recipient, Holly (Jones) Greer, '92 and '17, chats with Linda (Haynes) Marlowe, '97.
5. During the Friday night BCU Reunion Vespers, Ndala (Gooding) Booker, '91, speaks on critical thinking and race.
6. Bryan Lopes, '84 and '92; Sam Nkana, assistant professor in the School of Journalism and Communications; Tim Davis, attended; and Mark McKenzie, '91 and '94, enjoy a round of golf on Sunday.



Alumni Notes

'60s David, '64, and Judy (Edwards) Osborne, '64, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary a few years ago. After 48 years of active pastoral ministry and academic administration, Dave retired and has been serving as an interim pastor for eight churches in Northern California. Judy has also retired from her job as a professional interior designer; previously she had taught classes in design and family and consumer science at four Adventist colleges and universities over more than 30 years. They live in Lincoln, California, and anticipate the birth of their first grandchild to their son, Dave, and his wife, Sara.

'80s Nancy (Meyer) Schafner, '80, served as a student missionary from Southern to Beirut, Lebanon. She recently authored a book titled *Cross the Waves and Climb the Steeps: The Meyer Family Missionary Adventures*, which combines her student missionary experiences with the experiences of family members who also served overseas.

2 Rebecca (Burks) Heinrich, '86 and '87, has 21 years of experience teaching in the Seventh-day Adventist school system. For six years she has taught at Chinle Adventist Elementary School, a mission school on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona. Rebecca delights in serving Native American families, introducing Bible stories and principles of healthy living, in addition to typical academic studies.

3 Chris Lang, '89, graduated with a double major in management and accounting and later earned an MBA from Rollins College in Orlando, Florida. He also earned a CPA and worked for many years in corporate settings. In 2009, he launched Lifestreams Media, a film

production ministry, to deliver true stories that inspire hope. Several of his films have won awards, including the recent release *Charmed by Darkness: the Life and Legacy of Roger Morneau*. Chris relocated the ministry to Chattanooga in 2020.

'00s Chad, '02, and Christina (Holm) Stuart, '99, '02, and '03, live in Ashton, Maryland, with their three sons: Dayton (13), Landon (11), and Levi (9). Chad serves as a pastor.

Sandy (Shaik) Thornton, '03 and '05, lives in Colteawah, Tennessee, with her husband, Greg, and their three children: Lincoln (9), Annelise (7), and Adeline (5).

4 Adam, '05, and Jessie (Brodie) Brown, '04, '05, and '11, live in Dayton, Ohio, with their two wonderful and wild boys: Callan (8) and Henry (5). Adam is the dean of student success at Kettering College, and Jessie works in Dayton as a nurse practitioner in plastic surgery.

5 Laura (Rector), '06, and Russell Aggabao (attended) met at Southern while both worked in the Dining Hall; they were married in 2004. Laura finished her master's degree in social work at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and became a licensed clinical social worker. Russell is currently a firefighter and has served in the Air National Guard for more than 13 years. They live with their three children in Mount Pleasant, North Carolina.

Rachel Brupbacher (attended) went on to earn a bachelor's degree in French, German, and history in 2011. Subsequently, she was admitted to postgraduate studies at the University of Oxford. She recently published her first book, *Miles Minor Kellogg and the Encinitas Boathouses*, released by The History Press on June 7.

6 Hifsy Alcudia-Cook, '10, lives in Jackson, Missouri, with her husband, Garrett, and their two sons: Lucas (4) and Ezra (2). Hifsy is a mission-oriented stay-at-home mom. She is enjoying this new chapter of her life.

Juan and Vanessa (Ruiz) Martinez, '11, live in Apopka, Florida, with their two daughters: Adeline (4) and Ila (1).

7 Dustin, '14, and Olivia (Nieb) Gold, '12, met during their junior year of high school while attending a music clinic hosted on Southern's campus. The couple married in December 2013 and live in Altamonte Springs, Florida, with their two boys, a cow, two sheep, 10 chickens, two ducks, two dogs, and two cats.

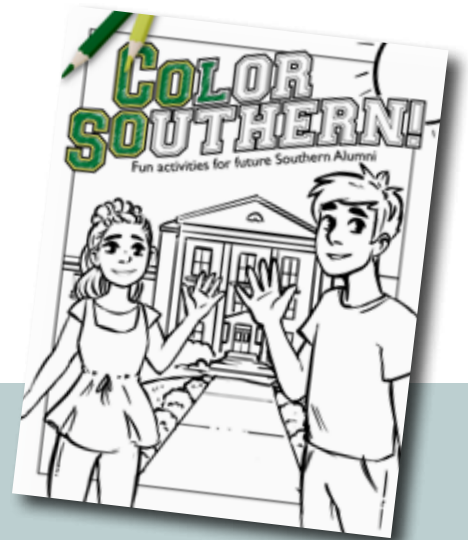
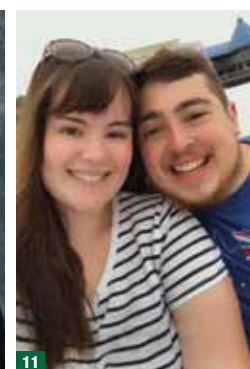
8 Megan Gray, '12 and '16, lives in Ringgold, Georgia, with her two sons: Aiden (10) and Declan (6).

9 Amanda (Barton) Kolibu, '15, and her husband, David, live in Castle Rock, Colorado, with their two children: Raleigh (4) and Harvey (3).

Mario Reategui, '17, and his wife, Milagros, live in Morenci, Michigan, with their two children: Michaella (11) and Matteo (9). Mario is a pastor.

10 Megan Simpson, '17, lives in Bennett, Colorado, and teaches English, literature, and creative writing at Bennett High School.

11 Daniel, '21, and Samantha (White) Venegas (attended) are excited to watch God lead, teach, and heal. Daniel is a pastor serving three churches in the Mountain View Conference in West Virginia. Samantha is finishing a bachelor's degree in secondary education online through Andrews University and her master's in marriage and family counseling. They have a small black cat named Ash.



Friends for Life Reunite

Recently Charles Lindsey, '67, (left) and Bob Heck (attended) rode their motorcycles to visit members of Southern's unofficial 1960s fraternity "Amici." Between 1965-1967, rooms above the old Collegedale Academy building became home to approximately 18 male Southern students, with the approval of the dean of men, K.R. Davis. "Amici" is the plural of "Amicus," a Latin term meaning "friend," so the young men dubbed their lodging "Amici Hall" or "Friends Hall." The bonds of friendship that developed during that time have lasted more than 50 years, and the group stays in touch on a regular basis through

texting, often praying for one another through life's ups and downs.

During this mini-reunion, Lindsey and Heck traveled from Knoxville and Arizona (respectively) to reunite with friends in Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida, including former "Amici" residents and their spouses Lynn, '67, and Paula (Rabucha) Elkins (attended); Frank Palmour, '66; Phil, '66, and Judy (Woodruff) Wilson, '66; Walt, '68, and Carol (Neidigh) Williams, '67; and Lewis, '68, and Anne (Cronmiller) Hendershot (attended). They also visited Wayne, '65, and Martha (Woodruff) Benson, '66; Bill, '66, and Janet (McKee) Wood, '67; and Jim Herman, '67.

Future Southern Alumni Program Expands

Since launching the Future Southern Alumni program in February 2019, more than 125 alumni families have enrolled their children. Through this complimentary program, Alumni Relations hopes to excite children of alumni about their possible future at the university with a series of age-appropriate birthday gifts from the time of enrollment until age 17. The program was recently expanded with several new gift additions, including a Southern-themed activity book with illustrations by Rebecca Johnson, '13.

"Southern is proud of the bond that ties together past, present, and future generations of alumni," said Evonne (Kutznor) Crook, '79, director of

Alumni Relations. "It is exciting to celebrate meaningful milestones with our alumni families, and we look forward to their children continuing this legacy as Southern students in the years ahead."

If you or your spouse attended or graduated from Southern, visit southern.edu/future-alumni to enroll your child(ren). For more information, contact Alumni Relations at alumni@southern.edu.



Weddings



1 Adam, '18, and **Vashti (Daly) Foggie**, '15, were married on July 12, 2020, in Winter Park, Florida. The couple lives in Altamonte Springs.

2 Brant, '19, and **Jessica (Mattox) Burns**, '19, were married on June 21, 2020, in Ooltewah, Tennessee. The couple currently lives in Collegedale. Brant is a nurse at Erlanger East Emergency Room, and Jessica works at Hidden Hills Farm and as the Acro gymnastics coach for Collegedale Academy. They look forward to moving to a small farm in Kentucky, near where Jessica grew up.

3 Devin, '19, and **Natalie (Boonstra) Lilly**, '21, were married on May 8, 2021. The couple lives in Pennsylvania, where Natalie is a communication intern at the Pennsylvania Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and Devin is studying seminary courses online, sponsored by the Carolina Conference.

4 Jacob, '19, and **Sarah (Wolfe) Martin**, '19, were married on June 28, 2021, in Wisconsin. Jacob plans to graduate with his Doctorate of Medicine in Dentistry from the University of Alabama School of Dentistry in 2024. Sarah continues to add to her experience as a high school biology, chemistry, physical science, and forensics teacher.

5 Grant, '21, and **Cheyenne (Cookenmaster) Hagen** (attended) were married on May 20, 2020, in Cartersville, Georgia. After graduation, the couple moved to Oregon, where Grant accepted a teaching job in the conference. They are expecting a baby girl this fall.



Family Additions



1 Justo, '06, and **Marcella (Colburn) Morales**, '04, welcomed their son, Elias, on August 28, 2020.

2 Benjamin Garver, '08, graduated from Loma Linda University School of Dentistry with his doctorate in dental surgery in June 2021. He and his wife, Crystal, live in Loma Linda with their three daughters: Lilianna (7), Audrey (4), and Catherine (2). They are expecting their fourth child in March 2022.

3 Moise Ratsarasaotra, '12, and his wife, Amy, welcomed their sons Mikael on July 7, 2017, and William on March 24, 2020. The family lives in Kalamazoo, Michigan, where Moise serves as a pastor.

4 Nathan, '12, and **Rebecca (Gates) Lewis**, '12 and '14, welcomed their son, Micah, on January 18, 2021. The family lives in Apison, Tennessee.

Donald Sparks, '13, and his wife, **Angi**, welcomed their daughter, Penny, on March 1, 2021. The family lives in Shelby Township, Michigan.

5 Matthew and Maria (Kim) Chang, '17, welcomed their son, Atticus, on March 31, 2021. The family lives in Loma Linda, California, where Matthew graduated from the Loma Linda University School of Medicine in May 2021.



Remembrance

All memorial gifts may be mailed to Southern Adventist University, Advancement, P.O. Box 370, Collegedale, Tennessee 37315, or shared online at southern.edu/give.

1 Dorothy (Parker) Keppler, '51, passed away on May 13, 2021, in Fairview, North Carolina, at the age of 91. Dorothy grew up in Florida, and while attending Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University), she met **C. Burton "Burt" Keppler**, '53, whom she married in 1950. The couple both graduated from Florida Sanitarium and Hospital School of Nursing (now AdventHealth University School of Nursing). Dorothy and Burt and their daughters, Brenda and Susan, moved to Bolivia in 1955, where they worked as medical missionaries for several years. While there, Dorothy often served in physician roles when nobody else was available. Back in the United States, she worked in Michigan as an obstetrics nurse and then Loma Linda, California, as an operating room nurse, where she participated in pioneering cardiac surgeries. In 1965, after Burt received his doctorate in medicine, the family settled in Greenville, South Carolina. There, Burt opened a medical practice in which Dorothy served as administrator, accountant, nurse, and receptionist. They welcomed a third daughter, Karen, and later a son, Benjamin, and in 1974 the family moved to Birmingham, Alabama, where Burt completed an anesthesiology residency. Two years later, the family settled on a farm in Kingsport, Tennessee, and Dorothy was free to devote her full attention to her true passion: being a mother and later a grandmother. In 1984, Dorothy and Burt moved to the mountains of western North Carolina, where Dorothy devoted more of her time and energy to her grandchildren, gardening, sewing, quilting, and her church. As lifelong Seventh-day Adventists, Dorothy and Burt served on multiple short-term medical mission trips around the world. In 2008, shortly after losing her husband of 54 years, Dorothy suffered a massive stroke. Despite needing constant care, she continued to maintain her cheerful and caring disposition until her death. Dorothy was predeceased by her brother **Roland**, '53, and sister Marjorie. She is survived by her four children, 10 grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

2 Ruth (Jennings) Zoerb, '65, was born on February 20, 1921, and passed away in Walla Walla, Washington, on March 28, 2021, after serving the Lord with all her heart for 100 years. Musician, fashion designer, artist, art and lifestyle teacher, she was the first of seven children and cooked in people's homes to earn her academy tuition. She played the trumpet in her large musical family, later specializing in piano and organ. She volunteered as a draftsman during World War II, and her drawings contributed to a container that carried part of the atomic bomb to Japan. At Washington Missionary College (now Washington Adventist University), Ruth earned her way by working in the college print shop. She met and married Everett Zoerb, a love that lasted beyond his death in 1999. Taught by her mother to make her own clothes, Ruth took a course from the Chicago School of Fashion Design and then designed and sewed everything she wore. In the 1960s, the Zoerb family moved to Collegedale, where Everett worked at the College Press until he retired. Ruth earned a degree in home economics from Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University) and taught flat pattern making while still a student. Upon graduation, the college hired her to teach drawing, painting, sculpture, and ceramics. To her many private art students, she always asked questions, teaching them to think. When one frustrated student accused, "But you always answer a question with a question!" she replied, "Oh, do I?" Ruth was unfailingly committed to caring for the people she believed God put into her life: her family and students. Passionate about her faith, Ruth read the Bible daily and memorized many chapters, in addition to studying the works of Ellen G. White and the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. She is survived by her sister Alethea "Peachie" Appleyard; many nieces and nephews; and the student who adopted her in 1967, **Lin Ennis**, '79.

3 Helen (Dean) Knittel Ruf (attended), a former Southern employee, passed away on March 31, 2021, at the age of 92 after a short battle with cancer. Born in Plainview, Texas, she attended Ozark Academy in Arkansas. After attending Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University) and Madison College, she received her associate degree from Union College in 1953 and later earned a bachelor's degree in secretarial science at Andrews University. One of her first jobs was working in the treasurer's office for the Iowa Conference, before accepting a position in the Colorado Conference office. Helen met Frank Knittel, a doctoral student at the University of Colorado, and in 1956, the couple married. Over the years, they served together at several Adventist universities. At Andrews University, while Frank served as dean of students, Helen earned a master's degree in education and taught business classes. Their children, Jeff and Sherry, joined the family in Berrien Springs as well. Helen loved entertaining friends, gardening, reading, music, and animals. In 1967, the family moved to Collegedale, Tennessee, where Frank served as academic dean and later president of Southern. Helen was always active, holding teaching positions in the business and English departments, managing the Adventist Book Center, and graciously hosting many faculty events. In 1983, they moved to California, where Helen worked in academic administration at Loma Linda University, as registrar at La Sierra Academy, and as a professor at La Sierra and Loma Linda universities. In 2013 Helen and Frank moved back to Tennessee to be closer to their adult children. Two years later, Frank passed away. In 2016, Helen married **Roland Ruf**, a retired minister. Helen is survived by her husband, **Roland**; son **Jeff Knittel** (attended); daughter **Sherry Campbell** (attended); and her sisters **Dorothy Moon** and **Cheryl Carpenter**. Extended family mourning this loss include: **Roland Ruf Jr.** (attended); **Warren Ruf**, '74; **Stephen Ruf** (attended); **Joseph Drew**, '05; **Jessica Barrera**; **Jacob McNeal-Drew**; **Andrew Knittel**, '10 and '13; **Rachel Carithers**, '10; **Adam Ruf**, '04; **Becca Donaldson**, '07; **Sarah Ruf**, '13; **Amanda Ruf**, '17; six great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.



We'd love to hear from you, and so would your classmates! Send updates about additions to your family, accomplishments, marriage, professional recognitions, or other news you'd like to share to:

alumni@southern.edu
Alumni Relations • P.O. Box 370
Collegedale, TN 37315-0370
southern.edu/alumni/updates

Connecting Through Music

by Stefanie Green, junior public relations major

Pastor, musician, and worship leader Cristian Sorto, '21, has been writing and producing music since high school. He has completed three albums in Spanish and is working on a fourth that will be in English.

"The writing process never stops," Sorto said. "I'm always writing something new."

No matter how busy he might be, he finds time for writing music. Not only does he enjoy watching the projects come together, but ultimately, he loves to see the impact the songs have on people. Receiving feedback about how specific songs have touched listeners spurs him on to continue creating. Music has also become a bridge to connect with people from other countries who listen to his music.

"Music can reach people wherever they might be," Sorto said, "and whatever they might be feeling."

More Than a Hobby

Music has always been part of Sorto's life. As a child, his parents encouraged him and his brother to be involved in church through special music. In high school, he enjoyed participating in choir and praise teams.

"As the years went by, I developed a passion for music," he said. "It became more than just a hobby for me."

As a theology student at Southern, most of his weekends were spent either traveling with Engage Worship—university sponsored, student-led teams that provide worship programming for churches and schools across the country—or leading worship services on campus.

Now, after graduating this May, Sorto serves as pastor to a four-church district in the Wisconsin Conference.

He feels that his time at Southern set the tone for his ministry post-graduation; music is his special way of connecting with a congregation. Being impacted by music in his own life, Sorto knows what a powerful tool it can be in reaching people for Christ, and he likes to end every sermon by leading out in music and offering an appeal.

"I love seeing how I can combine music with my preaching," he said. "If my sermon didn't get to them, maybe a song can."

Eternal Impact

Sorto created deep, lasting friendships while at Southern. That included meeting his wife, Genesis (Rivas), '21, who graduated with her bachelor's degree in psychology this spring. They were married in June, and Sorto sees Genesis as an integral part of his ministry.

"Genesis is kind and approachable," he said. "People feel comfortable around her; she draws them in."

As Sorto looks back, he is grateful for the role Southern played in his journey to becoming a pastor and pursuing his passions—through professors and mentors on campus who encouraged him, as well as through career opportunities.

One of the professors who left a meaningful impression on Sorto was David Hartman, '82, DMin,

in the School of Religion. As it turns out, the feeling is mutual.

"Whatever Cristian does, whether participating in class, preaching, or leading worship, he's always passionate!" Hartman said, "I really appreciate that about Cristian, and I believe he is going to influence thousands in his ongoing ministry."

To learn more about Cristian Sorto and to hear his music, visit cristiansorto.com.

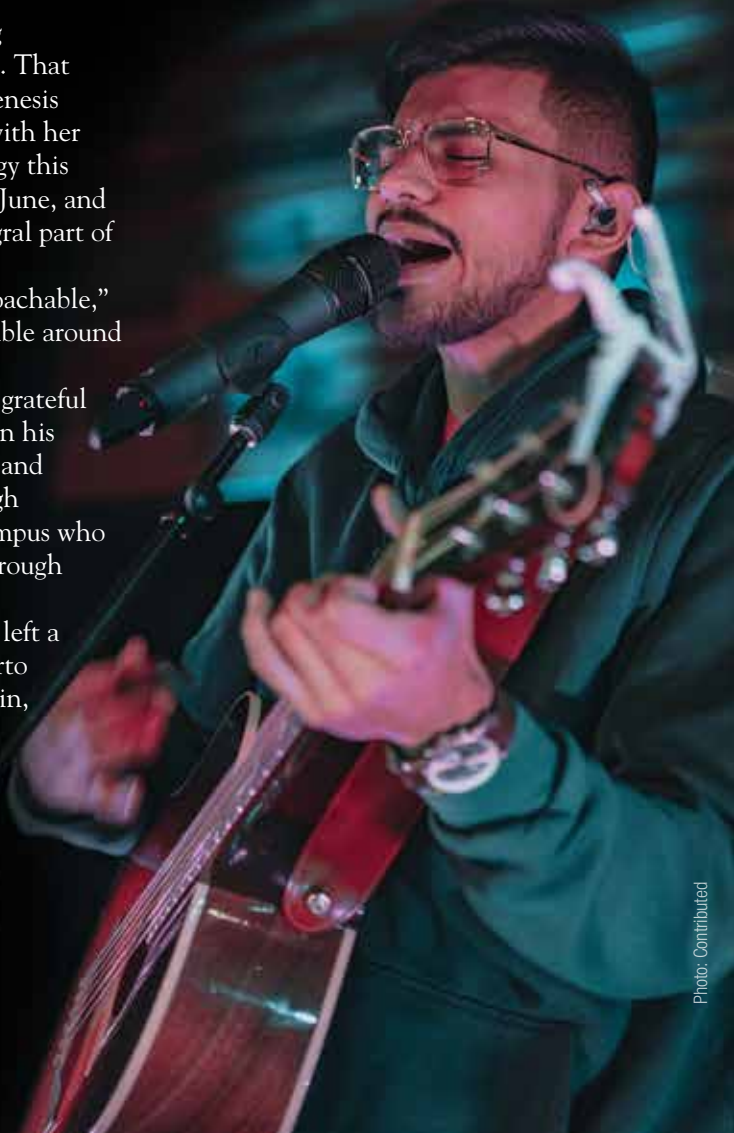


Photo: Contributed



Photo: Ryan Pierce

Tipping Point

Mini-golf, life-sized foosball, and giant Jenga were just a few of the ways freshmen, such as Dana McGrew, a medical laboratory science major, connected during the SmartStart block party. Each year, many incoming freshmen take advantage of this free summer session to get a head start with college credits while making friends. With 571 freshmen this fall, it is the largest new class in 10 years.



Your gift matters to Carlos.

Name: Carlos Torres

Majors: Marketing and Psychology

Year: Freshman

Hometown: Piscataway, New Jersey

Career Plans?

I want to pursue an MBA and help companies deliver high-quality messaging to their prospects and consumers.

Why did you choose Southern Adventist University?

When I was 7 years old, I visited Southern for the first time. Something about the campus drew me in, and since then, it has been my dream to study here. During high school, I kept the dream alive through the experiences of friends who attended Southern.

How are you funding your education?

I have been blessed to receive several scholarships; that's how I am able to study at Southern. My parents also contribute, and I work several jobs on campus to fill in the gap.

What do you enjoy most about Southern?

I enjoy the opportunities to grow, learn, and connect with other students who have different backgrounds.

Why is Southern special to you?

Through the years, I've been drawn to Southern in various ways. Now that I'm here, I'm experiencing what I had only dreamt about: the classes, the intramurals, the worship, the friends. I know that God wants me to be here.

Gifts of any size can have an impact on the lives of Southern students such as Carlos. To give, scan above or visit southern.edu/give.