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May 2020 QuickNotes

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May 2020 QuickNotes

Campus Life

ON-CAMPUS CLASSES SCHEDULED TO RESUME FOR FALL SEMESTER

Underclassmen dealing with academic, emotional, and financial disruption resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic recently received some good news. In a May 4 email, President David Smith, PhD, announced that classrooms will reopen in August as the Fall 2020 semester begins.

Dear Students,

We miss you! Which is why I am so happy to announce that we will have classes open on campus for the Fall 2020 semester. Your safety will remain a top priority while we stay fully dedicated to providing you with a quality, Christ-centered education in an Adventist environment.

We will continue to offer courses online through the summer, and we have formed a special task force to explore and evaluate what the new semester will look like, including any special precautions that will be necessary to maintain everyone's safety. We will share more details in the coming weeks.

I am proud of each of you for completing this unusual semester. Now more than ever, we recognize the necessity of preparing the next generation of leaders and thinkers. God has a plan for each of you, and Southern is here to help you reach your full potential. We will continue to keep you in prayer and eagerly anticipate your return to campus this fall!

New student orientation begins August 18 and classes begin August 24. In related news, Commencement exercises for Spring and Summer 2020 graduates will be held August 9 in Iles P.E. Center, and Southern's donor-supported _____ is now _____.

-Staff Report

STUDENTS OVERSEE NEW \$500,000 INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO

The Student Managed Asset Risk and Return Training (SMARRT) Fund offers hands-on experience for those seeking to learn investment analysis principles under the supervision of faculty and staff. This new collaboration between Southern's Financial Administration office and

the _____ provides \$500,000—1% of the university’s total endowment—for students to manage.

According to finance professor and SMARRT Fund adviser Dennis F. Steele Jr., ’95, PhD, five students were selected to begin managing funds in October 2019. Part of the group’s initial education involved learning more about the faith-based components of Southern’s investment policy, a socially-responsible approach that seeks to avoid funds connected with alcohol, tobacco, gambling, and defense stocks, among others.



Their first team decision, placing \$50,000 in an exchange traded fund that mimics the S&P 500, has already shown evidence of initial gains. The SMARRT Fund requires a 4.5% minimum target return to meet the university’s endowment commitments. Any additional return is used to grow the student-managed portfolio.

“The emphasis is on training,” said finance professor Braam Oberholster, DBA, another adviser for the fund. “Students need to learn how to actually analyze the market. And we want to bring in majors from different disciplines across campus because we need that diversity of insight. We need to recognize that business is something that touches every dimension in our lives.”

Additional training is available through access to the Bloomberg Terminal, a market analytics database, where students can take a course and earn Bloomberg Certification. SMARRT Fund team members do not receive academic credit for their work, but Steele emphasizes practical experience and professional networking as valuable benefits—not to mention how impressive it looks on a résumé.

“The SMARRT Fund sends a strong message to potential employers about how much we trust our students and our confidence in the education they’re receiving while at Southern,” Steele said.

-by Lucas Patterson, associate director for Advancement, and Elise Deschamps, sophomore public relations major

Community Connections

VIRTUAL BENEFIT CONCERT ASSISTS LOCAL TORNADO VICTIMS

A series of tornadoes tore through the Greater Chattanooga area on Sunday night, April 12, which injured dozens of people, killed three, and displaced many more as at least 12,000 structures in Hamilton County were damaged. Thankfully, Southern’s campus received minimal harm.

However, the heartbreak of this devastation—felt even remotely by students sheltering in place at their homes across the U.S. as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic—inspired a group of Southern musicians to organize a [virtual benefit concert](#) to help victims in the Collegedale and Ooltewah areas.



The special evening of sacred songs, comprised of 17 individual vocal and instrumental performances recorded at homes and churches in seven different states and two countries, was streamed online on April 18 at 7:30 p.m. Musicians included a collection Southern students, alumni, adjunct instructors, and other talented friends of the university. The concert attracted several hundred viewers and raised more than \$1,600.

Kaili Kimbrow, senior music and business administration double major, helped organize the event from her home in Texas and contributed a harp performance to the collaboration.

“As I contacted friends and classmates across the country, we all really wanted to help those affected by the tornadoes,” Kimbrow said. “If we were still in Collegedale, we could have volunteered with storm clean up, but that just wasn’t possible. Instead, we created this unique concert where everyone shared from their hearts and their homes. Music uplifts and encourages during difficult times. We pray that this may bless those who listened to the concert as well as those who will benefit from the financial help.”

-by Lucas Patterson, associate director for Advancement

ACADEMIC SUMMER CAMPS AVAILABLE ONLINE FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Since 2016, Southern has offered a variety of three-day camps for both day students and overnight guests. Last year, more than 150 high schoolers came to the university and experienced a small taste of Southern firsthand as they explored career and calling. Although the COVID-19 pandemic effectively eliminated all options for on-campus activities this summer, five of the scheduled camps will still be held in a modified online format.

This year’s Academic Summer Camps are June 15-17. Topics include:

- Computing (Ethical Hacking)
- Filmmaking
- Photo/Journalism
- Outdoor Adventure Leadership
- Vegetarian Culinary Arts



It's not difficult to imagine computing or communications camps being taught online. But cooking? Outdoor adventure? These highly experiential offerings required creative reworking to accommodate the transition to digital delivery.

For example, the Vegetarian Culinary Arts camp modified its menu—simplifying ingredient lists and equipment required—while moving camp time to afternoon and evening hours so students will be cooking when a guardian is home (for safety purposes). Professors leading the Outdoor Adventure Leadership camp made adjustments of their own, deciding to wear cameras while caving and rock climbing so students will have a birds-eye view of the technical skills being taught.

Academic Summer Camps are open to those who will be in grades 9-12 for Fall 2020 and cost \$65 per student. For more information, visit [_____](#).

-Staff Report

ADVENTIST REVIEW PUBLISHES PROFESSOR'S ARTICLE ABOUT PRAYER DURING CRISES

[_____](#) Professor Jud Lake, '82, ThD, spent four years researching and writing *A Nation in God's Hands*, a thorough commentary on Ellen White's Civil War visions. In a 2017 QuickNotes article after the book's publishing, he said his writing wasn't just about the past; it had "a contemporary ring" to it because of current hardships and uncertainties facing the country.

In an April 14 article published by *Adventist Review*, Lake once again makes the connection between the crises of the Civil War and present times. It's not a message of despair, but rather one of hope about the power of prayer to affect literal, life-saving change.

On February 21, 1865, The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald extended a call to all the churches and scattered believers to "set apart four days commencing Wednesday, March 1, 1865, and continuing till the close of the following Sabbath, as days of earnest and importunate prayer." As the believers prayed together during these four days, March 1–4, 1865, they specifically pleaded with God to bring an end to the war. A spiritual revival took place, and they felt assurance that heaven heard their prayers. Interestingly, as President Abraham Lincoln delivered his second inaugural address on March 4, Adventists were on their knees praying.

This prayer response of our Adventist pioneers to the Civil War crisis in the spring of 1865 contains a most important lesson for us living through the COVID-19 crisis in the spring of 2020.

Lake's full article is _____, and *A Nation in God's Hands* can be purchased through _____.

-Staff Report

Alumni Highlights

NURSING ALUMNI TRAVEL TO NEW YORK CITY FOR COVID-19 SERVICE

After countless attempted phone calls and much prayer, Yaniz (Seely) Rodriguez, '18, finally connected with Krucial Staffing, an agency contracting nurses to serve on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic in New York City (NYC). Leaving the comfort of her home in Chattanooga, she took on the challenge, yet, like many other nurses, she was not prepared for what she would witness.

Despite the best efforts of medical professionals, patients of all ages have succumbed to COVID-19 right before her eyes. Additionally, Rodriguez has watched as her co-workers have contracted the same disease they are in New York to fight.

"Some days it feels like we're working in hospice, not a hospital," Rodriguez said. "I was scared to come here, but I felt very strongly that I was needed—and I still feel that way."

Even before Rodriguez's 21-day contract ended, she agreed to extend her time working in NYC. But she hasn't been alone. Amid the regular heartaches and 15-hour days, Rodriguez has found herself surrounded by fellow alumni from Southern's _____. Like Rodriguez, they came from across the country to answer the call for help.



At the hospital in NYC, Rodriguez reconnected with Jocelin (Morales) Esparra, '17. They first met as students on campus and completed Southern's Soul-winning and Leadership Training (SALT) program together. After graduating in 2017, Esparra spent the next year serving as a missionary in India. When the COVID-19 pandemic began, Esparra had only been working as a nurse for 10 months. Although concerned she did not have sufficient experience to help in this crisis, Esparra felt God calling her to serve, and she was able to secure a contract with Krucial Staffing.

Esparra was the only Spanish-speaking, bi-lingual nurse in her unit and many of her patients spoke very little English. She would often serve as both nurse and translator for her patients. Like Rodriguez, Esparra was not prepared for the heartbreak she would encounter.

One of Esparra's patients, who only spoke Spanish, was sobbing inconsolably, despite their best efforts to comfort him. He desperately wanted to communicate with his family, who he had not seen or spoken to in days. Due to hospital policy, family members were not allowed in the building and the patient's room in a temporary overflow location for COVID-19 patients did not have a telephone. Esparra knew she had to do something. Using her personal cell phone, she called the patient's family, and as peace and joy spread across his face, she felt God's presence in the room.

While attending Southern, Esparra also participated on a short-term medical mission trip to Brazil in 2017. Serving in the Amazon, she worked alongside Southern attendee Katarina (Monteagudo) Day. Three years later, they were now certified nurses and unexpectedly reconnected in NYC, serving together again—albeit in a very different environment.

“Working here, you feel like you’re back in the mission field,” Day explained. “There’s a lack of supplies, the equipment is older, and you really have to improvise.”

Before the beginning of each new shift, her unit gathers together to pray for their patients’ safety —as well as their own. Despite the setbacks, Day said her time in NYC has strengthened her relationship with God, and she feels like she is truly making a difference.

When Rodriguez, Esparra, and Day signed their staffing contracts, these Southern alumni had no idea they would reconnect in a city far from where they first met. The friendships they formed as students on campus provided a much-needed support system years later, bringing them closer to each other—and to God—during a dark time.

-by Ashley (Noonan) Fox, '15, assistant director for Alumni Relations

VIRTUAL 5K ATTRACTS ALUMNI SUPPORT

More than 300 students, employees, alumni, and friends participated in Southern’s first Virtual 5K, sponsored by the [_____](#). Following social distancing guidelines, participants were encouraged to run, jog, or walk five kilometers (3.1 miles) at a location of their choosing and submit their times on April 26 for the chance to win a gift card.

Former students came out in full force to support this initiative; 50 of the participants were Southern graduates or attendees! The Alumni Association held its own gift card drawing to help support Virtual 5K engagement. Winners included:

- Ted Ashton, '90 and '00
- Janelle (Stotz) Cunningham, '06
- Erin (Grube) dos Santos, '15
- Abby Jansen, '18
- Donald Lighthall, '00
- Joey (Norwood) Tolbert, '01 and '07



“We were excited that so many alumni joined in Southern’s Virtual 5K,” said Alumni Relations Director Evonne (Kutzner) Crook, ’79. “The Alumni Association is actively pursuing creative ways to support and connect with graduates during these unprecedented times.”

Kevin Hughes, ’18, office manager for the School of P.E., Health, and Wellness, helped coordinate the race.

“During this period of physical disconnect, it’s great to see people staying active and encouraging others to do so,” Hughes said.

As a result of the Virtual 5K’s success, the School of P.E., Health, and Wellness is offering _____ in May to help motivate the Southern family to stay active.

-Staff Report

We are excited to offer an experience for our alumni and friends called Southern Community Online. Create an account which will grant you access to our alumni directory, event calendar and registration, your giving history, and more.