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QuickNotes – Advancement e-Newsletter

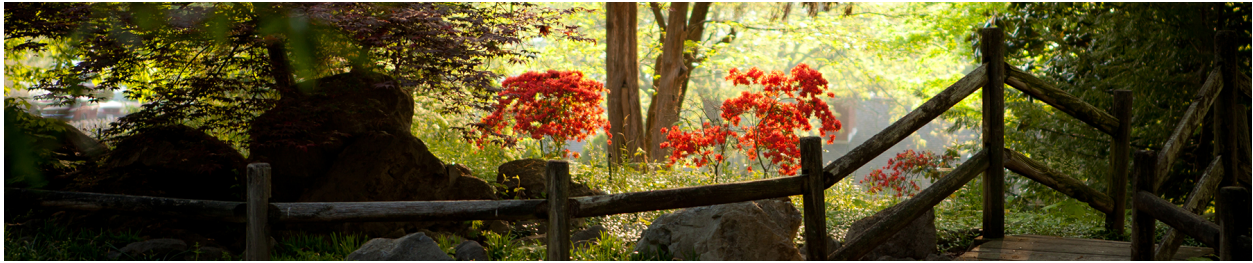
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June 2020 QuickNotes

Southern Adventist University

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June 2020 QuickNotes

Campus Life

JASON MERRYMAN, '98, HIRED AS NEW VICE PRESIDENT FOR ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Southern is pleased to welcome Jason Merryman as the new vice president for Enrollment Management. Merryman, who began his responsibilities last week, is no stranger to Southern, having graduated from the university in 1998 with a bachelor's degree in business. He also served on campus as director of Financial Aid and Enrollment Services from 2005 to 2012. Merryman holds a master's degree in organizational management and brings more than 10 years of higher education leadership experience to this position.



“I am delighted that Jason is joining our Enrollment Management team and serving as a key member of Southern’s administration,” said President David Smith, PhD. “He brings to us significant experience, and his positive attitude, great relational skills, and willingness to creatively face challenges will help guide us as we face our future.”

Merryman met his wife, Shelly (Spencer), ’98, at Southern, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in social work. The couple maintains that deciding to invest in a Seventh-day Adventist college education, specifically at Southern, was the best decision they’ve ever made. Merryman pledges to work tirelessly for prospective and current students, providing an experience that is unique to Southern’s campus.

“I am honored and blessed to serve students in this role at Southern,” Merryman said. “The Enrollment Management team and I are going to be working hard to convey President Smith’s vision to everyone we interact with and show Southern to be a truly God-loving place. I am confident that with God’s guidance and your prayers, we will be able accomplish these goals.”

-Staff Report

COVID-19 EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND HELPING STUDENTS RETURN TO SOUTHERN

When the World Health Organization classified COVID-19 as a pandemic on March 11, life changed dramatically for Southern students. They moved out of residence halls and became experts in distance learning as classes transitioned online for the semester’s duration. Simultaneously, a related crisis began to unfold for the students: financial strain.



How could students affected by job loss, unexpected travel, and other unforeseen expenses weather the storm and return to campus for classes in August? To address this immediate need, Southern created the COVID-19 Student Relief Fund with the support of passionate alumni and friends of the university who proactively reached out and asked how they could help. Southern has utilized social media, emails, and letters to share details about the new fund with a broader audience and received 125 gifts so far, totaling more than \$411,000.

“I hear countless stories about how our families are facing difficult situations because of COVID-19,” said Lillian (Portillo) Loza, ’05 and ’16, associate director of Student Finance. “It has been a huge blessing to have this money available for helping students return to campus in the fall.

Loza shared details from a sample of accepted COVID-19 Student Relief Fund applications, including:

- A nursing graduate student with only one semester remaining lost her job due to COVID-19. She is also her elderly father’s sole caregiver, making it difficult to find flexible employment. The emergency fund provided her with a \$2,200 scholarship.
- A senior accounting major wanted to return to Southern, but his father’s employer implemented work reductions due to COVID-19. The student has a part-time job but can’t put substantial money into his school account since he is now also taking care of his own basic needs (expenses his father previously helped cover). The emergency fund provided him with a \$3,500 scholarship.

- An international sophomore physical therapist assistant major was unable to return home due to COVID-19 and cannot work in the United States due to her immigration status. She would normally have taken care of her Southern expenses through on-campus jobs during the semester and employment in her hometown during the summer. The emergency fund provided her with a \$3,000 scholarship.

As stories of need continue to emerge, Southern welcomes additional COVID-19 Student Relief Fund gifts. For more information, visit [_____](#). Students seeking assistance from the fund are encouraged to [_____](#).

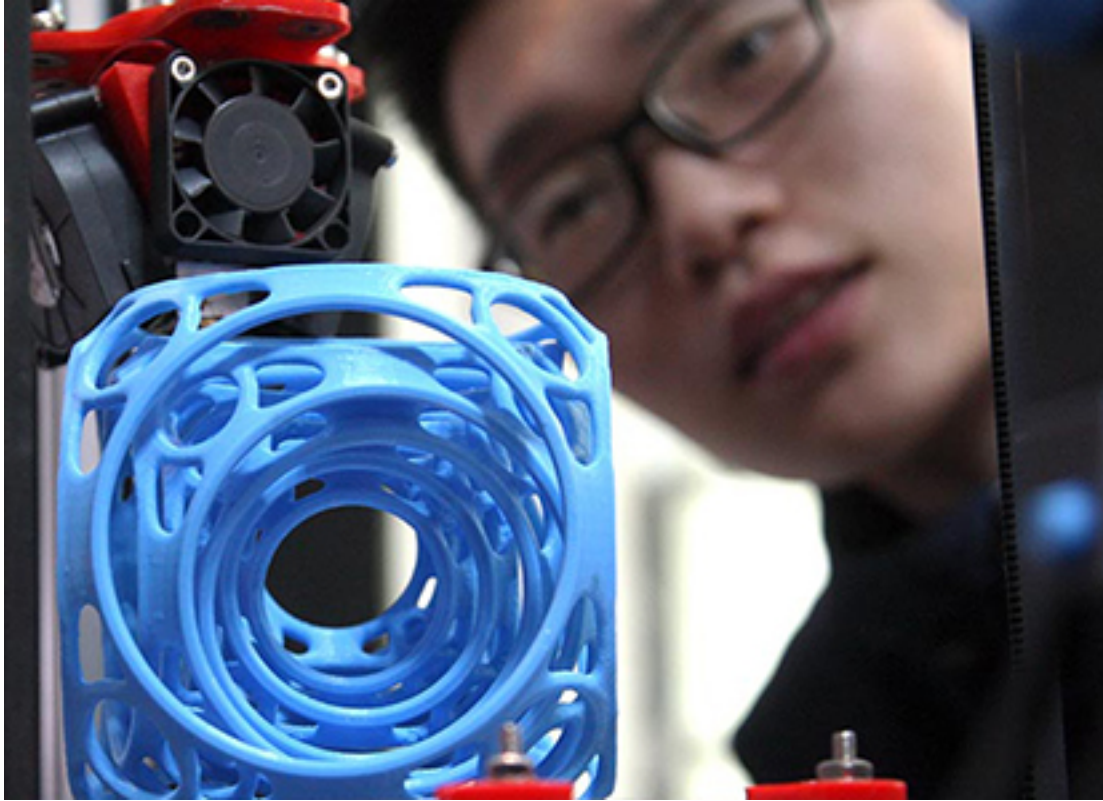
-by Lucas Patterson, associate director for Advancement

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION RECEIVES GRANT TO BOLSTER STEM HUB

Thanks to a new \$10,000 grant, Southern's [_____](#) (TMC) will be able to better provide education majors—as well as K-12 faculty and staff at local Adventist schools—with the tools necessary to creatively engage students in the learning process. These funds, awarded by the independent foundation Versacare, will support equipment, training, and resources for STEM education, with an emphasis on the project-based learning format.

TMC Director Katie (Martin) McGrath, '00, is leading the creation of Southern's new STEM hub. As an associate professor in the School of Education, she recognizes the need to keep teachers current on classroom technology.

“It’s imperative that the TMC remain a cutting-edge space, helping educators adapt quickly to the instructional challenges that exist in a rapidly evolving technology landscape,” McGrath said. “This grant from Versacare moves us closer to that goal. We appreciate their confidence in our plans and are grateful for their gift.”



Founded in 1991, the TMC has offered a comprehensive collection of tools and training for education majors and current teachers for nearly 30 years. Its collection of curriculum guides, DVDs, die-cuts, laminating machines, video cameras, and other items are being reviewed for relevancy—some will be donated to missions and other ministries—as new materials are added through grant-funded purchases. A sample selection of items atop McGrath’s preliminary STEM-related wish list includes 3D printers, programmable robots, and a high-quality textile/paper cutting machine.

A portion of the grant will also be used to fund ongoing TMC faculty and staff training for these technologies. By fully understanding the equipment, the team can more efficiently help education majors and K-12 teachers discover new ways to integrate each tool into potential lesson plans.

“It’s important to remember that STEM-informed teaching is more than just doing the same old things differently,” McGrath said. “It’s about using technology to teach in a completely new way, one that engages students in the subject matter, keeps them motivated to learn, and connects their interests to academic content that’s relevant to the real world.”

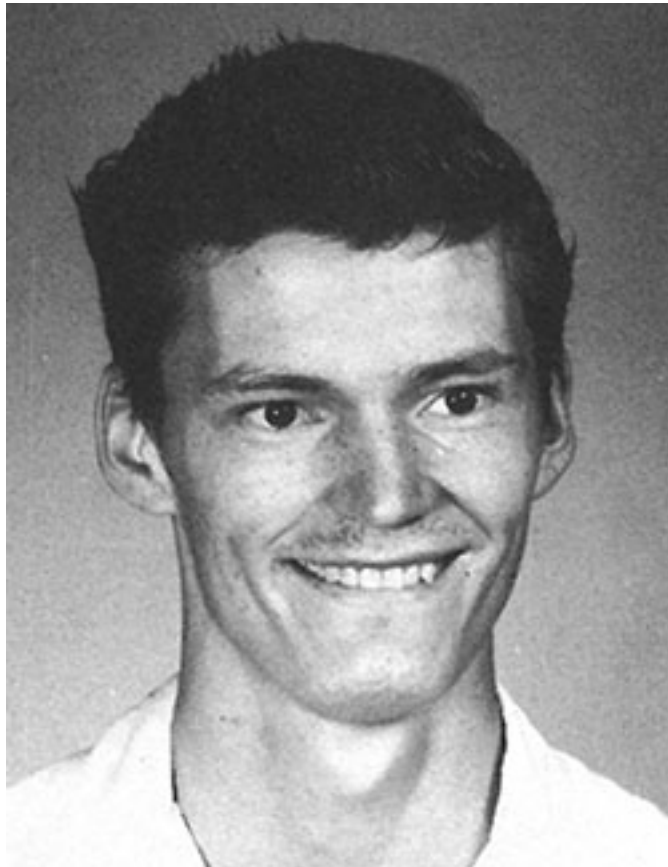
-by Lucas Patterson, associate director for Advancement

LIFELONG FRIENDSHIP WITH FACULTY LEADS TO SCHOLARSHIP GIFTS

Ron Fox, PhD, was anything but an average college student, and in Physics Professor Ray Hefferlin, he found the perfect faculty mentor to match. Their relationship extended far beyond the classroom and made a lasting impression on Fox, who recently honored Hefferlin’s lifetime

of friendship by contributing a \$100,000 charitable gift annuity and including a bequest in his estate plan to support scholarships for students studying physics at Southern.

Fox, '62, (pictured below) came to campus in Collegedale without completing high school; he had taken every science course Campion Academy had to offer before losing interest in secondary school and quitting at age 15. While other Adventist colleges had turned him away, Southern enrolled him despite the lack of a diploma. Fox's intelligence was obvious, but he needed time to mature and a flexible mentor to shape his development.



“Dr. Hefferlin impacted my life from the very beginning and guided me through those wild teenage years,” Fox said. “Once, I hitchhiked to the Alabama coast during a long weekend and spent my entire time there on the beach. When I came back to Southern, I was so sunburned that even wearing my clothes hurt, so Dr. Hefferlin allowed me to attend my all-male physics classes without a shirt!”

The entire Hefferlin family played a role in providing structure during Fox's time at Southern. He and other students would often visit the Hefferlin house for dinner or take a ride with them to the Great Smoky Mountains. Hefferlin's widow, Inelda (Phillips) Hefferlin, '58, enjoyed serving alongside her husband in this ministry of hospitality that exceeded any professional responsibilities.

“Ray really cared for each of his students, especially his majors,” Inelda Hefferlin said. “In fact, I distinctly remember Ray telling me what a bright mind Ron had. Ray listened to students’

problems and sometimes even helped them financially. He also helped several with admittance into graduate schools.”

Fox was one of those students. Shortly before graduation, he began looking for a job, but his mentor had other plans.

“Dr. Hefferlin thought I should pursue additional academic training, but I needed to start earning a living because I was recently married and had a family to support,” Fox said. “I told him that if he could find me funds for graduate school faster than I could find a job, then I’d follow his recommendation. It took him less than 30 minutes to obtain a full scholarship for me at the University of Tennessee!”

The two families kept in touch and visited one another years later, after Fox moved west for work with Boeing Aircraft on the early space program and Sandia National Laboratories, where he contributed to nuclear research and other advanced energy projects. According to Fox, the planned gifts that he and his wife Elaine (Latham), ’63, made to the Ray Hefferlin Physics Endowed Scholarship Fund are “just a small token of appreciation for all that the Hefferlins and Southern have done for me.”

Gifts like these provide tremendous financial relief for students, as well as great joy to those who knew and loved Hefferlin.

“I am always surprised when Southern’s Planned Giving office tells me that a donation has been made in Ray’s honor,” Inelda Hefferlin said. “It’s a blessing to know that bright young physics students will have the opportunity to study how God made the universe. I can’t wait to share this particular happiness with Ray in Heaven!”

The Ray Hefferlin Physics Endowed Scholarship Fund was established in 1996. Since then, 88 alumni and friends of Southern have contributed to its growth. For more information regarding charitable gift annuities, estate plans, and other giving opportunities, visit [_____](#).

-by Lucas Patterson, associate director for Advancement

INSPIRATIONAL BOOK CREATED FOR GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION AVAILABLE ONLINE

In preparation for the General Conference Session, which was originally scheduled for later this month, Southern created a special book, *Be Still and Know That I Am God*, that would have been handed out at its booth in Indianapolis. Since the event was canceled, the university ended up not printing the book but instead is making it [_____](#). Please enjoy this collection of inspirational thoughts and beautiful nature representing Southern and our surroundings!

-Staff Report

Alumni Highlights

JUAN CLASS, '09 AND '11, TAKES EXTRAORDINARY STEPS TO SERVE AFTER TORNADO

At 7 p.m. on Sunday, April 12, Juan Class, '09 and '11, headed home from his shift as an emergency room nurse practitioner at Erlanger Health System's main hospital in downtown Chattanooga. Severe storms were brewing, so he reached out to Erlanger East, a smaller branch where he also works, letting the lone physician on duty know that he could come in if things got bad.

At 11:45 p.m., Class received an emergency alert, warning of a tornado spotted nearby, and he quickly sent his wife and children to a neighbor's basement. As the worst of the storm passed, he got word that he was needed in the emergency department, located about seven miles from his house. He jumped into his car, but within a mile, he was blocked by tornado damage—trees crossing the road.

After helping clear the street, Class proceeded, only to be stopped again and again by downed trunks, limbs, and power lines. It did not seem like he would make it to the hospital at the rate he was going. But then his training kicked in from when he was a U.S. Army medic.

“At that point, I decided to start walking,” Class said. “What I witnessed firsthand was unforgettable: homes that I had previously admired were completely destroyed, and trees were down everywhere. As I met people who were aimlessly wondering around, I stopped to make sure they were okay.”



As he went, the destruction intensified, and Class pictured the number of injured likely to be transported to the emergency department. That thought pushed him on through the dark, rainy night for 5 miles, scrambling around debris as he went. After nearly two hours, he reached a clear road and was able to catch a ride the last few blocks to the hospital, arriving soaked, muddy, and covered in leaves. However, after a quick change into clean scrubs, he went right to work, caring for the injured.

Class' commitment to helping people did not go unnoticed. The president and CEO of Erlanger Health System, William Jackson Jr., MD, commended Class in an email to all employees, saying, "I am deeply thankful to work alongside colleagues who embrace and embody Erlanger's mission of compassionately caring for people."

Class attributes his actions that night to both his faith and his education.

"I firmly believe that God has given me the gifts of compassion, grace, and an innate desire to care for and help people," Class said. "It is this and my belief in God that keeps me going in the midst of all this tragedy, including the current pandemic. I truly love Southern and how it empowers people to serve like this."

-by Janell (Pettibone) Hullquist, '05, editorial manager for Marketing and University Relations

CNN PROVIDES PLATFORM FOR KELLY RAZZOUK, '05, TO DISCUSS SYRIAN HEALTH CRISIS

In her role as director of policy and advocacy for the International Rescue Committee, Kelly Razzouk, '05, represents the venerable nonprofit at the United Nations. In that context, CNN.com recently featured an [interview](#) and one of her co-workers that sheds light on how the COVID-19 pandemic has escalated existing challenges in war-torn Syria.



Razzouk was also interviewed on a Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs [podcast](#) that explores how the International Rescue Committee is adapting current programming to meet the needs and challenges in Syria's health care system during the pandemic.

Southern [University](#) in 2013 and remains proud of her global humanitarian work. Our alumni continue to embody the university mission of serving others. If you have a story or know of alumni doing great work, please email [alumni@sc.edu](#).

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

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.