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December 2021 QuickNotes

Southern Adventist University

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December 2021

QuickNotes

PICTURES AND RECORDINGS DOCUMENT HOMECOMING

Thank you to everyone who joined us at the end of October for Homecoming Weekend 2021, whether you attended in person or virtually. Alumni celebrated meaningful milestones and reconnected with former classmates and professors.

Visit southern.edu/homecoming to view pictures and event recordings from the weekend.

ALUMNI HELP SAVE CONDUCTOR'S LIFE



It was a warm summer evening as the East Tennessee Symphony Orchestra rehearsed in Southern's Mabel Wood Hall, and Pops Conductor Joel Denton did not feel well. He sat down behind a group of trumpeters to listen as another conductor, Jeremy Francisco, led a classical piece.

Suddenly, the room began spinning. Dazed, Denton closed his eyes and leaned back. Jack McClarty, '99, MD, was near Denton.

“We were in the middle of a song, and I noticed him starting to fall out of his chair and behaving strangely,” said McClarty, who is a trumpeter in the orchestra and the

chief of anesthesia at Erlanger East Hospital. “Having dealt with emergencies like this in my field, I guessed what was going on very quickly.”

Denton was having a heart attack. McClarty shouted to halt the rehearsal and rushed to help Denton. Four other orchestra members with medical training quickly joined him, including two graduates of Southern’s nursing program: Kevin Rodman, ’93 and ’96, Emergency Department director at AdventHealth Gordon; and Madalyn Powers, ’21, an emergency room nurse.

McClarty shouted for someone to call 911 and sprinted to his car to retrieve his emergency airway kit, which included a mask and oral airway. When Denton’s heart stopped beating, the group began performing CPR. Paramedics arrived on the scene with a defibrillator less than 10 minutes after Denton had collapsed, and by the time he was transported to the hospital, he had regained consciousness.

While Denton was en route to the hospital, Francisco led the orchestra in prayer and singing the Doxology, which McClarty describes as a “very powerful moment.”

The next morning, McClarty visited Denton in the ICU.

“I walked in, and there he was sitting and eating breakfast,” McClarty said. “I couldn’t believe my eyes.”

The doctors had completely cleared the blockage in one of Denton’s major arteries. After a few days, he was released from the hospital. He immediately modified his diet, and within nine weeks, he lost 45 pounds.

“I think this story is a good example of how you can get a good outcome from a horrible situation,” McClarty said. “Joel’s got a new lease on life and renewed vigor. He’s changed his health.”

Denton said he now feels 10 years younger and is very thankful to the orchestra members for helping save his life.

“It was a God moment,” Denton said. “I was in the right place at the right time with the right people.”

-by Amanda Blake, sophomore journalism major

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS SERVE LOCAL REFUGEES

In response to an increased need in the Chattanooga community, two student-led organizations at Southern have partnered with local nonprofits working with refugees.

The university’s Middle Eastern Club, which formed last school year, joined with Adventist Muslim Friendship Association to hold a Peace Camp on October 2 at a nearby elementary school. Kilah Runnels, junior social work major and club secretary, describes the event as a family fun day where refugee families in the area could picnic together.



Approximately 25

refugee families from various Middle Eastern countries participated, along with 15 Southern students. The students, who took part in cultural training beforehand, visited with the families and helped facilitate games for the kids. Runnels said she enjoyed listening to the refugees' stories and learning about their struggles.

“That was the best community service I’ve ever done,” she said. “Those interpersonal connections are key for me. It’s one thing to study about cultures and another thing to talk to people and immerse yourself.”

Southern's Adventist Peace Fellowship chapter, also a student-run organization, is volunteering with Bridge Refugee Services. Isabella Eklund, junior social work major and club president, explains that the students felt impressed to partner with a refugee agency after Taliban militants took over Afghanistan early this semester.

"After seeing how quickly people's lives can get uprooted, we decided we wanted to care for refugees," Eklund said.

So far, the group has helped Bridge Refugee Services organize storage and conduct a charity drive to collect basic household items for refugee families arriving in East Tennessee.

"We need to prepare for families that may not have anything for their new homes," Eklund said. "We want them to settle as happily and comfortably as they can. It's fairly traumatic having to move from one country to another, and we want to be a welcoming community for them."

Both student organizations intend to continue these partnerships into the future.

“Serving those who have been displaced is so important,” Eklund said. “We want to maintain our care for the community through this important work.”

-by Amanda Blake, sophomore journalism major

SOUTHERN CELEBRATES MILESTONE EVENTS

On September 30, the Southern family came together in the Collegedale Church of Seventh-day Adventists to formally inaugurate Ken Shaw, '80, EdD, as Southern's 27th president. The ceremony included an academic processional, well-wishes from sister institutions and Seventh-day Adventist Church leadership, an address by Shaw, and selections by Southern's School of Music. Celebrating Shaw as the first alum to become president, alumni representatives from the last eight decades marched in the processional.



As part of the inaugural week, Southern held the [ribbon-cutting festivities](#) for the Bietz Center for Student Life on October 1. Although students had begun using the Bietz Center during SmartStart, this event formally celebrated its opening. Invited guests included the Southern Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, and alumni, as well as local media.

Named for Southern's 25th president, Gordon Bietz, DMin, and his family's long-standing dedication to Seventh-day Adventist education, the Bietz Center underscores the fact that students are the reason Southern exists. Several members of the Bietz family attended the celebration,

including Gordon and his wife, Cynthia; their daughters, Gina Gang, '92, and Julie Kroll, '92; and extended family.

Avery Kroll, senior animation major at Southern and granddaughter of Gordon and Cynthia Bietz, was commissioned to paint a portrait to honor her grandparents for their many years of service to Southern. Kroll said the art project was the biggest she has ever completed, and she struggled with perfectionism and accuracy.

“I wanted the eyes to look alive in the painting, to capture a soul, a human being, an amazing individual,” said Kroll, referring specifically to the image of her grandfather. “In discussion with the head designer of the Bietz Center, my goal was to capture the essence of who my grandfather is and recognize that he had an astounding impact here.”

At the unveiling, Kroll felt nervous but was thankful that her brother, Aiden Kroll, sophomore finance major, was there to offer support. She said her grandparents were

excited and proud when they saw the painting. Kroll recalls her grandmother being “full of tears and very emotional.”

To learn more about both President Shaw (and First Lady Ann Shaw) and the new Bietz Center, visit southern.edu/columns.

-Staff Report

STUDENT CENTER RECEIVES DESIGN AWARDS

The new Bietz Center for Student Life has won four awards from the Association of University Interior Designers (AUID), a national organization. Most notably, wall art in the Bietz Center’s Jack Blanco Chapel won “Best in Show.” Entries were submitted by universities across the country and were independently judged by professionals in architecture and interior design.

“The ‘Best in Show’ almost put me in tears,” said Becky Djernes, interior design and real estate coordinator at Southern. “Never in my wildest dreams would I have expected that a spiritual project would win. When it did, I just smiled and said, ‘God, you win. You always win.’”

The chapel was named in honor of Jack Blanco, PhD, a retired dean of the university’s School of Religion. In planning the winning wall art, Djernes had asked Blanco: “If you had only four Bible 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.



The Blanco Chapel

wall art also won first place in the “Specialty” category. Additional Bietz Center awards included second place in the “Specialty” category for metal wall art in The Hangout, and third place in the “Renovations \$50,000-\$150,000” category for The Southern Shoppe (formerly the Campus Shop in Fleming Plaza).

The awards were announced during this year’s AUID annual conference, which was held in Chattanooga, Tennessee, not far from Southern. As part of the conference, more than 20 AUID members toured the university’s campus. Attendees expressed appreciation for Southern’s beautiful grounds and cohesive architectural

theme. Djernes was thrilled by the response, saying, “What really made me happy was having several people say, ‘You can see evidence of God across your campus.’”

More information about the Bietz Center can be found online at southern.edu/studentcenter.

-by Amanda Blake, sophomore journalism major

YOUR LOYAL SUPPORT CHANGES STUDENTS’ LIVES

During the holiday season, I often think about past experiences and how they have shaped my life. Do you? I think about meaningful people and moments that are now part of me.

For you, those memories might bring you back to Southern: walks on the promenade, Friday night Vespers, caring teachers, and life-long friends. Just like years ago, the Southern Experience is possible today because caring

alumni like you come together in support of Southern students.



Your financial gifts provide a Christian education and opportunities to grow and serve. It matters to Matthew, a sophomore liberal arts education major who works an early shift at FedEx to make sure he can pay for tuition and get enough study time. He dreams of one day giving back to his community as an elementary school math and music teacher.

In Matthew's own words: "I was struggling to find the funds to pay for school, but with the help I received, I can put more time into my studies. Thank you for being

instrumental in providing the resources for me to attend Southern. I would not be here without your help.”

I want to thank you for joining me in giving a gift this holiday season that will make an eternal difference in the life of a Southern student.

-by Ellen Hostetler, Vice President for Advancement

To make your gift count toward 2021 taxes, give online by 11:59 p.m. EST on December 31, 2021 (the transaction must be completed by this time). Checks must be postmarked on or before December 31, 2021, and mailed to:

*Southern Adventist University
Advancement
P.O. Box 370
Collegedale, TN 37315*

If you are age 70.5 or older, you can make a rollover gift from your IRA to a charity without any federal income tax on your gift, and it may qualify as your required minimum distribution. To make an IRA rollover gift to Southern, simply contact your IRA custodian and request that an amount of your choice be transferred directly to the university. Your gift could be \$1,000, \$10,000, or even as much as \$100,000. As always, you should consult with a qualified financial adviser before making a gift that may impact your tax status.

Visit southern.edu/plannedgiving or call Southern's Planned Giving office for more information: 423.236.2832.

Upcoming Events

December 11 - Christmas Concert featuring choral ensembles and Symphony Orchestra, Collegedale Church of Seventh-day Adventists, 4 p.m., [live streaming link](#)

December 16 and 17 - Winter Commencement, [live streaming link](#)

December 23 through January 3 - University offices closed for Christmas and New Years

January 10 - Winter 2022 classes begin

HELP SOUTHERN WHILE SHOPPING ONLINE

When you use [AmazonSmile](#), you can also support Southern students. It provides the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile and select Southern as the charitable organization of your choice, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to Southern.

AmazonSmile works on your computer browser and Amazon Shopping phone app (available for IOS and

Google Play for Android). In the phone app, find “Settings” in the main menu (☰), then tap on “AmazonSmile” and follow the on-screen instructions to enable the service on your phone.

Support Southern when you shop at [AmazonSmile!](#)

