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Fall 2024

## Columns Fall 2024

Southern Adventist University

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the magazine of Southern Adventist University

fall 2024

# columns



## Finding Faith

Take a look at how we find our faith through  
life and learning at Southern. | page 12



Photo: Mila Bales

### Building Lives of Service

Freshmen nursing majors **Peyton Martz** (center) and **Caitlin Lee** (right) work with Elani Dodd, '13, '14, and '22, assistant professor in the School of Nursing, building children's beds for the nonprofit Sleep in Heavenly Peace. Incoming students participate in Southern Serves during orientation as each school year begins, introducing them to Southern's core value of serving others generously.

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Cover caption: Students often find that their time at Southern helps them solidify their faith in God. Photo by Larron Mattheson.

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## Summer Brain Boost

Photos by Larron Matheson, junior mass communication–media production major

Southern's Academic Summer Camps in June offered a chance for 118 high school students to explore several of our majors on campus. Students delved into nine areas of study ranging from computing to construction. The camps provide plenty of fun, hands-on learning while visitors try out a potential career field.

**1: Construction Camp** This camp exposed students to the activities associated with a career in construction, showing practical application, discussing opportunities, and incorporating business ownership.

**2: Computing Camp** Students were introduced to the world of ethical hacking through a Capture the Flag (CTF) environment. They learned about simple encryption, open-source intelligence, network scanning, and exploiting some of the most common web security risks.

**3: History Camp** In this interactive summer camp, students played the roles of real historical people who lived in the 1800s in a game where teams worked together and explored their characters' effects on American history.

**4: Culinary Arts Camp** Southern's Vegetarian Culinary Arts program offered the perfect place for students to try their hands at creating delicious dishes. Cooking is not only a fun hobby but also an important life skill and an increasingly popular career choice.

**5: Media Camp** Ideas and storytelling, along with creating an engaging video and a crisp photo, were the focal points of Media Camp, where students learned the first steps of how to effectively use photography and videography for social media.

**6: Outdoor Leadership** Students experienced Southern's ropes course, white water rafting, rock climbing, and caving. Instructors also shared how to use nature activities as a ministry for God.

**7: Film Camp** Students interested in a film career with a Christian perspective gained hands-on experience with the gear professionals use to shoot high-quality motion pictures. They discovered what engages audiences and what it's like to be part of a production team.

**8: Automotive Camp** In this camp, students had the opportunity to work on a vehicle, learn about different aspects of maintenance and repair, and experience day-to-day activities associated with an automotive career path.

**9: Campus Life** During Academic Summer Camps, students also have time to enjoy campus, hanging out in the Bietz Center for Student Life, making new friends, and experiencing what life is like at Southern.

**10: Biology Pre-Med Camp** Offering a behind-the-scenes view of the medical profession, students in this camp spent time uncovering hidden diseases in x-rays, practicing suturing, constructing skeletons, and learning how a scientific laboratory works. The group also explored biblical principles for finding meaning in their careers.



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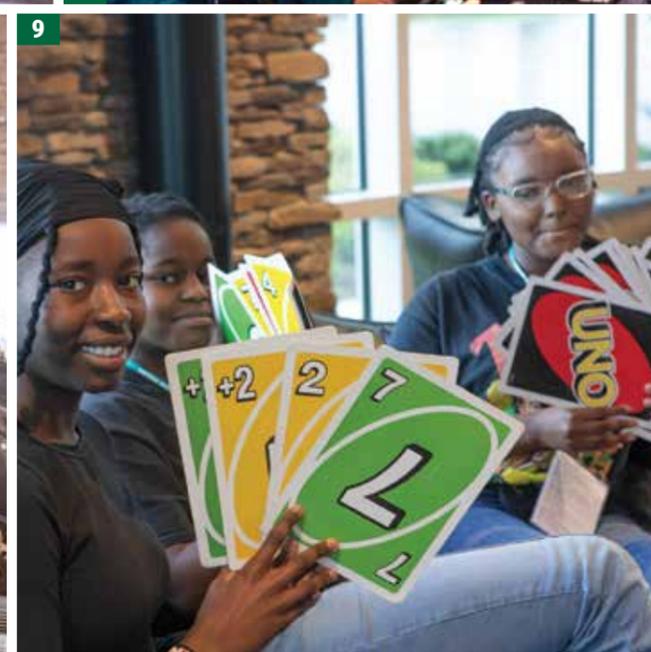
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10

## Blacksmithing Club Forges Connections

At the largest ever hands-on blacksmithing event for young people in the United States, the Southern Smiths, one of the many student clubs and organizations on Southern's campus, introduced more than 800 participants to the art of shaping metal with fire. The booth offered the Blacksmithing Honor, sponsored by the university, at the 2024 International Pathfinder Camporee in Gillette, Wyoming, in early August.

In order to earn a badge for his or her uniform sash, each Pathfinder completed requirements for the honor using an anvil,

hammer, and tongs to forge two items: a Fredrick's Cross and an S-hook with a spinning finial.

"The best part was seeing the reactions in the eyes of the kids as they moved forward in their forging skills," says club treasurer and instructor Hayden Rigsby, senior history major at Southern. "I could tell how each one was impressed by what he or she was learning and practicing." Creating the cross to take home ranked as the favorite activity among badge requirements.

- by Tina Frist Smith, '89 and '23, communication manager



Pathfinders were able to get hands-on experience using a forge at Southern's blacksmithing booth during the International Camporee.

## Nursing Skills Lab Utilizes New R42 Manikin

Southern's School of Nursing is the first nursing school and only the second healthcare program in the United States to utilize the R42 Bariatric Manikin, newly released this year. The manikin provides nursing students with needed experience as they care for patients with different body types.

In skills labs, manikins allow students to practice checking vital signs, inserting nasal gastric tubes, and changing the dressings on wounds.

"Our goal is always to simulate reality as much as we can," explains

Kerry Allen, '91, '98, and '09, associate professor and skills lab coordinator in the School of Nursing. "We want students to interact with manikins that mimic what they're going to see in a hospital setting."

The name R42 references the 42% of Americans who are obese, with the manikin simulating a person weighing 300 pounds. It is 3D printed, with a realistic skin texture and fully articulated limbs.

Allen explains that understanding different body types—and the skills needed in each situation—is beneficial

for many of the tasks that nurses undertake, such as turning patients in the bed or changing the bedding while the bed is occupied.

Because of Southern's investment in learning, students have the chance to practice on various types of patients in the skills lab before they enter a hospital, better preparing them to work in actual medical situations. The newest manikin is one more step in maintaining a strong program where students can learn the skills they need to succeed.

- by Chehalis Eno, junior English major

Read full stories and find more news at [southern.edu/news](https://southern.edu/news).

## » by the numbers

600

square feet in each of the 26 new Southern Mountain Cottages offer a new option for student housing on campus.

19

countries hosted Southern's long-term student missionaries last year.

2,929

undergraduates this school year make this the largest undergraduate student body in Southern's history.

## Team Ranks in Finance Challenge

A team of finance students from the School of Business participated in the Greater Tennessee Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Institute Research Challenge last spring. Despite this being only the second year for Southern to compete in the challenge, the team placed second among 10 participating colleges and universities, increasing its position from last year.

In the challenge, students assume the role of financial analysts, evaluating a company and advising a panel of judges on whether to buy, sell, or hold stock in the company. The competition tests students' analytical, valuation, report

writing, and presentation skills.

"Our success in the CFA challenge is a testament to the support of the Bloomberg terminals and our finance lab, as well as the dedication of the School of Business professors," says Joelle Akiki, professor in the School of Business and adviser for the team.

Southern's \$20 million School of Business Leadership and Innovation Campaign will support a new building and program endowment that benefits students and programs like these. To learn more, visit [southern.edu/gobusiness](https://southern.edu/gobusiness).

- by Gabriella Grundy, senior business-public relations major



Southern Adventist University's student team presents their research findings at the Greater Tennessee Chartered Financial Analyst Institute Research Challenge held in Nashville.

100%

of May 2024 nursing graduates who have taken the NCLEX so far have passed on the first try.

\$1.8M

in financial support from donor-backed funds benefitted Southern in 2023-2024.



## Your Gift Matters to Tina

**Name:** Tina Duncan  
**Major:** Medical Lab Science  
**Year:** Junior

Tina chose Southern Adventist University because of its strong Christian atmosphere and biblical approach to science, which are key to her dream of becoming a general surgeon. But with her family's finances stretched thin, staying in school has been tough. Your gift to scholarships could have a profound impact for Tina and other students like her.

Join us in making this season brighter for a Southern student. Your generosity can change a life and empower the leaders of tomorrow.

Make a donation today at [southern.edu/give](https://southern.edu/give).

740+

new students participated in Southern Serves Day, assisting 29 organizations in Chattanooga.

## Southern Mountain Cottages Meet Student Housing Needs

A newly built home away from home on the north side of campus will soon welcome its first student residents. Southern Mountain Cottages provide a new on-campus housing option for students and expand the living spaces available in response to climbing enrollment numbers.

“Southern is blessed to be experiencing unprecedented levels of growth,” says Lisa Hall, ‘87, dean of students and director of residence life. “We want to do everything we can to provide a quality Adventist education and welcoming campus environment for all of the students who want to attend our university. Southern Mountain Cottages are a great option for our more independent upperclassmen who still want to be on campus.”

Located on the edge of White Oak Mountain off Colcord Drive, each 600-square-foot cottage includes loft-style beds with study areas, a bathroom, a kitchen, a living area, and laundry facilities. They also offer an



The cottages at the base of White Oak Mountain will embrace the natural beauty of the area once the landscaping and entry decks are completed.

easily walkable distance to classes and activities. Currently, the project includes 26 cottages, each accommodating four students. Marty Hamilton, associate vice president for Financial Administration, describes the cottages as modern and eco-friendly modular homes, which are built according to the same high-quality standards as traditional homes that use dimensional lumber construction.

Hamilton feels that not only will the cottages themselves be beautiful, but

so will the setting. The landscaping surrounding the cottages will embrace the area’s natural mountain beauty with attractive lighting and pathways.

“We wanted the cottages nestled up in the woods and surrounded by natural landscaping, so we are including plants like blueberry bushes and flowers to further add to the natural feel of the development,” Hamilton says.

- by Becky Brooks, ‘03, editorial manager



The living room and kitchen offer ample outdoor light and a modern aesthetic.

## Student Composition Spotlights by Local Orchestra

Southern student Matthew Kimbley, senior double major in music theory/literature and piano performance, got to hear his original composition *Atlantic Overture* performed by the Chattanooga Symphony & Opera on opening night, September 26. He also took questions from the audience after the concert.

“I am extremely honored to have them perform my composition,” Kimbley shares. “Last year, while sitting in one of their concerts, I set a goal of having one of my works performed by a professional orchestra within 10 years. Little did I know that they would perform the piece just one year later. It is an incredibly rare experience for a student my age to have a composition debuted by a professional

orchestra, and I am very blessed to have this opportunity.”

Kimbley began writing music when he was 6 years old, composing simple pieces in his piano workbook. He’s come a long way since then, growing to love music and composition, choosing to study music at Southern, and composing original pieces that the university’s Symphony Orchestra and Wind Symphony performed last year.

“I’m proud of Matthew and trust that this will be the beginning of an illustrious musical career—one focused and centered on serving God through music,” says Peter Cooper, DMA, dean of the School of Music.

- by Chehalis Eno, junior English major



Matthew Kimbley smiles for the audience after conducting his composition *Atlantic Overture* for Southern’s Symphony Orchestra last school year.

## Students Win Big at Chattanooga ADDY Awards

Four Southern students won awards at the 2023-2024 American Advertising (ADDY) Awards Chattanooga last spring. Hosted by the American Advertising Federation, the ADDY Awards are the largest creative competition in the world, with a tiered competition starting locally.

“Having an award like this on a student’s résumé shows potential employers that he or she has the skills and ambition that it takes to succeed in this industry,” explains Mindy Trott, ‘06, MFA, professor in the School of Visual Art and Design.

Elennie Ramirez, senior graphic design major, won the Student Best-of-Show ADDY, a Judge’s Choice ADDY, a Silver ADDY, and a Gold ADDY. Katie Rose, junior graphic design major, won a Judge’s Choice ADDY and a Gold ADDY. Andrew Boggess, senior mass communication and photography major,

and Preston Waters, junior marketing major, won a Silver ADDY together.

- by Chehalis Eno, junior English major



Left: Katie Rose

Top right: Elennie Ramirez

Bottom right: Andrew Boggess (left) and Preston Waters (right)



## Friendly and Fit

By Ana Zelidon, senior English major

While Hulsey Wellness Center primarily serves students and staff, the friendly atmosphere of this high-quality facility also fosters participation from the local community, providing a practical way for Southern to serve its neighbors. Celebrating the sixth decade since the beginning of the School of Health and Kinesiology at Southern Adventist University, the commitment remains to empower individuals to live well.

### Community Wellness

After walking through the front entrance, newcomers and members are typically greeted with smiles and waves from Southern students. Caleb Alvarez, junior kinesiology major, has been working at the front desk since his sophomore year.

“We’re a public gym, so it’s important to be as open and welcoming as possible,” Alvarez says. “Hulsey provides a great way for us to meet Southern alumni and people in the community. I’m glad I can share what my school is all about and be a part of a place where people enjoy coming to work out.”

Collegedale and Chattanooga-area locals total one-third of the current members, and many have been impressed with the hospitality extended by the youthful staff.

“New members are coming in all the time, providing constant positive feedback on our swim lessons, the gymnastics program for kids, and gym cleanliness,” says Darin Bissell, ’03, the facility manager at Hulsey. “Now that we accept the Silver Sneakers and Silver & Fit health insurances, more seniors are visiting to try out the gym, and many tend to sign on and stay.”

Three-year member Shannon Heftka recently learned that her insurance covers membership fees at Hulsey. Originally from Los Angeles, she moved to Chattanooga 20 years ago and tried memberships at different gyms in her area. The first time she arrived at Southern’s facility, she was pleasantly surprised by both the sanitation and the employees.

“The students are very friendly and as nice as can be. It’s a part of the atmosphere,” says Heftka, who comes to the facility five days a week during the adult swim time. She regularly expresses her appreciation to Tamara Ritterskamp, ’94, aquatic program director, for



Hulsey Wellness Center's pools, fitness classes, and friendly atmosphere are leading to positive community connections.

the lifeguards’ attentiveness. “If I have any trouble, I know the lifeguards here are equipped to help me,” Heftka says.

### Lifelong Fitness

“The aquatic program is a huge outreach opportunity for Southern and a connection with the community that we wouldn’t have otherwise,” says Kaleb Rivas, senior animation major and head lifeguard. He and other student lifeguards teach group swimming lessons throughout the year to children at various skill levels, including some as young as age 4. “It’s fulfilling to see kids who are terrified of water at first, but then can easily swim laps in the pool by the end of their lessons.”

According to Ritterskamp, parents of the children attending swim lessons respond to surveys with overwhelmingly positive feedback. Most families hear about the lessons from satisfied parents in local churches.

“We have quite a few community members [from] outside the Seventh-day Adventist ‘bubble,’” Ritterskamp says. “Many who enroll in our lifeguard certification classes are not from our church’s demographic, but they come here because they know our gym has well-trained instructors and super-nice people.”

Chris Gober previously owned a personal gym and has worked as a personal trainer at another local gym. At the beginning of the summer, he joined Hulsey and hasn’t looked back. “This gym has great equipment and the most congenial staff,” Gober says. “During my workouts, other gymgoers ask me questions, and I feel comfortable asking nearby weightlifters to spot me. Everybody is here to learn and exercise together.”

Hulsey Wellness Center is a comprehensive wellness facility with a fitness center, indoor pools, 30-foot climbing wall, and a state-of-the-art human performance lab. Programs available include children’s gymnastics and swim lessons, lifeguard and first-aid certification through the Red Cross, and a variety of exercise and swim classes for adults. Learn more by visiting [southern.edu/wellness](https://southern.edu/wellness). ■



### Hi, Forrest!

Southern’s new bear mascot, now officially named “**Forrest**,” greets students as they arrive on campus at the Freshman Welcome Party. The name Forrest was chosen because of the mascot’s love for the outdoors and appreciation for Southern’s natural beauty. Forrest represents harmony between people and God’s surrounding nature. With his energetic spirit, he loves celebrating student achievement and encouraging campus residents to work hard, rest well, and have fun with friends. After 131 years without an official mascot, a bear was voted as the mascot in 2023, representing strength, courage, confidence, and leadership, all qualities that Southern students aspire to embody. His name was voted on by students and staff in August 2024. Read more at [southern.edu/columns](https://southern.edu/columns).



# FINDING FAITH

A LOOK AT HOW WE FIND OUR FAITH THROUGH LIFE AND LEARNING AT SOUTHERN

What is faith, and how does it play into campus life at Southern?

Hebrews 11:1 says, “Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

Many Southern students and staff have discovered that the rather abstract ideas of confidence, hope, and assurance become more concrete for them during their time on campus, building the foundation for a lifelong relationship with God.

Southern friends Zach LeClerc (left) and Calvin Serban recently created a film about climbing and faith.



## CLIMBING AND CHRISTIAN FAITH

By Chehalis Eno, junior English major

Zach LeClerc, junior nursing major, shares how the faith it takes to climb mountains reflects the faith we need to have in God.



“Climbing, for me, is a super cool space where you can find growth and push yourself in so many ways,” says Zach LeClerc, junior nursing major, as he ascends a sheer rock face at the beginning of the film *Walls of Faith*.

LeClerc has always loved the outdoors, but it wasn’t until he came to Southern that he began rock climbing and formed a new passion. He also discovered that the faith it takes to climb mountains reflects the faith we need to have in God.

“The funny thing is I’m actually afraid of heights,” LeClerc shares. “It took me a lot of time to experience how the equipment was protecting me, and then I got more comfortable with it. I think that’s such a cool reflection of a relationship with God.” He shares that learning from his professors and being mentored also shepherded his climbing journey, and his experiences at Southern have not only strengthened his climbing skills but also deepened his faith journey.

“I would say that my relationship with God has become a lot more tangible from my time at Southern, and I’m very grateful for that,” he says.

### Walls of Faith

LeClerc decided to share his insights on climbing and Christian faith in a film called *Walls of Faith*. The idea for the film arose in response to a creative prompt for Connect With the Creator, a film festival at Walla Walla University, Southern’s sister school in Washington. The thought-provoking question was “How do you connect with God through the outdoors?” LeClerc worked with friend and filmmaker Calvin Serban, ’23, film production alum, to create the piece.

In the 17-minute film, LeClerc draws parallels between climbing and Christianity. “I realized that just watching friends fall and be caught by the protection they placed

wouldn’t make me any more confident in the gear when I used it,” he says. “I think it’s the same thing with God. You have to experience Him personally.”

He also shares that trust in the climbing gear will directly impact how high someone can climb, just like how faith in God will impact how much He can make a difference in someone’s life.

### Sharing Faith

In addition to submitting the film to Connect With the Creator, Serban also entered *Walls of Faith* into the Lookout Wild Film Festival (LWFF), based just 10 minutes from Southern in Chattanooga. He notes, “I wasn’t sure how a faith-based film would be perceived by a festival that tends to lean toward a secular lifestyle.” Months later, word came back that the film was accepted. “I was stoked, especially since I knew ours was one of 60 films selected from 300 applications,” he adds.

After the film was shown in Chattanooga, LeClerc and Serban participated in a Q&A panel where they shared more about the inspiration and faith aspects of the film. LeClerc says his favorite part about the setting was being able to share his faith because everyone had the common bond of loving the outdoors. “The amount of people who told us that they love the spiritual tie to our film was amazing. And then they asked about what church we go to or what we believe,” he says.

“It was an amazing experience to present a bit of what went on behind the scenes to an audience that had just watched our film,” says Serban. “It was also a great opportunity to share our faith and why we chose to make a film about it.” ■

Watch the film at [southern.edu/columns](https://southern.edu/columns).

LeClerc and Serban are already working on their next film, which they hope to submit to film festivals in 2025. This time, they plan to explore how they experience Sabbath rest through the outdoors.

# FROM GENESIS TO GENES

By Ana Zelidon, senior English major

Religion and science professors meet regularly to discuss topics where faith and science intersect.

Most evenings, Southern physics professor Kenneth Caviness, '82, PhD, and his wife, Claryce, sit comfortably in their living room reading copies of books about genetic codes and Christian philosophy. Each month, their knowledge quest expands to include colleagues and friends in a conference room on Southern's campus where faculty meet for the Faith-Science Discussion. Analyzing the background and current reports where these topics meet helps professors solidify their own faith and more easily explain to students the complexities that arise between these two core academic disciplines.

## Decades of Discussion

For nearly 20 years, professors from Hickman Science Center and the School of Religion's Hackman Hall who come from diverse scientific and theological backgrounds have discussed books and articles about creation, origins, and worldview topics of mutual interest.

"With representation from biology, physics, chemistry, computer science, and religion, it's an enriching collaboration to come together and share collective insights and perspectives," says Greg King, '81, PhD, School of Religion dean and founder of the Faith-Science Discussion. "Together, we have made a commitment to understanding God's creation and purposes."

## Answering a Call

In 2010, Southern affirmed its stance on creation and the origin of life after the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists released a statement calling on all Adventist institutions to uphold the one-week creation story found in Scripture. King considers the discussion group an active response to that directive.

The group's study materials range from pieces by

conservative authors, such as Nancy Pearcey and Don DeYoung, to Micheal Behe, Lee Strobel, and others who combine biblical and evolutionary views. During the Biology and Allied Health Department's annual Origins Weekend each spring, one of the authors is often invited to speak for convocation, creating the opportunity for students to join in these critical discussions.

The office shelves of chemistry professor Mitch Menzmer, PhD, are full of printed works from years of participating in the group. "I want to have a solid understanding of what the Bible teaches and what we find in nature. Since I'm a scientist, I have greater exposure to scientific thinking and ideas, so I ask different kinds of questions than a theologian," he says. "During our gatherings, we go through each publication in a methodical way, probing and critiquing and comparing ideas with our church's view." Menzmer's favorite discussions have centered on thermodynamics and the origin of life from nonliving matter.

## Colleagues and Friends

Beyond the monthly meetings, participants in the discussion group have the chance to frequently connect outside their respective academic disciplines with other faculty members and Southern administrators who attend. "Our discussions facilitate cross-campus comradery. There's a symbolism in coming together and recognizing that we hold something in common," says Stephen Bauer, PhD, theology professor in the School of Religion. During meetings, members verify each other's assumptions and claims, respectfully communicate about current scientific discoveries, or correct one another on translations of a biblical Hebrew text. "It's a very respectful and collegial environment," he says.

## Outside the Conference Room

"As we approach challenging topics in our classes, students have questions. We want to be able to speak intelligently about any surrounding issues," Menzmer says. "We need to know who believes what and why, along with the reasons we hold certain positions as Adventists. That's the big picture."

Faculty are also able to keep abreast of differing trains of thought in their fields and share their insights with others off campus. Caviness has had opportunities to share some of the group's collective ideas worldwide. "I started with one paper for a conference, and one thing led to another. Now I have 10 different presentations that I've used in South India, Ukraine, Argentina, and Germany as well as here in the United States," he says. "God has put a burden on my heart

to share that science and religion are not at war with each other. In fact, science is an act of worship. We study science because we are in awe of God's creation."

King expresses: "What a joy it is to work and teach with people who are committed to God as Creator. That belief brings us together in community and gives us the opportunity to know each other a little better while appreciating the insights of different disciplines." ■



**Top Right:** Theology professor Stephen Bauer presents the book *A Biblical Case Against Theistic Evolution* for discussion.

**Above:** Aaron Corbit (left), '24, biology professor, adds to the conversation.

Learn more about the Faith-Science Discussion, Southern's Origins Exhibit, and other related information at [southern.edu/faithandscience](https://southern.edu/faithandscience).

# FAITH FOR THE FUTURE

By Ana Zelidon, senior English major

Lauren Rogers, junior allied health major, sees how her faith has grown through trials and with the help of ministry opportunities at Southern.

“So, how are you and Jesus?” the pastor asked. “What do you mean?” Lauren Rogers hesitantly replied. Rogers was 17 years old and a fourth-generation Seventh-day Adventist in her home country of South Africa. She and her family were active members of her local church, but when she was asked this question at youth camp, her faith was based on her Adventist heritage, not on a personal relationship with Jesus.

## A New Heart

As she considered the pastor’s question, Rogers chose to latch onto Jesus for herself. Guided by a feeling she now identifies as the Holy Spirit, she dedicated her life to Christ through an anointing service at camp.

“I poured out my heart to my pastor, and at the end, he asked me, ‘Do you want the Holy Spirit to change and transform you?’ I said, ‘Yes.’ He took some oil, put it across my forehead, and prayed for me,” Rogers remembers. “I have never cried like that since that day. It was the moment I knew Jesus and I were locked in.”

A short time later, Rogers’ family began to experience terrible hardships. Her parents lost their jobs and their home, and she watched her family suffer from declining mental health. Having just graduated from high school, Rogers was also deliberating whether to stay in South Africa or move to the United States to attend Southern.

“During that time, it was just God and me. I remember praying, ‘Lord, I don’t really know what the future looks like, and I don’t understand the present, but I want to take Your hand and do the right thing,’” Rogers says. “I knew God was going to take care of me regardless of which option I chose.”

## A Faith Community

After careful consideration and purposeful prayer, Rogers came to Southern to study allied health in Fall 2022, with her family following her a year later. Though she was emerging from a storm of obstacles, Rogers’ dedication to prayer pushed her forward and inspired a spirit of service.

She embarked on mission trips to the Dominican Republic and Brazil, enlisted in Southern’s LEAD literature evangelism program, joined a student-led choir, participated in worship events, and began working in Southern’s Office of Ministry and Missions on campus.

“Being involved at Southern has helped me realize that Jesus’ love overshadows everything, even my own self-doubt,” she says. Rogers recounts her excitement in entering a like-minded community. “The friends I have made here have been such joyful people, and it’s easy to see that they have Jesus in their hearts. They bring so much happiness to my life.”

## A Vision of Service

Rogers describes her new spiritually influenced connections and experiences as “godly reservations” that deepen her relationship with Jesus. “There are some people whom God has reserved just for you to speak to—at the right place at the right time—like little divine winks,” Rogers says. “There are some moments that are just so profound, and God knows they will touch your soul in a special way. So, keep listening.”

She often feels unprepared when these opportunities to share God arise, but that’s part of what makes each one a special moment for her.

Rogers describes her experience as a missionary overseas: “When I went to the Dominican Republic to preach, I would have never thought I would give a sermon. When I went to Brazil, I was constructing, even though I didn’t have the muscles for building. So far, God has been providing me with opportunities to do what I’m least comfortable doing.”

Inspired by her involvement in different ministries at Southern, Rogers plans to use her career to achieve her goal of becoming a missionary. “My experiences have made me want to share God more intimately within my career,” Rogers says. “I want to connect people to Jesus, through not only healing the body but also healing the heart. Before coming to Southern, I didn’t know I wanted to be a missionary. Now, I don’t see myself doing anything else.” ■

Lauren Rogers has participated in mission trips to the Dominican Republic and Brazil while enrolled at Southern, working in dental clinics and ministering to the people she met. These experiences have helped her decide to pursue becoming a full-time missionary in the future.



# WORLD-CLASS EXPERIENCES

This summer, students from Southern traveled around the globe. With various itineraries and goals, they served communities on mission trips, earned course credits on academic tours, and shared the love of God through evangelistic meetings and musical concerts. These are just a few of the world-class experiences available to Southern students.



## 1 PERU

Twenty-one students, two staff members, and several medical volunteers traveled to Pucallpa, Peru, with Southern's Evangelistic Resource Center, where they held medical and dental clinics for the local population and preached nine evangelistic sermons in local churches.



## 2 BRAZIL

Students served with Amazon Lifesavers Ministry during Southern's Vision Trip to Brazil. They lived on a boat and slept in hammocks while traveling along the Amazon River, providing medical and spiritual care to villagers.



## 3 SPAIN

A concert tour by Southern's select chamber choir, I Cantori, took students to Spain, where they sang in historic venues, churches, and schools to serve as ambassadors of goodwill. According to Genevieve Brown-Kibble, DMA, director of choral studies, "We want to draw people to a deeper sense of who Christ is through the literature that we sing."



## 4 ITALY

As part of the Reformation Study Tour led by the School of Religion, students toured sites of historical significance to Christians. Pictured here, the group listens to a presentation at the College of the Barbs in Italy's Waldensian Valley in Torre Pellice. The tour also visited sites in Switzerland, Germany, and Czechia.



## 5 UGANDA

Southern's Enactus club in the School of Business visited villages in Uganda to hold financial literacy classes. Pictured at right, Roman Johnson, '24, and Colin Glenn, senior business administration major, interact with children in the village of Saara Kihombiya.



## 6 INDONESIA

During an Evangelistic Resource Center mission trip to Jakarta, Indonesia, 12 participants preached 16 evangelistic sermons for a series titled "A New Beginning." The group is wearing the traditional dress of the Toraja tribe as they meet with administrators from the Jakarta Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



# AI AND DINOSAURS



technology to classify images of dinosaur teeth. This meant inputting images of teeth to train the model to classify an image, then assigning the image to a group based on the type of tooth recognized by the model.

One of Alférez's graduate students at the time, Jacob Bahn, '23, was in search of a project for his master's thesis, so Alférez officially invited him to take on the project in October 2022.

"I was super-intrigued by the project, even though I had never previously worked with deep learning technology," Bahn says. Using a data set of 487 images from Snyder's collection of microfossilized *Pectinodon bakkeri* teeth, which were obtained during dinosaur digs in Wyoming, Bahn began the work of gathering data.

Bahn first organized numerical values based on certain features of the dinosaur teeth into a file before running machine learning algorithms on it. As a result, he was able to create three different groupings of the teeth. Next, these groupings were used to train a deep learning model that would automatically classify the images. Eighty percent of Snyder's images were used for training, and after a cleaning process, the other 20 percent were used to validate the model.

The deep learning model was trained on the new GPU server in the School of Computing, which was purchased with funds from a research grant provided by the Faith and Science Council of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, as well as donations from Southern's 2022 Giving Day.

Professor Alférez (top left) invited Jacob Bahn (bottom), '23, to explore the possibility of classifying *Pectinodon bakkeri* dinosaur teeth using deep learning technology.

The results of the validation are promising, with 71% accuracy, 71% precision, 70.5% recall, and a 70.5% F1-score, which indicates the reliability of how the model was used in this context. Alférez, Bahn, and Snyder are continuing to edit and modify Bahn's original thesis with the aim of having it peer-reviewed and published in an academic journal.

Bahn currently works as a software engineer for the Tennessee Valley Authority and is excited to continue working on the project. "It's a fun talking point in my career," Bahn says. "I've always been a bit of a geek when it comes to technology, and why not throw dinosaurs into the mix?"

Both professors say that this is the first collaboration of its kind at Southern. "The nature of this project requires lots of data, which is something that the biology team can provide," Alférez says. "Then, processing that data is our side—the computing side—of things."

Snyder concurs, "For a project like this, it is essential to have the expertise in both fields to reach the goal."

According to Alférez and Snyder, this collaborative project has opened the door for the School of Computing and the Biology and Allied Health Department to develop additional endeavors, with the goal of providing more learning opportunities for students.

"We live in the era of AI," Alférez says. "Through these projects, students are able to generate new knowledge and gain the necessary preparation for jobs in which AI is highly sought after." ■



Paleontologists help us understand the history of life on Earth through their study of fossils, which they manually identify by examining the fossils' geometry and other features. But what if they had a faster, easier, and more effective way to classify these ancient traces of life?

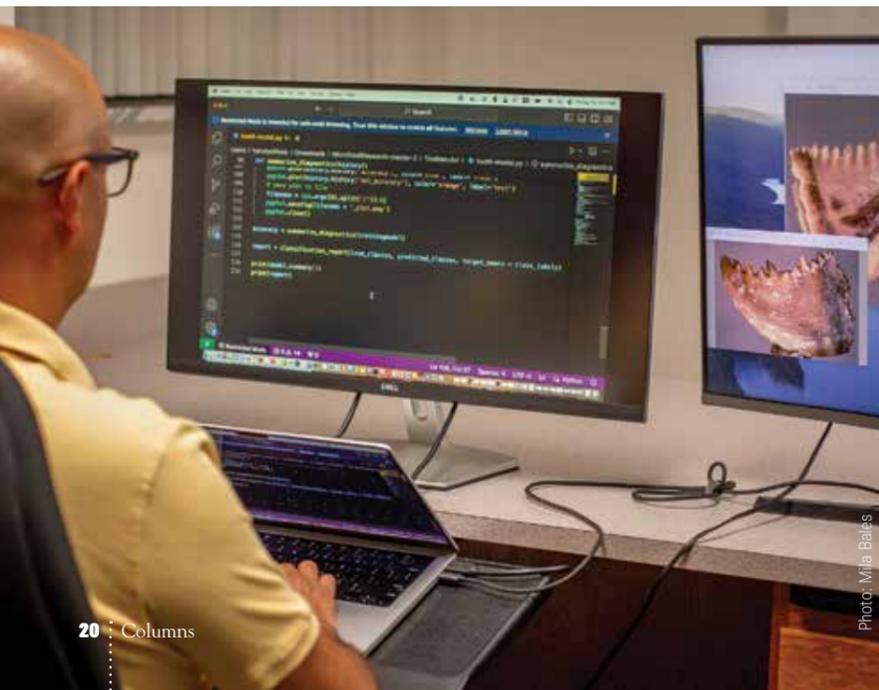


Photo: Milla Bales

By Gabriella Grundy, senior business-public relations major

**S**outhern Adventist University's Biology and Allied Health Department and School of Computing have collaborated on a project that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to automatically identify dinosaur teeth. The project applies the form of AI known as deep learning, which uses artificial neural networks to learn from data and solve complex problems.

Harvey Alférez, PhD, professor and director of the Center for Innovation and Research in Computing (CIRC) in the School of Computing, and Keith Snyder, PhD, chair of the Biology and Allied Health Department, began formulating the idea for the project in Fall 2022. They wanted to explore the possibility of using deep learning



Photo: Milla Bales



Photo: Keith Snyder



Photo: Harvey Alférez



Illustration: Wikipedia

*Pectinodon bakkeri*, a species of troodontid theropod dinosaurs, is described as a small, chicken-sized dinosaur. Its generic name derives from the comb-like serrations on the rear edge of its teeth (the Latin word *pecten*, meaning "comb," and the Greek word for "tooth," which translates as *odon*), and its specific name references paleontologist Robert Thomas Bakker.

# HOMECOMING 2024

By Becky Brooks, '03, editorial manager

## "FIT FOR ETERNITY"

was the theme for Homecoming Weekend 2024 and had Southern's campus bustling with activity October 24-27 as nearly 1,000 alumni and friends came together to reminisce, renew friendships, and celebrate milestones. On Sabbath, the featured speaker for the weekend, Pavel Goia, '99, *Ministry Magazine* editor and associate ministerial secretary for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, shared a message centered on the theme.

The campus celebrated three significant anniversaries this year: 50 years for the Die Meistersinger men's chorus, 60 years since the formation of the School of Health and Kinesiology (originally the Physical Education Department), and 100 years since the construction of Lynn Wood Hall. Activities offered throughout the weekend included a new-this-year pickleball tournament, along with traditional favorites such as the car show, estate planning presentations, and cooking demonstrations.

"I love welcoming our alumni back and getting to know more and more of them over Homecoming Weekend," says Cheryl (Fuller) Torres, '05, director of Alumni Relations. "I'm already looking forward to next year!"

Mark your calendar for Homecoming Weekend 2025, which is scheduled for October 23-26. ■



5 Photo: Joseph Hyde



6 Photo: Joseph Hyde



7 Photo: Larron Matheson



8 Photo: Larron Matheson



9 Photo: Joseph Hyde

## DIE MEISTERSINGER TURNS 50!

Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as Southern's men's chorus, nearly 100 Die Meistersinger members from years past blessed a full sanctuary with their reunion concert on Sabbath afternoon.

Die Meistersinger has performed in Romania, the former Soviet Union, Thailand, and many other European and Asian countries. After Marvin "Doc" Robertson, who directed the choir from 1974-1999, retired as dean of the School of Music, members of the group promised to reunite every five years to renew friendships and to offer praise to God through music selected from past performances. This year marks the group's sixth campus reunion and five decades since the group's inaugural practice.

Bruce Coston, '83, a member of Die Meistersinger from 1979-1983, shares four reasons why being part of this choir had a big impact on him:

- 1 The musicianship expected of us
- 2 The relationships I developed with men whom I respected and admired
- 3 The way it challenged me to be more committed in my walk with God
- 4 It was also just a lot of fun!

### PICTURE CAPTIONS

1. Mills McArthur (attended, on left), associate professor of history and political studies, speaks with a visitor to Lynn Wood Hall during the building's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
2. A rally intensifies during the School of Health and Kinesiology's pickleball tournament on Saturday night.
3. In honor of Lynn Wood Hall's anniversary, a 1915 Model T Ford was parked on the promenade—which was originally a road—in front of the building.
4. Alumni enjoy a friendly meal at Picnic in the Park on Friday afternoon.
5. Clayton Belgrave, '15, attends the Kick-Off Banquet on Thursday.

6. Barbara (Holland) Wear, '62, (left) and Harriet Snyder, '68, attend the Ladies Luncheon on Friday.
7. Alumni from 2014, Jeremy Grabiner, Xenia Figueroa, and Virginie Cimpaye gather during the Honor Class Reception.
8. On Sabbath evening, alumni met in the South Atrium of Collegedale Church for the Alumni Reception, where they could fellowship and meet with friends.
9. Holly Gadd, PhD, (left) professor of nursing, talks with Linda (Im) Chung, '84, and her husband, John, during the Kick-Off Banquet.

To view more photos from Homecoming, visit [southern.edu/columns](https://southern.edu/columns).



1 Photo: Becky Brooks



2 Photo: Joseph Hyde



3 Photo: Becky Brooks



4 Photo: Mila Bales

# Alumni Association Tour

## JUNE 10-23, 2025



# THE BEST OF BRITAIN

ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, WALES



Join fellow alumni and friends of Southern for a tour of beautiful sites and remarkable history in the United Kingdom.

### TOUR INCLUDES:

- Round-trip airfare from Atlanta to Edinburgh and London to Atlanta
- Two meals per day
- Nightly hotel lodging
- Entrance fees to sites
- Comfortable European coach transport
- Experienced tour leader Bill Wohlers, PhD

**PRICE:** \$5,500 (based on double-occupancy and current exchange rate)

**LEARN MORE** at [southern.edu/alumni-tour](https://southern.edu/alumni-tour) or by contacting Alumni Relations at 423.236.2827 or [alumni@southern.edu](mailto:alumni@southern.edu).



### PICTURE CAPTIONS

**1.** Janet (McKee) Wood, '67, (left) and Ellsworth McKee, '54, attend the Kick-Off Banquet.

**2.** Mamie Pruitt, '79, (left) was honored as the Alumna of the Year as Phil Garver, '70, presents her award.

**3.** Shannon (Hayward) Gabbard, '04, and Jon Gabbard, '03, enjoy a meal during the Welcome Home Supper.

**4.** Die Meistersinger Men's Chorus performs a concert for their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary reunion.

**5.** Steve Martin, '82, plays the offertory during the Sabbath afternoon Die Meistersinger Reunion Concert.

**6.** Denver Nelson, '24, leads a cooking demonstration by the

Vegetarian Culinary Arts program on Friday morning.

**7.** The Antique/Classic Car Show showcased a variety of cars and tractors belonging to alumni and community members.

**8.** Beautiful weather and vibrant fall colors set the scene for the Alumni Golf Tournament on Sunday.

**9.** Around 50 antique cars and 17 tractors were part of the Antique/Classic Car Show Sunday morning.

**10.** Friends spend a day on the green at the Alumni Golf Tournament.

**11.** Attendees take photos on the tractors during the Antique/Classic Car Show.



## 100 YEARS IN LYNN WOOD HALL

Built in 1924 as part of Southern Junior College, Lynn Wood Hall was first used when the school year began in September of that year. The building cost \$48,000 to construct. It was first called College Hall before it was renamed Lynn Wood Hall in 1945.

It opened as an administration and classroom building. Electric power was installed in 1940, but even in 1941 it housed the only telephone in Collegedale, and all calls had to be routed through Ooltewah. Over the years, the floor has been worn where students stood to pay their school bill. It has held weddings, nurses' capping services, and chapel services. Chemistry and physics labs, history, cooking, and typing classes have all been taught in its classrooms. Southern's library was even located in a corner room on the top floor before the A.G. Daniells Memorial Library was completed in 1946.

During the weekend, alumni visited this special building where many friendships and memories have been made.

## Alumni Notes

**'70s** Mamie Pruitt, '79, is passionate about helping kids through physical education. She has received numerous awards in her role as a coach and educator. She was recognized as Teacher of the Year six times; the 2023 Advocate of the Year for Georgia Health, Physical Education, and Recreation; and American Red Cross Teacher of the Year. She received a Michelle Obama Let's Move Award, Elementary Physical Education of Excellence Award, and recognition as a Church Mentor Mom. She has co-authored two books, *Heart of My Sisters* and *My Life Praises You*, a women's devotional. She founded the Mamie L. Pruitt Educational Assistance Fund and is CEO of C-ME Professional Services. She's Southern's 2024 Alumna of the Year.

**'80s** **1** Jeffrey Kuhlman, '83, MD, was inducted into the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association 2024 Hall of Fame. A Navy captain, Kuhlman spent 30 years in military medical service, appointed to the White House for more than half of that time. As director of the medical unit, he served George H. W. Bush, Bill and Hillary Clinton, George W. Bush, Joe Biden (as vice president), and Barack Obama. In January 2009, Kuhlman was appointed physician to the president by President Obama—a role he filled until his retirement from the Navy in 2013. He holds a Certificate in Traveler Health® and continues to provide medical direction for AdventHealth Global Missions, participating in medical trips abroad. Since 2013, he has served as chief quality and safety officer for Florida-based AdventHealth, leading clinical risk and transformation efforts. He serves in a medical advisory role to the orthopedic physicians caring for the University of Florida Gators football team. His third book, *Transforming Presidential Healthcare: Ensuring Comprehensive Care for the Commander in Chief Amid 21<sup>st</sup> Century Threats*, was published in September 2024.

William McKnight, '87, has been named one of the 100 most influential people in data by DataIQ and is also ranked #1 globally in big data and cloud by Thinkers360. He is incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be included in such talented groups of data leaders. He is president of McKnight Consulting Group, which encourages organizations to become data-driven, incorporating data into each and every decision, interaction, and process in order to fully utilize data. This allows organizations to grow resilience, expand into new markets, and scale. He hosts a monthly webinar series, "Advanced Analytics With William McKnight," which he began four years ago.

Karen (Spencer) Davis, '89, earned a master's degree and a doctoral degree in early childhood education P-3/educational specialist K-12 from Grand Canyon University in Arizona. She's a professor at a local university in New Jersey, where she lives.

**'10s** **2** Nearly a decade after their time together at Southern, Georgia (Standish) Damsteegt, '15, George Nelson, III, '18, John Henri Rorabeck, attended, and Mark Froelich, '13 and '15, remain close friends. All have successfully established careers in the Washington, D.C., metro area that align with their degrees, and they continue to support one another through life's milestones. A recent highlight was the baby dedication of 1-year-old Kathryn Damsteegt on August 17, 2024, with her dear friend, 1-year-old Audrey Froelich, by her side. Damsteegt works as a web and graphic design specialist at the North American Division, Nelson serves as an administrative professional at the North American Division, Rorabeck is the science communication director at Kids After Hours, and Froelich is a healthcare support specialist for Adventist Risk Management.

**3** Kevin Christenson, '16, in his role as head of Hope Studios, was executive producer of *The Hopeful*, a Hope Channel International film telling the story of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The movie, which premiered in theaters in April, shares the church's history in a way that is engaging for audiences even with no prior exposure to the Adventist faith. He also recently joined Southern's School of Journalism and Communications' Advisory Board and hired a student intern to help with public relations and communications when the studio was launching the film. Christenson enjoys opportunities to mentor the next generation of cinema evangelists.

**4** Carlos De La Cruz, '18, completed his Master of Divinity from Andrews University Theological Seminary in Michigan in May 2024 and is now pastoring in the Oklahoma Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. He celebrates with his wife, Wendy (Castro), '18, and their two children.

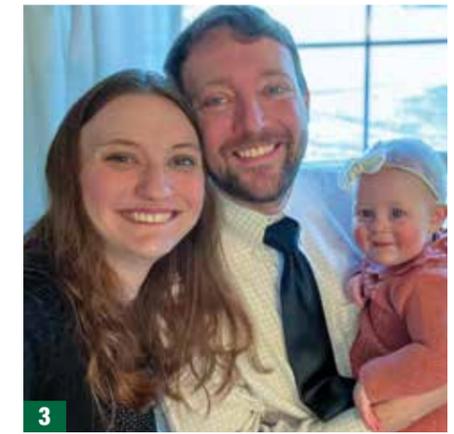


## Family Additions

**1** Nicolas, '17, and Ashley (Rich) Lapido, '16, welcomed Adeline to their family on December 27, 2023. Nicolas and Ashley live in the Collegedale, Tennessee, area.

**2** Nehemiah and Tessa (Corbin) Quarnstrom, '19, welcomed Chloe to their family on June 14, 2024. Nehemiah and Tessa live in Coon Rapids, Minnesota.

**3** Mark, '13 and '15, and Lisa (Poirier) Froelich, '15, welcomed Audrey Elise to their family on June 11, 2023, in Silver Spring, Maryland. They say she is a very observant, happy, and healthy girl who loves to smile and wave at her new and old friends alike. Mark works at Adventist Risk Management as a healthcare support specialist for the Ascend to Wholeness healthcare plan, which manages healthcare insurance and other benefits for Adventist pastors and teachers in the United States. Lisa works as an orchestra and band teacher at Spencerville Adventist Academy.



3

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

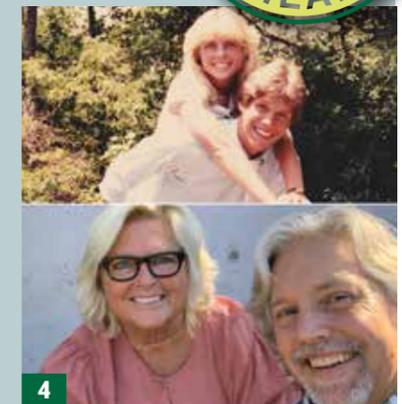


## Celebrating Southern Sweethearts

**4** One Sabbath in January 1983, Teresa (Adams) Rice, '83 and '86, and her roommate planned to join a group to sing at the nursing home. Only four students volunteered that day, so the trip was canceled. One of the two men who showed up was Kevin Rice, '86, MD, who came with a mutual friend. Teresa had heard that Kevin had a girlfriend, so when he called the next day and asked her to the upcoming Valentine's banquet, it was a surprise. She thought he was smart, funny, and cute, so she figured he knew what he was doing—and it turns out, he did not have a girlfriend. The pair dated for the remainder of their time at Southern, joining Destiny Drama, taking walks around the loop, swimming laps at the pool together, studying at McKee Library, driving up to Lookout Mountain for sunsets, enjoying falafels and onion rings at Ankar's, windsurfing at Chickamauga Lake, and eating waffles at the Campus Kitchen. They married in June 1986 and moved to Loma Linda for medical school. Kevin was in an MD/PhD program, so they were there for eight years. Teresa, a nurse, worked at Loma Linda University Medical Center in PICU, NICU, and Epidemiology. They had both of their daughters while there (in 1988 and 1992). After more than 41 years together and 38 years of marriage, they are still each other's favorite.

Share your Southern Sweetheart story at [southern.edu/alumni](https://southern.edu/alumni).

\*A Southern Sweetheart couple is defined as an attendee/graduate married to another Southern attendee/graduate.



4

## Remembrance

**Stephen Anthony Hall Sr.**, '67, passed away at 80 years old on May 11, 2024. Hall was born in Orlando, Florida, to Grady L. and Edith Hall. He graduated with a degree in theology from Southern Missionary College and returned to Florida to become the first youth pastor at Forest Lake Church in Altamonte Springs. He later taught 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades at Forest Lake Elementary Educational Center before becoming a budget analyst for Orange County, Florida, and eventually working as a certified financial planner. Hall was a member at Kress Memorial Seventh-day Adventist Church, a chairman of the school board at Orlando Junior Academy, a member of Toastmasters and the Rotary Club, and a volunteer chaplain for the Orange County Sheriff's Office for 15 years. Hall earned two master's degrees from Rollins College in business administration and criminal justice, also working as an adjunct instructor there for 10 years. Hall is survived by his wife, **Mary (Stevens) Hall**, '77; two sons, Stephen Anthony Hall II and Jonathan D. Hall, both of Orlando; along with his sister-in-law, nephews, nieces, and several great-nieces.

**1 Tim Nichols**, '79, was born on August 6, 1957, in Jackson, Michigan, to Rex Kleile and Joyce Jean (Shewman) Nichols and died on March 24, 2024. In 1968, the family moved to Florida, where Nichols attended East Bay High School in Tampa for one year, then transferred to Forest Lake Academy. After graduating in 1975, he went to Southern Missionary College to earn a Bachelor of Arts in theology. One week after graduation, he married the love of his life, **Shiree Diane Albers**, '78, in Des Moines, Iowa. Nichols was a pastor in Kansas and Florida before moving into pastoral leadership positions in central Florida and then at the state level. He was executive pastor at Forest Lake Church in Apopka at the time of his death, after an 18-month battle with cancer. He was preceded in death by his sister **Penney (Penelope Lynn Nichols)**, '78. He is survived by his wife, Shiree; sons and daughters-in-law, **Michael**, '08, and **Sabely (Cruz) Nichols**, '07, and **Ben**, '10 and Madoka Nichols; mother, Joyce Nichols; sister and brother-in-law, **Rene**, '82, and **Victor Czerkasij**, '83 and '00; and nephews.

**2 James Norman Ramsey**, '68, passed away in Asheville, North Carolina, on August 29, 2024. Ramsey was born in Asheville in 1946. He attended Fletcher Academy during his senior year in high school and then enrolled at Southern Adventist University. He nurtured his love of language, history, and music while studying at Newbold College in England in 1965-1966 and also earned diplomas from the London Royal School of Music. Upon graduating from Southern with bachelor's degrees in history and English, he taught in elementary and high schools. He also pursued graduate study in literacy and reading at Andrews University in Michigan and

earned his doctorate in educational administration from Pennsylvania's LaSalle University in 2001. Ramsey later served as an instructor at institutions ranging from community colleges to correctional facilities. He also created various academic programs, including an adult literacy project. Ramsey is survived by four siblings and various other family members.

**3 Ruby Sorensen**, attended, passed away in 2024 at 98 years old, retaining her independence and zest for life until the end. Born in Saginaw, Michigan, to a Canadian mother and an American father, Ruby's life was a testament to love, service, and creativity. Ruby married a Danish man, and they raised five children together. Sorensen was a high school teacher, and she and her husband dedicated significant portions of their lives to missionary work in Argentina and Ethiopia. For the last 25 years of their service, they were at Southern Adventist University, where she worked in the cafeteria until her husband's passing in 1999. Following this, Sorensen lived with her oldest daughter and son-in-law, **Nancy**, '79, and **Morgan Helligren**, '75 and '76, in Pennsylvania, later moving with them to Springfield, Tennessee. In 2019, Sorensen moved to live with her youngest daughter and son-in-law, **Chiqui**, '81, and **Lars Gustavsson**, '79, in Walla Walla, Washington, where she remained until her passing. Over the past two decades, she poured her heart into a monthly publication called *Merry Tidings*, which she originally created to bring cheer to elderly church members who were unable to get out. She is survived by her daughters: Nancy Helligren and Chiqui Gustavsson, and their spouses; her sons: Erik, **Lief**, '99, and Temesgen; 13 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, and 14 nieces and nephews.



**4 William N. Twombly**, attended, was born on October 20, 1933, and died on August 5, 2024. Bill was born to Eli and Ethel Twombly in Trenton, Florida. He graduated from Trenton High School and attended Pacific Union College in California and Southern Adventist University. He lived in Angwin, California; Tacoma Park, Maryland; and Collegedale, Tennessee. He was drafted into the Army during the Korean War and volunteered for Operation Whitecoat, a medical research program at Fort Detrick in Maryland, resulting in treatments for yellow fever, hepatitis, Q fever, and others. Later in life, he developed interstitial lung disease, which the VA determined was a direct result of his participation. Still, the program offered him the opportunity to serve in a way that was consistent with his deeply held convictions and his status as a conscientious objector. He was active in his church, working at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for four years and at Southern for 28 years, in addition to helping establish three churches. He was a member and leader of the Ooltewah-Collegedale Kiwanis Club and the Desmond T. Doss American Legion Post 257. He was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Clarence; sister, Helen; son, David; and son-in-law, Layton Wilson. He is survived by his wife, Sandra; brother, Kenneth; daughter, Kari Wilson; son, **Kenneth**, attended; stepson, Raymond (Kimmi) Peet; eight grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

**Edward W. H. Vick**, '55, a Seventh-day Adventist teacher, preacher, and writer, died on July 23, 2024, in Bournemouth, England. He was 95. He published around 30 books and started Evening Publications, his own publishing house. Vick served as a pastor in the United States, Canada, and his homeland of England, preaching for more than 50 years. He also taught at Canadian Union College (now Burman University) in Alberta and at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University in Michigan. Later in life, he was head of the Religious Studies Department at Forest Fields College in England, and he continued to teach philosophy at local institutions after his retirement. Vick unyieldingly pursued knowledge at England's Newbold College, where he met his wife and was ordained, and at Southern Missionary College, where he studied theology. He received a master's in New Testament Greek from Andrews University, a Bachelor of Divinity from the University of London, a doctorate in theology from Vanderbilt University in Tennessee, a Bachelor of Letters in contemporary philosophical theology from the University of Oxford, and a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of Nottingham in England. Vick is survived by his wife, son, two daughters, and four grandchildren. — excerpted from an article in Spectrum by Matthew Orquia, senior English major

## Alumni Council

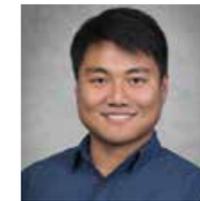
Meet your Alumni Association representatives. The Alumni Council is a group of volunteer leaders who serve the association in advisory capacities to help fulfill the mission and strategic plans of the university, as determined by the Board of Trustees and administration. To better represent the interests of young alumni, or Graduates of the Last Decade (GOLD), the position of GOLD president was added in 2019.



**Kris Eckenroth**, '99, senior president



**Kelly Payne**, attended, GOLD president



**Raymond Liu**, '13 and '16, vice president for alumni engagement initiatives



**Eric Dunkel**, '99



**Jay Dedeker**, '88



**John Henson**, '80, MD



**Moses Maier**, '17



**Niraj Patel**, '20



**Rolland Crawford**, '73



**Sharon Robberson**, '71



**Xenia Figueroa**, '14

**Not Pictured:** Eileen Flores, '19; Giovanni Banuchi, '00; Paul Ware, '87, MD. **Ex-officio Representatives:** Cheryl Torres, '05, director of Alumni Relations; Ellen Hostetler, vice president for Advancement; John Boone, '21, assistant director of Alumni Relations.

## Is Your Kid a Future Alumni?

Sign up your child or children for Southern's complimentary Future Alumni program. We send special birthday gifts every two years to the kids of alumni who sign up! Learn more at [southern.edu/futurealumni](https://southern.edu/futurealumni).

Violet Ford, 4, daughter of **Elden**, attended, and **Jourdan (Stephens) Ford**, '16, shows off her Future Alumni birthday swag.

Vaughn Treiyer, 12, son of **Dany**, '06, and **Marla (Robberson) Treiyer**, '05 and '07, sports his Southern sunglasses and flag.



## Reconnect with Fellow Alumni!

Did you know you can connect with long-lost classmates? Those who attended or graduated from Southern can access our Alumni Finder\* through our new alumni resource hub. Get in touch through the platform to renew past friendships.

Visit [southern.edu/promenade](https://southern.edu/promenade) or scan the QR code to access the Alumni Finder.

\*Alumni Finder access is available upon registration and verification.



# Forever Grateful

## Q&A with Tatiana Silveira, a student in Southern's Adult Degree Completion Program

By Staff Writers

Thanks to Southern's online Adult Degree Completion (ADC) program, Tatiana Silveira is attending Southern as a senior psychology major even though she lives more than a thousand miles away in Massachusetts. The program's courses are completely online and asynchronous, allowing working adults to finish school without putting their lives on hold. This allows Silveira and many others to schedule classes around their busy work and personal lives, not vice versa.

Cynthia Wright, ADC director, shares: "Making the decision to return to college as an adult is a significant and brave step, and we're here to support adult learners in every way possible. If they are looking for clarity on program details, need advice on balancing their studies with responsibilities, or just want to talk through any worries that come up, I am available and eager to assist."

Read on to learn more about Silveira's experience, and visit [southern.edu/adc](https://southern.edu/adc) to learn more about Southern's program.

### Why did you choose Southern's ADC program?

I looked high and low for a completely online Adventist degree program that could be flexible, since I am a mother and full-time worker. The flexibility of Southern's program makes it a perfect fit for me. The eight-week modules are accelerated but not overwhelming, especially because I hope to complete my degree as quickly as possible. Southern made that doable.

### How has your experience been so far with the ADC program? How is it shaping your academic, professional, and personal growth?

I have the highest praise for Southern's program. What makes the ADC program worth joining is more than the stellar modular setups, flexible workload, or even the accommodation in various student aids. It's the people. Every person at Southern is a reason to come here. It may be because I'm not from the South or because I was not always an Adventist, but the level of love in this institution of education was shocking. I previously attended a secular college, and the world does not have what we have here at Southern.

### How has it been balancing school with work and life during the process?

Balancing all of my obligations is a lot at times, but I truly feel supported and equipped to do so. I have a 6-year-old daughter, and she likes to sit by my desk and draw while I do homework. She says she's also doing homework. While I cook and clean, I listen to the week's readings. With Christ, this process hasn't been all that taxing, even though it initially sounded like it could be.

### What should prospective students know about finishing their degrees at Southern?

Finishing your degree here will allow you to be a champion for Christ in your field. I recommend using all of the tools available while attending. Resources such as tutoring, the library, and counseling are available both on and off campus. I would also add that your professors and advisers are some of the greatest resources you'll come across. Each one holds invaluable experience and knowledge. Ask all you can because Southern delivers!

### What were some memorable experiences for you as part of the ADC program?

My advisers have given such a lovely impression. Director Cynthia Wright works tirelessly for her students. She diligently keeps track of my progress and reaches out often. She gives me reminders and calls to ensure my success. I have never once felt unsupported at Southern with her as my adviser. When I attended a local college for my associate degree, I had maybe two conversations with my adviser, and I usually couldn't get in contact with anyone. Truthfully, I can't even remember my adviser's name. That isn't the case with my advisers here at Southern, and I'm forever grateful.

Psychology major Tatiana Silveira (not pictured) looks forward to helping individuals achieve their dreams through a Christian mindset. Image credit: SDI Productions



Photo: Larron Matheson

### Celebrating Success

Richard Thomas, '21 and '24, receives his diploma from President Ken Shaw as he graduates with his Master of Social Work during the Summer 2024 Commencement ceremony. Southern recognized 27 students who earned undergraduate degrees (two have two majors or degrees), 39 master's graduates, and four doctoral graduates (two have a dual emphasis) at the service on August 23. Welcome, graduates, to Southern's Alumni Association!

Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum, Israel Antiquities Authority,  
and The Israel Museum invite you to celebrate the arrival of



# THE IVORY COMB

LICE AND LITERACY AT LACHISH



**Comb Inscription Coming to Southern in January 2025**  
Symposium on January 27

The ivory comb dating to 1700 BC, discovered by Southern Adventist University archaeologists, will be displayed on Southern's campus in the Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum from January 27 through May 2, 2025. The rare object features the oldest deciphered complete, alphabetic sentence: "May

**this tusk root out the lice of the hair and the beard."** Featured by *The New York Times*, Smithsonian, CNN, and BBC, the small comb was named by *Christianity Today* as the #1 discovery in biblical archaeology. Southern's exhibit will be the first viewing in the United States of the linguistically significant artifact.



**For more information:**  
Visit [southern.edu/museum](https://southern.edu/museum)  
or call 423.236.2030.