My freshman year in college was a struggle for me. Not only was I getting adjusted to a full load of college-level classes, but I was also trying to figure out how I was going to afford staying at Southern Adventist University. The combination was stressful, and at times I tried to ignore dealing with the subject of finances. Soon I realized just how unwise this lack of proactive assertiveness was, and I started making appointments to see my financial counselor for advice and assistance.

Like all of the counselors, mine was welcoming and more than happy to help me figure out what I needed to do. Through meetings with my counselor, we were able to work through a plan that enabled me to continue studying at Southern. After our meetings, I was able to see that Southern truly is an affordable option even for students who are initially unsure of their financial standing.

If your family is in the same situation mine was—wondering how you can afford to keep your student at Southern—don’t give up hope. Try these tips to take advantage of all the financial resources available.

Get to know your family’s student finance counselor.

“Make your student finance counselor one of your best friends,” says Jason Merryman, director of Enrollment Services/Student Finance. “These experts are here to help you and know where to find scholarships and financial aid that can help your student receive the funds they are eligible for.”

Apply for scholarships.


Hundreds of Southern students have discovered additional funding from these sources.

Take part in work and work study.

Filing the FAFSA can help a student take part in the work-study program. But all students are eligible to work on or off campus and help defray their costs. Most students are able to contribute up to $3,000 during the school year from working 14-16 hours per week, and up to $3,000 during the summer from working 30-32 hours a week.

File the FAFSA early.

The best way to ensure that your student has a strong financial base is to file the FAFSA before the priority deadline of March 31. (To make this deadline, have your taxes and FAFSA completed at least one week prior to the deadline.) Southern needs the FAFSA in order to determine how much need-based funding a student qualifies for.

Filing early means that students are able to receive all of the funds they are eligible for, because Southern promises that students who file their FAFSA before this deadline will receive the full amount of need-based scholarship funds they qualify for.

Missing this deadline means that your student could miss out on literally thousands of dollars.

~By Suzanne Ocsai, editor
Favorite Bible Verse

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16).

~Submitted by Austin Cole, junior theology major
Few things can compare to the simple pleasure of eating a freshly picked salad that you and your friends grew together. Through Southern Adventist University’s Garden Club, students now have the opportunity to enjoy such a pleasure. The club provides a way for students to learn how to grow their own vegetables from the cultivation of the earth to the harvesting of the produce.

Even before the club’s official organization date of March 2009, students were meeting regularly. Members tilled a portion of land between Southern Village and the Stateside Apartments, built a small greenhouse, and grew squash, tomatoes, cilantro, basil, carrots, and much more.

“The club started as a way to provide students with the opportunity to get outside and learn something incredibly practical and fulfilling,” says John Howe, junior biology major and president of the club.

The Garden Club seems to be accomplishing this goal.

“As part of the Garden Club, students get to see the fruit of their labors in the food that they grow,” says club treasurer Joel Kurtz, senior business administration and history major. “It’s a great way to spend time in the sun with friends, and it’s economical and honest work.”

Economical is a key word in today’s society, where many people are looking for farm-fresh produce that’s inexpensive and locally grown. Students who express an interest are able to pick fresh produce for free at the student garden. The club also sells a portion of their harvests to the Village Market, Southern’s grocery store. Proceeds from the club’s sales are donated to various charitable organizations including Invisible Children, an organization dedicated to helping children affected by the war in Uganda.

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The students enrolled in the class will write a single project during the semester. For some students it will be the beginning of a book.

“Dr. Nash is a formidable writer,” says Angela McPherson, a junior mass communication major who plans to finish a book she has already started. “Under his teaching, I am consistently improving in my writing.”

While Nash requires students to work hard and achieve their best, he also provides a creatively freeing environment in his classes that allows students to express themselves.

“I most enjoy the banter with the students in the classroom,” says Nash. “I look for those personal connections that the whole class will enjoy.”

Andy Nash, ’94, was first drawn to the written word at the age of eight, when he would frequently pick up the newspaper lying on the table and begin reading. Later, while a student at Southern, Nash learned the principles behind writing the news stories that always attracted him, discovering that the best writing is the clearest and simplest. This knowledge took him on a career that included working for the Adventist Review and starting his own magazine before returning to his alma mater as an associate professor.

Nash’s eagerness for telling true stories resulted in the obtaining of his recent doctorate degree in creative nonfiction. As a result of research connected to his doctoral studies, two projects were born. The first is his memoir, titled Paper God, which is published by Pacific Press. The second endeavor is a new Literary Journalism class Nash is teaching for the first time this semester in the School of Journalism and Communication.

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~by Manuela Asaftei

Andy Nash is teaching four classes this semester, including the new Literary Journalism class.

The Garden Club: Growing Food and Friendship

~by Suzanne Ocsai

John Howe, far right, and club members (L-R) Sarah Holloway, Kristin Thomas, Danielle Karppala, and Ricky Irizarry enjoy the spring harvest in the student garden.
Clad in matching shirts of turquoise and gold, Southern Adventist University students left the gymnasium on the morning of January 18 with one purpose: to serve the greater Chattanooga area through Christ’s example of service to others. More than 700 students signed up to serve at one of 54 sites across the city of Chattanooga and surrounding Hamilton County. “Our theme this year, ‘We Serve Because He Served’ demonstrates the quintessential reason to serve,” says Crystal James, senior liberal arts education major and SA community service director. “Had it not been for Jesus, who so willingly served us by dying on the cross, we would not have the ability to serve others. By serving, we learn to become more like Christ.”
Southern’s PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America) cleaned out linen closets at Bridge Refugee Services and helped move furniture into a refugee’s new home.

Johnathon Santucci, sophomore psychology major, served the Chattanooga Zoo spreading mulch for the animals.

Crystal James, senior liberal arts education major and SA community service director, paints a kitchen wall.

Kamilah Brathwaite, freshman mathematics major, sorted dishes at Bridge Refugee Services.

Students gathered in the gym for breakfast and worship before heading out to their various sites to serve.

Students prepare for a day of beautifying the 8th Street neighborhood. They raked, cleared leaves, and helped with other landscaping projects.
Students Say

When helping your student pick classes, do you ever wonder which classes rate the highest? We asked some students to tell us about their favorite classes at Southern, and here are their answers:

“I like my Basic Rock Climbing class. It’s the most fun I have had in classes, and it’s hands-on.”
~Priya Ratteray, sophomore general studies major

“Publication Tools and Techniques allowed me to do some more creative design stuff that I didn’t know I would enjoy and be good at. I have tapped into a different set of skills that I didn’t use before. It’s been really fun.”
~Audrey Cooper, senior public relations major

“I learned a lot about Christ’s life in a personal way in Life and Teachings of Jesus with Dr. Tilstra. He is very gentle and insightful. He is also very personal and relational.”
~Vanessa Cutz, junior English major

“I liked Music History. The teacher was interesting and very knowledgeable. In that class, I was able to make a connection between music and what was happening at the time in society.”
~Brian Gonzalez, senior music major

“I really liked Design Studio 2. It was stressful but educational for me as a designer. I learned different design styles through the history of design. By being influenced by previous styles, it helped me develop my own.”
~Kristopher Haughton, senior graphic design major

“Public Speaking is like therapy. There are a lot of people who are shy, but the class size is like a family and you can learn to develop.”
~Jianna Acosta, freshman biology major

“Interpersonal Ministries was my favorite. You learn a lot of practical skills of communication in that class. You also learn listening skills and how to apply them. I have been able to apply what I have learned, such as reading body language. Communication is a big instrument in keeping healthy relationships.”
~Ruth Bonet, sophomore theology major