

# PANORAMA

parent newsletter

march 2014



## Integrating Faith and Service with Learning

As Breck Lang spends this semester in Transcultural Nursing, a service-learning class, he's reminded of his year abroad as a student missionary. When Breck first came to Southern, he decided the one thing that would complete his college experience would be to spend a year as a student missionary. Never in his life had he done something just for God, and as a Christian, that made him uneasy. But after a year helping the Karen refugees in Thailand displaced from Burma, his outlook on serving drastically changed. Service has become an important role in the life of this senior nursing major.

"I have virtually lived my entire existence for myself," Breck said. "My eyes were closed out of ignorance to the needs of others. It was not until I was given opportunities to serve that my eyes were opened to the immensity of life beyond myself."

After returning, he discovered that one of the places around the world where Karen refugees were being sent was Atlanta. Because of the love he has for the Karen people, he knew he had to go and help them in some way. Now, he often visits the refugee church in Atlanta, reaching out in whatever way he can to show them that someone cares.

"Life begins to take on greater meaning as the Holy Spirit helps me forget myself and see the needs of others," Breck said. "Never in my life have I felt greater purpose and fulfillment than I do now."

This is why Breck is excited to be taking Transcultural Nursing. In the class, each student is paired with a refugee family in the Chattanooga area. The students get to know families and assist

wherever possible with making their transition to America easier. Breck said the class has further instilled the importance of service as a lifestyle, not just as a class requirement.

"The saying, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive' is not just a nice idea—it really is the truth," Breck said. "I never understood that until I experienced it for myself."

For Breck, service is not something that can be taught—it has to be experienced. In Transcultural Nursing, he and his classmates are gaining the needed experience that truly opens their eyes to the needs of others and helps them follow in the footsteps of Jesus' example of service.

"I have found a life that is worth living," Breck said, "and it feels so good!"

~by Shana Michalek

"I have found a life that is worth living, and it feels so good!"

-BRECK LANG,  
SENIOR NURSING MAJOR



Breck Lang and Jillian Wills, associate professor in the School of Nursing, discuss serving the refugee families in Chattanooga during his Transcultural Nursing class.



# Favorite Bible Verse

Colton Adams,  
senior history and global policy major

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you. For I am the Lord your God.”

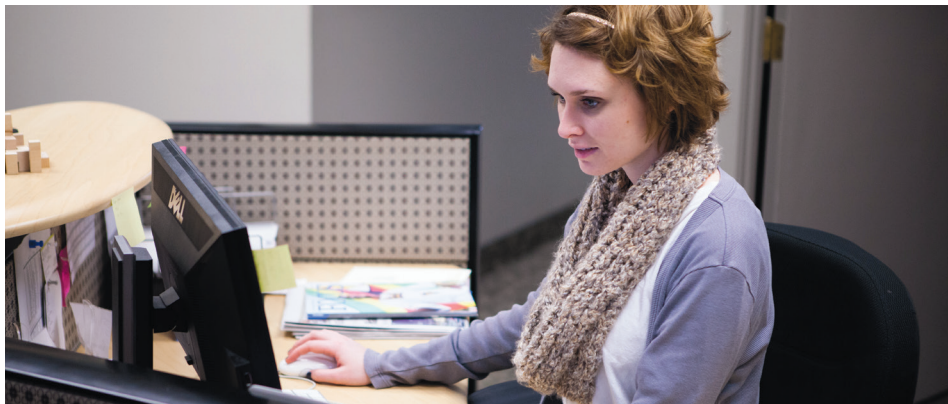
Isaiah 43:2-3

## Did You Know? FAFSA Deadline

With another academic year soon to begin at Southern, it's time to update your student's FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The process takes about an hour and will determine the financial aid your student is eligible to receive, including:

- Federal grants and loans
- State grants
- Southern's endowment grants
- Scholarships

Since the endowment grants at Southern are first-come, first-served, it is recommended to complete the FAFSA by March 1 and make sure to submit it no later than March 31. This gives your student the best



chance for getting the optimal amount of financial aid. Missing that deadline could mean delaying enrollment an entire year until the next chance to file.

Marc Grundy, vice president for Enrollment Services, said if a student files too late, they could miss out on thousands of

dollars of assistance.

“We want our students and parents to get all of the financial help that they can,” Grundy said. “Timing is key.”

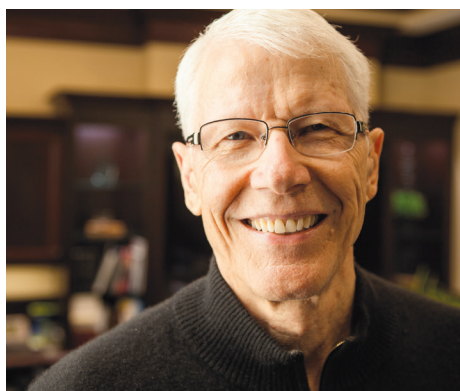
For more information and to get started on the application, visit [fafsa.ed.gov](https://fafsa.ed.gov).

~by Elizabeth Camps



## Ask the President

With Gordon Bietz



*Question: In what ways does Southern encourage my student to serve others?*

Serving others is an integral part of an education here, and Southern gives students opportunities to put service into practice through two primary methods: community service and service learning.

Every Sabbath afternoon, students have the opportunity to attend one of eight service activities sponsored by Campus Ministries. One of the newest options is Restore, which involves ministering to inner-city Hispanic families.

Students also are required to complete two 15-hour service-learning projects before graduation, either through service-learning classes, student-initiated mentoring projects, or approved mission trips.

In addition to service-learning requirements, students need to complete three community service activities each year that must be three to five hours each. This requirement can be met through the outreach ministries previously mentioned

or through campus-wide service days. Students are encouraged to sign up and volunteer at various sites (provided on [southern.edu/serve](https://southern.edu/serve)) around the greater Chattanooga area.

Short-term and long-term mission projects provide other options for involvement. Students can serve in a variety of areas, from work as deans and teachers to construction and evangelism. They can travel as far away as Palau in the Marshall Islands or as close as Washington, D.C. This year, we have 80 student missionaries serving in more than 30 locations around the globe.

Southern doesn't simply tell students to serve. The university provides them with a diverse array of opportunities with the hope that each will leave here equipped with not only an educational advantage, but also an innate desire to use his or her education and talents to serve others.

## Staff Profile:

### Dora Desamour, Christian Service Program director

A year ago, Southern employee Dora Desamour was working in human resource management. One day, she placed a prayer in a shoebox asking God to open up the door for a new career opportunity. She felt that her passion to serve could be better applied in a different position but wasn't sure where. A few months later, Southern posted an opening for the Christian Service Program director and she applied.

"This job is a perfect fit," Desamour said. "I actually don't have a middle name, but if I did, 'Service' would be it!"

Since starting work at Southern in August 2013, Desamour has grown even more in her passion for service and actively seeks to help students discover the zeal for helping others as well.

"I love looking at the different possibilities," Desamour said. "I thrive on the energy students have to make great things happen."

Desamour's mission is to plant the seed of service in the hearts of students through community service and service-learning opportunities. She not only manages the service program here at Southern, but also actively seeks out volunteer opportunities in the community as well.

Because Southern requires students to obtain a certain number of service credits before graduating, Desamour is responsible for ensuring that students have a variety of opportunities to discover what unique area of service fits them the best.

"The challenge is to find what students are passionate about and help them learn to serve others based on their passions," Desamour said. "It's getting to the core and



*Dora Desamour, right, sits down with a student to discuss service opportunities in the community.*

finding a match. We pray that this is something they'll do for the rest of their lives."

A year ago, Desamour had no idea that she would be an integral part of the Christian Service Program at Southern; however, she believes this is where God has placed her, and she is in love with her work.

"Service allows a look within, helping us to learn more about ourselves," Desamour said. "It teaches us about how we can be better servants and, ultimately, better Christians."

*—by Rachael Hankins*

## Student Life: Community Service Day

On January 20, close to 1,000 students, faculty, and staff ventured off campus to work with area nonprofits as part of Southern Adventist University's 21st annual Community Service Day initiative. The event was organized by the Student Association (SA) and Southern's Christian Service Program.

Simon Ionashku, senior mathematics major and SA community service director, helped choose "True Beauty" as the day's theme.

"True beauty is not based on external appearances, but rather an inner quality that is built on moral and biblical truths that are shown through compassion and service," Simon said. "Jesus is the ultimate model for this as He sacrificed Himself to serve others."

Southern students participate in community service and service-learning projects as a requirement for graduation, but organizers pray that students will recognize the

deeper, eternal benefits of helping others.

"I hope they see volunteering as the highest honor," Simon said. "That's the message we're trying to send. Be beautiful in the heavenly sense."

SA led out in many campaigning projects to get students signed up for volunteer projects, but not every student needed multimedia prompting. Brooke Firestone, senior nursing major, has participated in every service day while at Southern and testifies to the joy that comes from helping others. This year, she and many others volunteered at the Chattanooga Zoo.

"There is nothing like the reward of bettering your community through some humble, hard work," Brooke said.

Garrett Skipper, education curator for

the zoo, was grateful for the help.

"It was a fantastic experience," Skipper said. "Because of the sheer number of students helping out, they are able to do

in a matter of just a few hours what takes our staff several weeks."

The Christian Service Program began at Southern in 2010 and is supported through contributions by Southern alumni Greg Vital and Russell Friberg, which generate

\$100,000 annually via responses to their gift-matching challenges. Vital and Friberg invite others to join them in securing the resources necessary to have the program fully budgeted by 2015. For more information about supporting this important initiative, call 1.800.SOUTHERN or visit [southern.edu/give](http://southern.edu/give).

*—by Elizabeth Camps*



P.O. Box 370  
Collegedale, Tennessee 37315  
1.800.SOUTHERN  
southern.edu

## What is one of your best community service or mission experiences?

“During Freshmen Community Service Day, my group painted a safe house for women who were victims of domestic violence.”

*-Kathleen Thompson,  
freshman international  
studies major*

“I went on a mission trip to Guatemala one summer, and it changed people’s lives while changing my own.”

*-Kimberly Solis,  
junior business administration  
major*

“West Side for Jesus allows me to bring joy to children and have the chance to revisit them weekend after weekend.”

*-Carlos Rosales,  
senior psychology major*

“Giving Christmas gifts with the Social Work Club. It was amazing to see the children’s excitement and the joy and relief on their parents’ faces.”

*-Mischka Scott,  
junior social work major*

“The Gym-Masters mission trip to Dominican Republic opened my eyes. I witnessed poverty on a level that I hadn’t seen before. I saw hearts trying to connect with us because they had no one else, and I saw the love of God transform team members.”

*-Wilson Fernandez,  
junior nursing major*

### MARCH

#### 15 Talent Show

#### 22 Asian Night

Put on by the Asian Club, this is a much-anticipated cultural night highlighting various Asian countries and cultures through food, music, and more.

#### 23 Symphony Orchestra Concert

#### 29 Studio 4109 LIVE

#### 30 Wind Symphony Concert

### APRIL

#### 5 Gym-Masters Home Show

#### 11 Lawn Concert Vespers

#### 12 Spring Concert, School of Music Choirs Dusk 'til Dawn Challenge

An overnight adventure race, this action-packed event attracts teams of students and includes activities such as running, zip lining, caving, rock climbing, and even mental challenges requiring teamwork.

#### 13 Strawberry Festival

#### 24 Symphony Orchestra Concert

#### 26 Jazz Ensemble Concert



# West Side for Jesus Outreach Ministry

West Side for Jesus is one of the many outreach ministries under the direction of the Chaplain's Office. Every other week on Sabbath afternoons, Southern students travel to the public housing complexes of Chattanooga to play with the kids. Students also present health seminars, gospel concerts, and preaching events that invite attendees to a walk with Jesus in new and dramatic ways.

PHOTOS BY MATT HADLEY



Naomi Desta, senior global policy and service major, reads with one of the children from the West Side area.



While students take time to play with the children, one little boy enjoys a piggy-back ride.



The students and the children gather around in a circle to learn new praise songs and sing familiar ones together.



Janice Cosme, senior public relations and business administration major, spends quality time with some of the children from West Side.



# Student Association Mid-Winter **Party**

As students return from Christmas break and begin to get back into a routine of school life, a welcome weekend diversion comes in the form of Student Association's annual Mid-Winter Party. This year's theme was Beauty and the Lumberjack, with the ladies dressed in their finest attire and the gentlemen in their manliest. The event featured a variety of activities, including musical chairs, speed meeting, and a costume contest.

PHOTOS BY MATT HADLEY



Jessica Frescino, freshman social work major, plays in a string quartet that delighted students with live classical music.



Kayla Dalusong, junior general studies major, and Jacob Mertz, junior religious education major, arrive at the party.



Israel Olaore, senior public relations major, and Chelsea Campbell, sophomore biology major, try to make it to the last seat first in order to win musical chairs.



During speed meeting, Jim Gearing, senior international studies major, enjoys making new acquaintances.