

PANORAMA

parent newsletter

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Making Southern Their Home Away from Home

Starting a new school can be nerve-racking. Transitioning to a college schedule and life away from home can be more unsettling. However, these changes can be rewarding if a student is willing to embrace this new chapter a step toward adulthood.

Obadiah Groft, junior theology major, did just that. Arriving at Southern after public high school, he knew only four other students. Now he's friends with more than 400. But getting to that number required stepping outside of his comfort zone.

"When I first came to Southern, I was nervous but excited for all the relationships that could be made," Obadiah said.

What that attitude, he took every opportunity to be involved. Through intramurals, social activities, spiritual events, outreach ministries, and simply conversing with students in class, he soon developed a wealth of friends.

"Try to meet someone new everyday," Obadiah said. "Soon you'll have a strong circle of friends who will introduce you to their friends."

Along with making friends, Obadiah created relationships that helped him feel at home. He developed valuable friendships with professors outside the classroom and volunteered with a youth Sabbath school at a local church, where he is still helping.

"Being involved makes me feel like I'm not just a face in the crowd," Obadiah said.

Beginning college can be scary, but students can transform Southern into their home-away-from-home, just as Obadiah did.

Get to Know Faculty and Staff

Whether it's professors, advisers, or deans, building strong relationships with faculty and staff helps students feel at home in a new environment.

Find a Church Family

There are more than 30 Seventh-day Adventist churches in the greater Chattanooga

area from which students can choose to attend. Finding one they enjoy and immersing themselves in it will help students feel like part of a loving church family.

Volunteer

Choosing to volunteer with a ministry or nonprofit program not only helps students create beneficial relationships but also puts their talents to good use.

Take Time to Make Friends

Whether your student is coming to Southern with two friends or 20, making good friends that will be a support system during their time in college is crucial. Southern has many opportunities to meet and interact with fellow students.

By making Southern a home away from home, your student can not only survive the transition to college life, but learn to thrive.

~by Shana Michalek

"Being involved makes me feel like I'm not just a face in the crowd."

-OBADIAH GROFT, JUNIOR



Obadiah Groft takes a moment to build relationships with one of his classmates and a faculty member.

Favorite Bible Verse

Morgan Preston,
senior graphic design major

Honor all men. Love the brotherhood.
Fear God. Honor the king.

1 Peter 2:17

Did You Know? Student Success Center

The name says it all. Southern's Student Success Center provides a supportive environment that encourages and assists students in growing and reaching their personal and educational goals through career counseling, personal counseling, tutoring, disability support services, learning support services, freshmen transition assistance, and testing.

"Whether a student is feeling blue, having difficulty with a class, or needing direction, getting help is the smart thing to do," said Jim Wampler, director of the Student Success Center. "Assistance is readily available."

Cheri Durst has been hired as first



year advising coordinator in the first year experience program, a series of orientation events for new students. Durst will be overseeing a comprehensive student retention program that will provide clear pathways to academic, social, and personal success for new students.

Additionally, the learning support services program is starting a supplemental in-

struction effort that uses peer-assisted study sessions to increase student success within courses that have been proven difficult.

"Our staff of professionally trained counselors and advisors is available to provide students with short-term counseling and advising in a supportive, caring, and confidential environment," Wampler said.

~by Elizabeth Camps

Q&A Ask The President

With Gordon Bietz



Question: How do faculty and staff build relationships with my student outside of the classroom?

The faculty at Southern actively seek to foster relationships with students outside of the classroom. Here the student to teacher ratio is 16:1, allowing students individual attention in the academic setting. While many professors strive to know students on a personal level during class time, they find that involvement in student activities promotes an easier environment to grow relationally.

Departmental clubs are one way that faculty become involved. Groups meet once or twice a month, sometimes at the home of their sponsor. This allows professors to mentor small groups of students that are interested in delving into a specific topic or field of interest and cultivate relationships at the same time.

Intramural sports are another environment where students and faculty connect. Some faculty members join student teams,

while others create a team to play against students. A bit of friendly competition provides a fun environment for fostering relationships. Whether it is softball, volleyball, or basketball, faculty members find intramurals to be a great outlet to be involved with the student body.

To further facilitate the connection between faculty and students, Southern has established multiple financial incentives to help employees entertain students in their homes, whether for club activities, Bible studies, or other occasions. Though the university funds don't generally cover the entire cost of feeding college students, it does help make the process easier. Cultivating relationships with students outside of the classroom is something the faculty and staff at Southern enjoy and actively pursue.

Staff Profile:

Renita Klischies, First Year Experience Coordinator

Renita Klischies, first year experience coordinator for Southern's Student Success Center, will never forget the day a struggling freshman walked into her office.

"You stood up in orientation and told us that it was your job to keep us in school. I want you to do your job," he said.

Klischies was shocked by the student's blunt demand, but didn't waste time. Within an hour she had introduced him to the tools needed to survive his first year.

Klischies didn't hear from the student until he returned weeks later.

"I want you to know that the only reason I'm still here is because you took the time to help me with my problems."

The student's words define Klischies' role and served as vocational validation.

"I see myself as the bridge," Klischies said. "I connect students to resources and help them through those rough points on

their journey. It's not rocket science—it's being human and lending a helping hand."

Klischies' journey began six years ago when administration presented her with the task of creating the first year experience program, an effort to help incoming freshmen make a smooth transition from high school to college.

Since then, she has constructed the Southern Connections course, reinvented the mentor program, revived Southern's annual community service project, and simplified orientation.

"Honestly, my job is anything and everything freshmen," Klischies said. "I tell students that my goal is to help them accomplish whatever goals brought them to Southern."

Klischies is a mother and that maternal nature comes across in her work.

"Sometimes, I feel like I'm mom to 600



kids," Klischies said. "I really want parents to know that if their son or daughter needs something, I'm here for them. I want them to know that if anything happens, their child has a parent away from home."

~by Myron Madden

Student Life: Intramurals

When looking up "intramural" in Webster's Dictionary, one of the definitions—"situated or occurring within the substance of the walls of an organ"—seems almost out of place. It's not.

Mike Boyd, associate professor in the School of P.E., Health and Wellness, refers to this definition when describing the goal of Southern's intramural program.

"We're trying to get as many people inside our campus walls to be as active as possible through sports or recreation," Boyd said.

The program has been quite successful. In fact, Best Colleges, an academic review website, placed Southern in their list of the top 50 intramural sports programs in the country for 2013-2014.

New intramural director Troy Walker, '94 and '97, believes that Southern's desire to educate mind, body, and spirit bleeds into the intramural program.

"It's not that we offer more sports or activities than all the other schools," Walker said. "It's that we have such a high level of participation," Walker said.

Walker is referring to the fact that between 1,400-1,500 students participate in at least one sport each year. That's almost 50 percent of the student body! Along with great participation, Southern's intramural program also offers opportunities for increased student/staff interaction. Darin Bissell, office manager for the School of P.E., Health and Wellness, has seen the benefits of this firsthand.

"Instead of a student just seeing their professor in class, intramurals provides them with another place of interaction," Bissell said. For example, Greg King, dean of the School of Religion, plays every sport.

During the fall semester, softball, futsal, flag football, and floor hockey are played. The winter semester features basketball,

volleyball, and soccer. Sprinkled between each of the sports are several tournaments.

For Arthur Theodore, junior industrial psychology major, intramurals have played a pivotal role in making friendships.

"Intramurals really help you build bonds with people you might not normally meet," Arthur said.

For more information, visit southern.edu/intramurals.

~by Charles Cammack



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What advice did your parents give you about adjusting to college life?

“Don’t get a girlfriend; just church, school, and sleep.”

-Krantzy Boursiquot,
junior theology major

“Be mindful of the meal plan and make sure to get out and attend events.”

-Cesar Pimentel,
sophomore graphic design major

“Don’t procrastinate, choose friends wisely, and always trust in God.”

-Rosalba Valera,
freshman history major

“My grandpa said, “You’re in college, just enjoy yourself.”

-Justin Hernandez,
sophomore medical lab science major

“Get to know people in your department and make those connections as soon as possible. Even though I changed my major, I still have those friends from my previous major.”

-Aimee Garver,
junior nursing major

“Study hard, and don’t talk to boys!”

-Natalie Herrera,
sophomore social work major

“My mom gave me a card that read: ‘God first always. Love, Mom.’ It really resonated with me.”

-Kenric Rimoni,
senior business major

OCTOBER

24 Alumni Homecoming Weekend (24-27)

Alumni are invited back to campus to “Experience the Spirit.”

27 SA Fall Festival

Students visit Hidden Hills Farm and enjoy an evening of fall activities run by various clubs and campus organizations.

30 Wind Symphony Tour (30-November 2)

NOVEMBER

2 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament

9 Extreme Dodgeball

10 Symphony Orchestra Concert

11 SA Spirit Week

Students participate in costume competitions and activities that show school spirit.

23 Studio 4109 LIVE

Student-led variety show that features musical acts, comedy sketches, and more.

27 Thanksgiving Break (27-December 1)

SPECIAL EVENT!

FEBRUARY

14 Mother/Daughter Weekend (14-16)

Mothers are invited to spend some special time with their daughters on campus.