

sa ess·ay

the annual magazine
of the university of
south carolina division
of student affairs
and department of
academic support
2007



from the vice president/vice provost

I am pleased to introduce you to *ess-ay*, the annual magazine of the University of South Carolina's Division of Student Affairs and Department of Academic Support.

In this inaugural edition, I hope you'll enjoy reading about a few of our recent accomplishments—innovative, collaborative ventures that transform the lives of our students and bolster the University in its efforts to remain a destination of choice for top students.

In the following pages, you'll find that our Capstone Scholars program attracts many of these students, the new Student Success Center helps them excel in and beyond the classroom, and Healthy Carolina makes it easy for them to make choices that will enhance their health. These and the other initiatives described in this magazine are part of our comprehensive approach to producing academic achievement; promoting personal development; and encouraging engagement, curiosity, integrity, purpose, leadership, community, collaboration, and well-being.

Those are the qualities Student Affairs and Academic Support instill in students as we foster a community of Carolinians guided by integrity, engaged in collaboration, and committed to success.

With this brief look at our achievements and those of South Carolina students, I'm confident you'll see that our community is living up to those expectations.

Dennis A. Pruitt
Vice President for Student Affairs,
Vice Provost for Academic Support, and Dean of Students
University of South Carolina
www.sa.sc.edu



Dennis Pruitt will continue as vice president for student affairs, a post he has held since 1983, and has assumed new responsibilities as vice provost for academic support.

In the latter role, Pruitt is responsible for coordinating and managing all aspects of student support services, including enrollment management, residential learning communities, pre-professional advising, fellowships and scholar programs, University 101, TRIO, the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, the registrar, academic integrity, student engagement, international programs for students, and student success initiatives.

Pruitt's appointment was announced in November 2006 as part of the reorganization of the Office of Academic Affairs and Provost.



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kenyatta frazier

you name it, and he's done it.



A 2006 graduate, Kenyatta Frazier earned a biology and pre-med degree from the South Carolina Honors College, served in student government, and was actively involved in Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. He conducted research with Bert Ely for the African DNA Roots Project database. With a Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, he improved his skills in Spanish, his minor, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. And, proving his athletic chops match his intellectual ones, he advanced to the final round of an intramural tennis tournament.

"Being so involved was helpful in meeting new people, getting good experiences on my resume, and in becoming a good, well-rounded person," said Frazier, who hails from Aiken.

So, what's next on Frazier's to-do list? Becoming a doctor.

When it came time to apply for medical school, Frazier sought the assistance of the university's Office of Pre-Professional Advising.

"I don't think I could've done it without them," Frazier said.

"I was calling them nearly every day with questions and looking for advice. They were instrumental in my success in getting into med school."

Frazier, who has just begun his first year at the Medical University of South Carolina, intends to become a surgeon.

"I'm planning to specialize in either neuro or trauma surgery," he said. "I'll just see how it goes, and hope that I can perform well in one or the other."

With his record of accomplishments, it's hard to imagine otherwise.



dinner dialogues

encouraging student-faculty interaction

Last year, the Office of Parents Programs launched Dinner Dialogues, an initiative to increase interaction between students and faculty.

Parents Programs covers the cost for faculty to host class dinners in their homes, creating a more social, informal environment for faculty and their students to get to know each other. In 2006–2007, faculty hosted 30 dinners for more than 1,000 students, and all agreed they would participate in Dinner Dialogues again and would recommend it to their colleagues.

“There was a lot of laughter and discussion about common experiences and challenges they’ve faced,” said Chrissy Coley, University 101 instructor and assistant vice provost for student success initiatives. “This experience further developed the sense of mattering, engagement, community, and support that students desperately need to succeed in college.”

Dinner Dialogues is made possible by contributions to the Parents Annual Fund, which allows parents to give to the University knowing that their students can directly benefit from the donations.

capstone scholars

program thrives



The University of South Carolina is attracting more academically excellent students than ever, and a recently created collaborative program honors these students for their achievements while challenging them to do even more.

THE CAPSTONE SCHOLARS PROGRAM HAS BEEN A MAJOR SUCCESS IN RECRUITING AND RETAINING ACADEMICALLY MOTIVATED STUDENTS TO THE UNIVERSITY. Since its inaugural year in 2005, student interest and first-year enrollment in the program have continually surpassed the expectations of University administrators and the South Carolina community. Today, Capstone Scholars is quickly becoming one of the University's most valued and respected programs.

Designed to complement the University's nationally acclaimed South Carolina Honors College, the Capstone Scholars program attracts high-achieving students by providing them with the resources and support to help them succeed. The program provides more than 1,000 exemplary students with a challenging educational experience to match their abilities, interests, and needs and to promote academic success at the university.

"[Capstone Scholars] helps students develop a perspective on the world that transcends the boundaries of their academic discipline," said John Spurrier, faculty principal of the Capstone Scholars program. "In a community fostering academic excellence, inquiry, and culture, Capstone Scholars are able to foster both personal discovery and community development."

In its focus to provide students with an accelerated and challenging college academic experience, Capstone Scholars is especially dedicated to the development of educational enrichment programs. The dynamic and collaborative partnership between the University's academic and student affairs offices has played a significant role in the success of the program, allowing students to derive considerable academic benefits from the participation and collaboration of faculty and academic offices across the campus.

"It's the best example I've ever seen of institutional collaboration."

"It's the best example I've ever seen of institutional collaboration," said Kip Howard, assistant vice provost for enrollment management.

*Opposite page, top to bottom:
Capstone Scholars Carmel Matin,
Joanna Marcy, Jesh Plumb,
and Leanne Sheira*

By Dana Fish

The wide variety of programs, seminars, and activities sponsored by the Capstone Scholars program also provides students with a well-rounded academic experience in and beyond the classroom. Capstone Conversations seminars and Capstone Cinema film screenings and discussions offer students an opportunity to interact with some of the University's most outstanding

faculty. These faculty offer insights into topics including politics and upcoming elections, business ethics, research, social justice, spirituality and religion, ethics, study-abroad and exchange programs, poverty, foreign relations, alternative energy, and Islamic culture. The University 101 first-year seminar course also has adapted particular sections to address the specific needs of students in the Capstone Scholars program, especially regarding their rigorous academic standards and campus involvement. Additional opportunities for students in the Capstone Scholars program include customized study-abroad programs and a residential learning space, which provide even more chances for the students to live and learn together.

“Living in the Capstone Scholars learning community provides students the opportunity to connect with other high-achieving students, while being provided a high degree of support,” said Jimmie Gahagan, assistant vice provost for student engagement. “The program opens doors for students, giving them opportunities to interact with fellow students, as well as outstanding faculty and community leaders.”

For student scholars, one of the most beneficial aspects of the Capstone Scholars program is the additional support network that is provided, allowing them to immediately connect with faculty, administrators, and students. “For me, it is not solely based on the academic enrichment,” said first-year student Elizabeth Martin. “We have the opportunity to really make connections and get involved within the University community.”

Second-year student Joanna Marcy agrees. “It is all about knowing that a group of people are there completely supporting you in achieving your dreams. I’ve gotten to know people on staff, faculty members, and peers who provide me with the support I need.”

In its first two years, the Capstone Scholars program has far surpassed planners’ expectations, attracted excellent students, supported these students’ success, and become an exemplary living-learning community at South Carolina. As the program grows in size, academic achievement, and prestige, the University and its external community will benefit from these civically engaged, prepared citizens.



study abroad and exchange enrich capstone program

As part of the Capstone Scholars experience, students are encouraged to participate in the Capstone Abroad program, which began in 2006 with two study-abroad opportunities.

That summer, 16 Capstone Scholars spent two weeks traveling throughout Ireland and studying the country's rich literature, history, and culture. Accompanied by Ed Madden, program leader and associate professor of English, students explored several of Ireland's most famous historical and literary sites, while also enjoying spectacular scenery.

Also in 2006, Capstone Scholars traveled to London with program leader Minuette Floyd, associate professor for art education. While abroad, the 14 scholars were introduced to British architecture and international art during a visit to The National Gallery, a day trip to Canterbury, and a performance at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

This summer, Karl Gerth, director of the Center for Asian Studies, accompanied 22 Capstone Scholars to China. The group explored Beijing, Shanghai, and Xi-han to learn about the country's history and visited sites including the Forbidden City and the Great Wall. Art professor Laura Kissel accompanied the group to film a documentary about the students' experiences.

The film will premiere later this year.

The Capstone Abroad program is coordinated in conjunction with International Programs, which serves the international-education needs of all South Carolina students and enables them to discover a world of opportunities.



A close-up, high-angle portrait of a young African American man with a bright smile, showing his teeth. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera. The background is a dark, textured blue.

african-american male institute

An all-male group of 13 African-American freshmen challenged themselves and each other to achieve academic success and assume leadership roles on campus and in the community last fall.

The students comprised the inaugural class of the University of South Carolina's African-American Male Institute (AAMI), a program to encourage participants to develop leadership skills and to employ strategies for personal and professional success. Under the direction of the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, the program features mentoring, seminars, and co-curricular activities, including community service and service learning projects.

The program also helps students adjust to their first year in college, said AAMI participant Jonathan McKinney.

"The African-American Male Institute has been the most beneficial program thus far in my matriculation at the University of South Carolina," said McKinney, a sophomore from Yemassee. "It has helped me make a smooth transition from a high school setting to a more challenging college setting. I have connected so well with some of the most intellectual African-American males, and I would recommend this program to any young man."

AAMI participants' progress will be monitored until graduation, and successful methods from their experiences will be employed to help future participants.

According to *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, South Carolina enrolls the largest percentage of African-American students among any flagship university in the country and is among the top 10 universities for percentage of African-American faculty. African Americans comprise nearly 15 percent of the University's student body and more than four percent of the faculty.



encourages
academic
and
personal achievement

*AAMI participant Larry Middleton
is a sophomore exercise science
major from Greenwood.*

**carolina's
new
student
success
center
is a
one-stop
shop for
academic
achievement**

In virtually every year since 1987, the average GPA and SAT scores of each incoming class at the University of South Carolina have topped those of each previous class. South Carolina students are high achievers academically, and their commitment to learning extends beyond classroom walls. They participate in an array of co-curricular activities, including research projects, community service, study-abroad and exchange programs, and leadership roles on campus and in the community.

But once these exceptional students arrive on campus, are they expected to go it alone?

Absolutely not, said Dennis Pruitt, vice president for student affairs and vice provost for academic support.

“Even as we admit students each year with far more impressive credentials than the previous year,” he said, “we are learning that every student, no matter their capabilities, needs personal or academic help at some point during their college experience.”

The University's new Student Success Center, located on the mezzanine level of the Thomas Cooper Library, is the place for students to find the help they need. The center's offerings include Supplemental Instruction, academic-skills coaching, tutoring, academic recovery programs, and initiatives for the success of special student populations.

The center can even assist those students who didn't struggle in high school, but do need help making the transition to college.

“More students need help and seek attention in their first year,” Pruitt said. “Some students need help adjusting to the rigor-

student
success
center

ous academic demands of college classes. Others need general upgrades to their study or life-management skills, while others need help in adjusting to the freedoms and responsibilities of college life.”

The Student Success Center provides programs and services to address all of these issues and serves as a referral agent for all other campus services.

Supplemental Instruction (SI), established in 2005, helps students in classes that historically have had a high percentage of students who earn a C or lower, or who withdraw from the course. SI sessions host groups of about 20 and are led by other undergraduate students who have previously enrolled and excelled in the courses. Students who participate in SI benefit from the sessions’ integration of “what to learn” with “how to learn.” On average, students who attend SI regularly earn half a letter-grade higher than those who don’t.

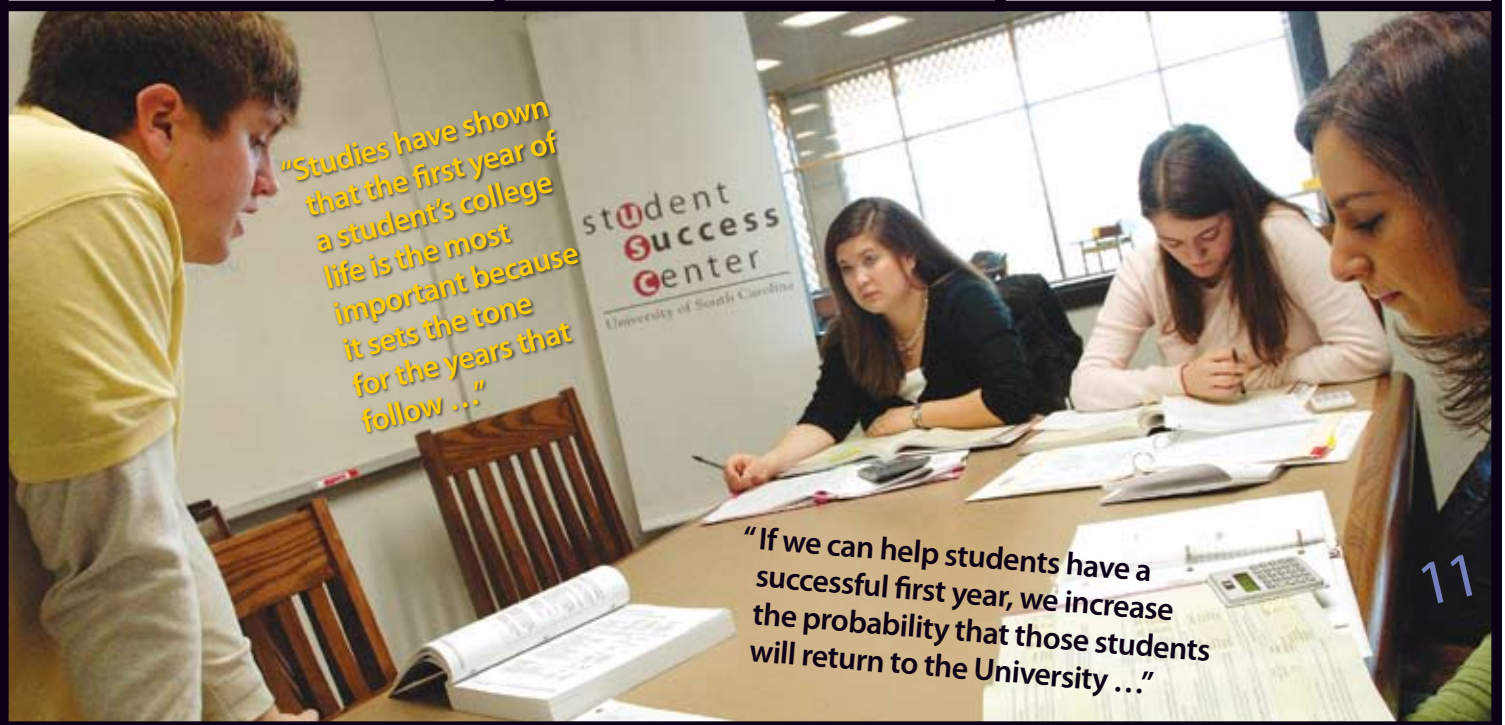
Individual tutoring at the Student Success Center is open to students in biology, chemistry, languages, math, and other select courses. Students can drop by the center to be tutored, or they can make appointments with tutors, who are selected for their qualifications in their areas of study. Students must have earned at least a B+ in the courses they tutor and complete an extensive certification training program to ensure that the center offers the highest quality tutoring services.

Student Success Center staff recommend that for every hour of class, students should devote two hours to studying and class preparation. Participating in SI and tutoring is an excellent way for students to meet this guideline. But in addition to spending enough time studying, students must study the right way, said Chrissy Coley, assistant vice provost for student success initiatives.

“Many [first-year students] do not realize how different the academic rigor is in the University classroom,” said Coley, “and that they will need to dramatically alter their study habits in order to earn the grades needed to remain in good academic standing, as well as retain scholarships and stay in their academic program of choice.”

“Studies have shown that the first year of a student’s college life is the most important because it sets the tone for the years that follow,” she said. “If we can help students have a successful first year, we increase the probability that those students will return to the University, and that they’ll succeed in college, ultimately by graduating.”

To help first-year students start their studies at South Carolina right, the center has launched a series of early intervention initiatives, Coley said.



And for students who are new to the Southeast, there's the popular seminar "What's the Big Deal about Sweet Tea?," a primer on enjoying life below the Mason-Dixon Line. All of these are opportunities for students to make the transition to South Carolina a successful one.



From left to right at the opening of the Student Success Center: Chrissy Coley, assistant vice provost for student success initiatives; Andrew Sorensen, president; Dennis Pruitt, vice president for student affairs and vice provost for academic support; and Mark Becker, executive vice president for academic affairs and provost

These early intervention initiatives include the Creating Academic Responsibility (CAR) program and a first-year call center, which helps students create and maintain good study habits and learn to meet the university's high expectations for academic performance.

The CAR program enlists the help of faculty, who provide feedback on students' class attendance. Students with excessive absences are referred to the Student Success Center, where staff help students determine the reason for missing so many classes and assist them in getting back on track.

Student callers from the First-Year Call Center contact each first-year student multiple times throughout the year.

"Our callers check in with students to see how their year is progressing and how satisfied they are with their experiences at the University," Coley said. "If they have questions or concerns, we can help them by finding answers or by referring them to the appropriate resources."

South Carolina has long understood the importance of students' first year of college and the need to offer programs and

resources to meet their particular needs. The success of these programs, coupled with research and observation, spurred the University to identify other groups of students that could benefit most from additional assistance.

As a result, the Student Success Center has introduced initiatives to promote the success of out-of-state students, transfer students, sophomores, and students of color. The center also provides programs and services to assist students in retaining their scholarships.

For transfer and out-of-state students, difficulties in adjusting to a new place can affect academic performance. That's why the center's programs include social and mentoring programs, and informational guides and seminars. And for students who are new to the Southeast, there's the popular seminar "What's the Big Deal About Sweet Tea?," a primer on enjoying life below the Mason-Dixon Line. All of these are opportunities for students to make the transition to South Carolina a successful one.

More extensive offerings for these student populations are in the works, and many of

them rely on collaborations between departments. The Academic Centers for Excellence, Student Assistance Program, and Sophomore Student Initiative, as well as the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, are important partners, and they work closely to ensure the success of students.

"Our collaborations allow us to help students, no matter what they need, no matter where they are," Coley said. "We always encourage students to get to know their peers and their faculty and to use every resource that's available to them. It makes perfect sense that we take the same approach."

That collaboration is a strategy that is vital for the success of students, as well as the center, which has big ideas for serving students.

"The goal for our new Student Success Center is that no student will fall between the cracks," Pruitt said. "No student will ever be 'invisible,' and every student will learn to be receptive to the wide array of services and programs in this center that will ensure their success and satisfaction at Carolina."

TRIO programs workshops benefit students statewide

trio

A series of workshops presented in the last year by the University of South Carolina's TRIO Programs helped prospective students around the state gain insight into the college admissions and financial-aid processes.

"The Keys to College" workshop for students and adults was held in November 2006 at the Richland County Public Library in Columbia. In this free program, TRIO staff shared the "keys" to attending college, including information on applying to school and navigating the financial-aid systems.

In February, TRIO offered "Paying for College" workshops at five locations around the state: the Richland County Public Library, Southern Wesleyan University, York Technical College, Coastal Carolina University, and Aiken Technical College. At each site, TRIO staff, University financial-aid experts, and other volunteers presented financial-aid information and helped families complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

"Paying for College" was coordinated in conjunction with the South Carolina Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (SCASFAA) and was sponsored by the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation.

South Carolina's TRIO Programs provide assistance to academically capable low-income or first-generation students. TRIO supports the University's goal to meet the highest academic standards while maintaining a strong commitment to student access and success in college. Additionally, TRIO offers programs like these workshops, which help all students take advantage of educational opportunities.

'party with a purpose' breaks fund-raising record to help area children

THEY HAD MANY STRATEGIES FOR STAYING AWAKE AROUND THE CLOCK: THEY DRANK GALLONS OF COFFEE AND RED BULL; THEY LOADED UP ON CARBS; AND THEY NEVER FORGOT, IT'S FOR THE KIDS.

They were the record-breaking 700 participants in the University of South Carolina's eighth-annual Dance Marathon. The 24-hour philanthropic event is part of a nationwide effort to benefit the Children's Miracle Network and its member hospitals. At South Carolina, it's organized each year by a student planning board in conjunction with the Office of Greek Life.

This year, South Carolina's "Party with a Purpose" raised \$101,981—another record—which was donated to Palmetto Health Children's Hospital in Columbia. The money will help fund two patient rooms and will benefit children who are treated at the new hospital.

Dance Marathon is the largest service event sponsored by the University's 33 fraternities and sororities. Volunteerism and community service are at the heart of Greek organizations' missions, said Alex Wysocki, Sorority Council president.

The ninth-annual Dance Marathon is scheduled for February 22 and 23, 2008.



emily dawes

she's setting out to change things

As a Statehouse tour guide and a University Ambassador for four years, Emily Dawes knows her way around Columbia. But now, she's headed into unfamiliar territory.

Dawes, who earned a bachelor's degree in political science this year, recently arrived in Liberia, the West African country where she'll help set up a mission school for girls ages 7 to 14.

To prepare for her stay, which will last two or more years, Dawes says she's consulted the University of South Carolina professors who piqued her interest in serving in Africa.

"I've been e-mailing with Ron Atkinson, and I had lunch with Ismail Lagardien to learn more about the political situation," Dawes said. "There's a lot to be learned from Africa's past—lessons that can help prevent future problems."

While at South Carolina, Dawes, originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, was an active campus and community volunteer. It was during her time as a leader in student government that she found another way to help people.

"One of the things I absolutely love about USC is that it's in the capital," said Dawes. "Government seemed so distant before, but after working in student government, now I realize I really can make a difference—maybe not a tidal wave, but at least a ripple in the water. And that can change things."



big event

celebrates big rivalry



TIGERBURN, THE ANNUAL PEP RALLY AND BURNING OF THE CLEMSON MASCOT IN EFFIGY, IS A TRADITION WITH ROOTS DATING AS FAR BACK AS 1902.

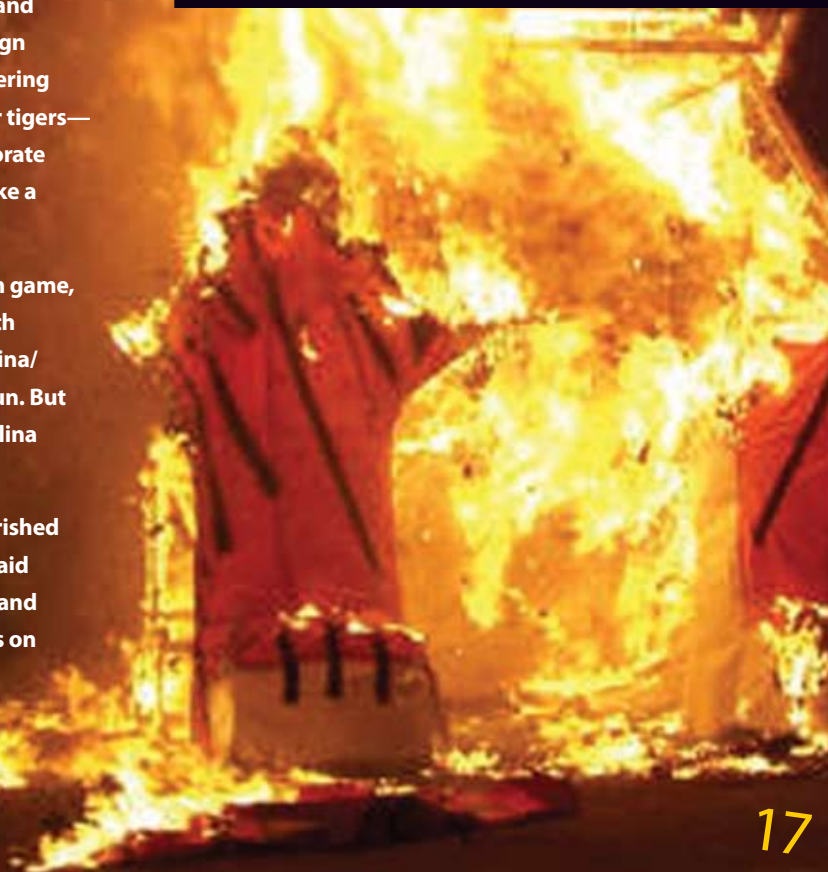
But it's unlikely that the turn-of-the-century students who participated in those first pep rallies and bonfires could have imagined the spectacle the event has become.

Since 2005, the University of South Carolina's Tigerburn has burned brighter than ever, thanks to the teamwork of Carolina Productions, the student activities organization, and mechanical engineering students under the direction of Abdel Bayoumi, chair of the mechanical engineering department.

Carolina Productions plans the outdoor event that attracts masses of South Carolina students, faculty, and staff and Gamecocks fans. In the meantime, the design and construction of the tiger is left up to the engineering students, whose big ideas translate into even bigger tigers—around 20- to 25-foot tall. The students even incorporate their mechanical know-how into creating features like a moving head and jaw.

During the week leading up to the Carolina-Clemson game, the South Carolina campus celebrates the rivalry with an array of events and activities, including the Carolina/Clemson Blood Drive and the Sigma Nu Gameball Run. But Tigerburn is the main event, said Ashley Wood, Carolina Productions president.

"Tigerburn is one of Carolina Productions' most cherished programs we plan each year for the student body," said Wood. "It is a fun mix of students, alumni, tradition, and entertainment. Each year Tigerburn grows and takes on a new face, but it will always serve as the pulse of true Gamecock spirit."



he's making it a point to give back

rickey evans

"Being an orientation leader is one of the best experiences available at South Carolina," said Rickey Evans, a junior from Kingstree. "When I was a freshman, my orientation leader was extremely helpful, and now I can help other students and their parents make a smooth transition to college."

Helping others comes naturally to Evans, who serves as a mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Columbia and as a tutor for elementary students at Columbia's Eddie B. Lloyd Jr. Community Center.

"It's important that I give back," Evans said, "especially because I've been fortunate to have the opportunity to earn a college education without the burden and stress of college loans."

A recipient of the Manning Hiers and Abney Foundation scholarships awarded for need and merit, respectively, Evans, a political science major, excels in the classroom and is active on campus. He's a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta honor society and a resident adviser at West Quad. After he graduates from the University of South Carolina, Evans plans to attend law school.

"Just like being an orientation leader, a student, or a volunteer," Evans said, "being a lawyer will allow me to continue meeting my responsibility of representing the University of South Carolina well."

By Jane Barghothi

The Division of Student Affairs and Department of Academic Support strives to provide merit- and need-based scholarships to all worthy students. This goal cannot be accomplished without private support through individual and corporate donations. Give a gift to the General Scholarship Fund today and provide immediate assistance to students who have earned an opportunity to succeed at the University of South Carolina. To learn more about giving to the fund, please contact Jane Barghothi at 803-777-3236 or janeb@gwm.sc.edu.

south carolina leads the nation with rotary scholarships

Nine University of South Carolina students have won Rotary International Scholarships for study abroad. With nine winners, South Carolina has more Rotary Scholars than any other American institution.

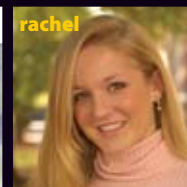
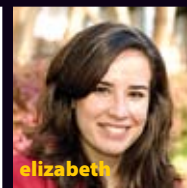
Each South Carolina Rotary winner will spend the 2007–2008 academic year abroad to promote understanding and friendly relations among people of different nations. Scholarship recipients are expected to maintain high standards of academic achievement while serving as unofficial “ambassadors of good will” between the people of the sponsoring and host countries.

The Rotary Scholarships are awarded in two categories. Ambassadorial Academic Year Scholarships sponsor nine months of study abroad and are valued at \$25,000; Cultural Scholarships are awarded for three months of study and are valued at \$12,500.

South Carolina’s winners are:

- **Veronica Sue**, Cultural Scholarship, a junior biology major from Greer
- **Dori Enderle**, Cultural Scholarship, a sophomore international business and English major from Richmond, Texas
- **Mark Godifraux**, Cultural Scholarship, a junior in the South Carolina Honors College and a finance and international business major from Mertztown, Penn.
- **Elizabeth “Liz” Grabenstein**, Cultural Scholarship, a senior in the South Carolina Honors College and a French and European studies major from Oak Ridge, Tenn.
- **Kali Stewart**, Cultural Scholarship, a sophomore finance major from Franklin, Tenn.
- **Anthony Busch**, Ambassadorial Academic Year Scholarship, a junior international business major from Kettering, Ohio (*not pictured*)
- **Sarah Price**, Ambassadorial Academic Year Scholarship, a 2006 graduate with a BA in advertising from Sumter (*not pictured*)
- **Kellie Sharpe**, a sophomore international studies major in the South Carolina Honors College from Dunwoody, Ga.
- **Rachel Bowman**, a junior *Baccalaureus Artium et Scientiae* major in the South Carolina Honors College from San Antonio, Texas.

Rotary Scholar candidates from South Carolina were assisted by the University’s Office of Fellowships and Scholar Programs, which provides advisement and support to students competing for national fellowships. The University has had 68 Rotary Scholarship winners since the office was created in 1994. Since that year, University students have won more than 350 national awards and earned more than \$10 million for advanced academic study.





healthy carolina enhances health, well-being

Universities have a moral imperative to help their students, staff, and communities improve their health and well-being. In 2006, the University of South Carolina launched a campus-wide initiative to do just that.

The initiative, called Healthy Carolina, is spearheaded by the Division of Student Affairs and Department of Academic Support. It is expected to have significant, long-term benefits for the South Carolina community and to position the University as a national leader in campus health promotion.

“We would like to see Healthy Carolina be the initiative that keeps health on the tips of everyone’s tongues,” said Michelle Burcin, director for Healthy Carolina. It is, she said, “the initiative that gets the campus focused on the health and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff.”

To achieve this, Healthy Carolina assesses the University’s health needs; guides programs, services, and policies; and encourages collaborative research.

Healthy Carolina is based on two national health-promotion initiatives: “Healthy People 2010,” from the United States Department of Health and Human Services, and the American College Health Association’s “Healthy Campus 2010.” Both initiatives identify major national health concerns and outline objectives to improve the health of American citizens.

To identify priorities and set goals for the South Carolina community, Healthy Carolina administered the National College Health Assessment (NCHA) in spring 2006. The survey examined topics ranging from general and preventive health to the effects of health on academics.

Assessing the health needs of faculty and staff was a little more difficult, said Burcin.

“In corporations, it’s very common to perform health appraisals,” she said. “But universities have such special employee populations of people with widely varying backgrounds that these corporate surveys aren’t appropriate. When we started out, we



Photos by
Benjamin Winchester,
senior media arts major

found that there was no tool to assess higher-education employee health, so we created one.”

Based on the results of these assessments, Healthy Carolina now focuses on physical activity, weight and obesity, tobacco use, substance abuse, sexual behavior, mental health, injury and violence, environmental quality, immunization, and access to health care.

“Our results were comparable to national NCHA data,” said Burcin. “So our priorities line up with the American College Health Association’s recommendations and Healthy Campus’ objectives.”

According to NCHA data, 77 percent of South Carolina students either never have smoked or haven’t smoked in the last 30 days. This finding supported the University’s subsequent adoption of Tobacco Free USC, a policy that prohibits the use of tobacco in and around university property.

“The policy protects our non-smokers—three-quarters of the student body—from secondhand smoke,” said Burcin. “At the same time, it makes it more difficult for the others to continue to smoke. We hope the policy will encourage many of them to quit.”

Healthy Carolina also is working to provide healthier food choices for the University. The Patio Café at Patterson Hall now offers a menu filled with vegetables, lean meats, and whole-grain pasta and rice—but no fried food.

“It’s a popular campus dining spot and proof that healthy food is delicious, too,” Burcin said. “The café offers our students and employees a way to eat healthy every day.”

South Carolina is a research institution of the “highest research activity,” according to the prestigious Carnegie classifications, so it’s fitting that research is a prominent component of Healthy Carolina. The university offers the perfect environment for health-related research, said Burcin.

“South Carolina is home to world-class researchers and to about 35,000 potential partners in research—the University’s students and employees,” Burcin said. “Healthy Carolina will participate in collaborative research, and we’ll encourage even more by matching researchers with subjects and situations so that they can uncover findings that will give us incredible insight into methods for enhancing health and well-being.”

When that happens, Healthy Carolina will put them into action, as their slogan says, by making healthy choices simple.



health-related issues affecting students' academic performance, by percentage of students reporting

- 30.1% stress
- 23.8% cold/flu sore throat
- 22.3% sleep difficulties
- 17.2% concern for a troubled friend/family member
- 15.3% relationship difficulty
- 14.8% depression/anxiety or seasonal affective disorders

university of south carolina national college health assessment—selected results

- 62% of students described their health as very good or excellent
- 77% of students reported either never smoking cigarettes or not smoking them in the last 30 days
- 45% of students reported vigorously exercising at least three days per week
- 63% of students had an estimated Body Mass Index (BMI) in a "healthy weight" range
- 31% of students reported eating an average of three or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day
- 15% of students reported being diagnosed with depression

university of south carolina faculty-staff health assessment—selected results

- 79% of employees described their general health as good or excellent
- 78% of employees reported currently having a primary care physician
- 48% of employees reported getting seven or more hours of sleep per night
- 59% of employees reported their weight as slightly or very overweight
- 56% of employees reported eating breakfast every day
- 44% of employees reported exercising at least three times per week

healthy carolina facts



On August 1, 2006, the University of South Carolina adopted Tobacco Free USC, a policy prohibiting the use of tobacco within 25 feet of university buildings, in university vehicles, and in designated outdoor areas, including Williams-Brice Stadium.

South Carolina president Andrew Sorensen said a tobacco-free campus squares with the university's responsibility to promote health and wellness.

"As the state's flagship university," said Sorensen, "USC has an obligation to establish policies that promote the health and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff, and to set an example for our state's citizens."

The tobacco-free policy applies to all faculty, staff, and students, as well as visitors and vendors working on campus.

The adoption of Tobacco Free USC was the first health-related policy change since the University launched Healthy Carolina, and it led the way for the City of Columbia to pass a ban on smoking in public places.

In promoting the University policy, Healthy Carolina encourages South Carolina students and employees who would like to end their dependence on tobacco to participate in free cessation programs. Such programs are available through the University's Campus Wellness Promotions; insurance plans, including the State Health Plan; and the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Courtesy of the Office of Media Relations

south carolina adopts no- tobacco policy



be-well project helps employees win at losing

The 50 participants in the University of South Carolina's Be-Well project had a lot to lose. In all, the pilot group of facilities services employees shed 335 pounds and 61 inches over the course of the 16-week wellness project.

Be-Well is a collaborative program involving researchers from the College of Nursing, the School of Medicine, Student Health Services, and Healthy Carolina. The first phase of the program offered free bloodwork analysis and physical exams, along with personalized exercise regimens and nutrition classes.

"The program wasn't just about weight loss," said Julie Hutt, program coordinator for Faculty and Staff Wellness Promotion.

"Their exercise plans were tailored specifically to their work. For those who do a lot of lifting in their daily work, we gave them exercises for their back and legs and worked on strengthening those muscles to help them work better and more comfortably."

Hands-on nutrition education included some culinary creation. "We began with education on nutrition—what they should be eating, what they should avoid," said Schuldt. "But we also offered healthy cooking classes. It was more than a lecture; participants tasted the food, and they were able to try different things they might not have tried before."

Phase II of the program, which is now open to all facilities services employees, began in June. Complete results are not yet in, but based on the results, the program might be expanded even further in the future. "Ideally, long-term, we'd like to see this offered to every employee at the University," said Schuldt.

"The results—from the health improvements to increases in employee morale and productivity—benefit the employees and the employer. Everyone wins."



honors on blossom to replace towers

THE CORNER OF MAIN AND BLOSSOM STREETS IS BUZZING WITH MORE ACTIVITY

THAN EVER, but for the first time in nearly 50 years, there are no “Honeycombs.” That was the nickname given to the Towers residence halls, which sported the veil blocks that gave the buildings a beehive-like appearance.

The Towers’ six buildings were built between 1958 and 1965 and soon became a familiar Columbia landmark. Two of the buildings were removed several years ago to make way for the University of South Carolina’s Graduate Science Research Center. In February 2007, the University demolished the remaining four. The space soon will be filled by a new residence hall for students in the nationally acclaimed South Carolina Honors College.

Over the last few decades, the Towers housed at least 50,000 South Carolina alumni. As the demolition date neared, many of these alumni gathered at a farewell reception to check out their former dormitories one more time.

“More than 400 guests visited the Towers in the weeks before we closed them,” said Gene Luna, associate vice president for housing and student development. “Former residents came from as far away as New Jersey to reunite with roommates, friends, and even former employees.”

Though the design was dated and the accommodations did not keep pace with the contemporary style of campus living, Luna said that some of those who visited were not quite ready to let go of the Towers—at least, not entirely.

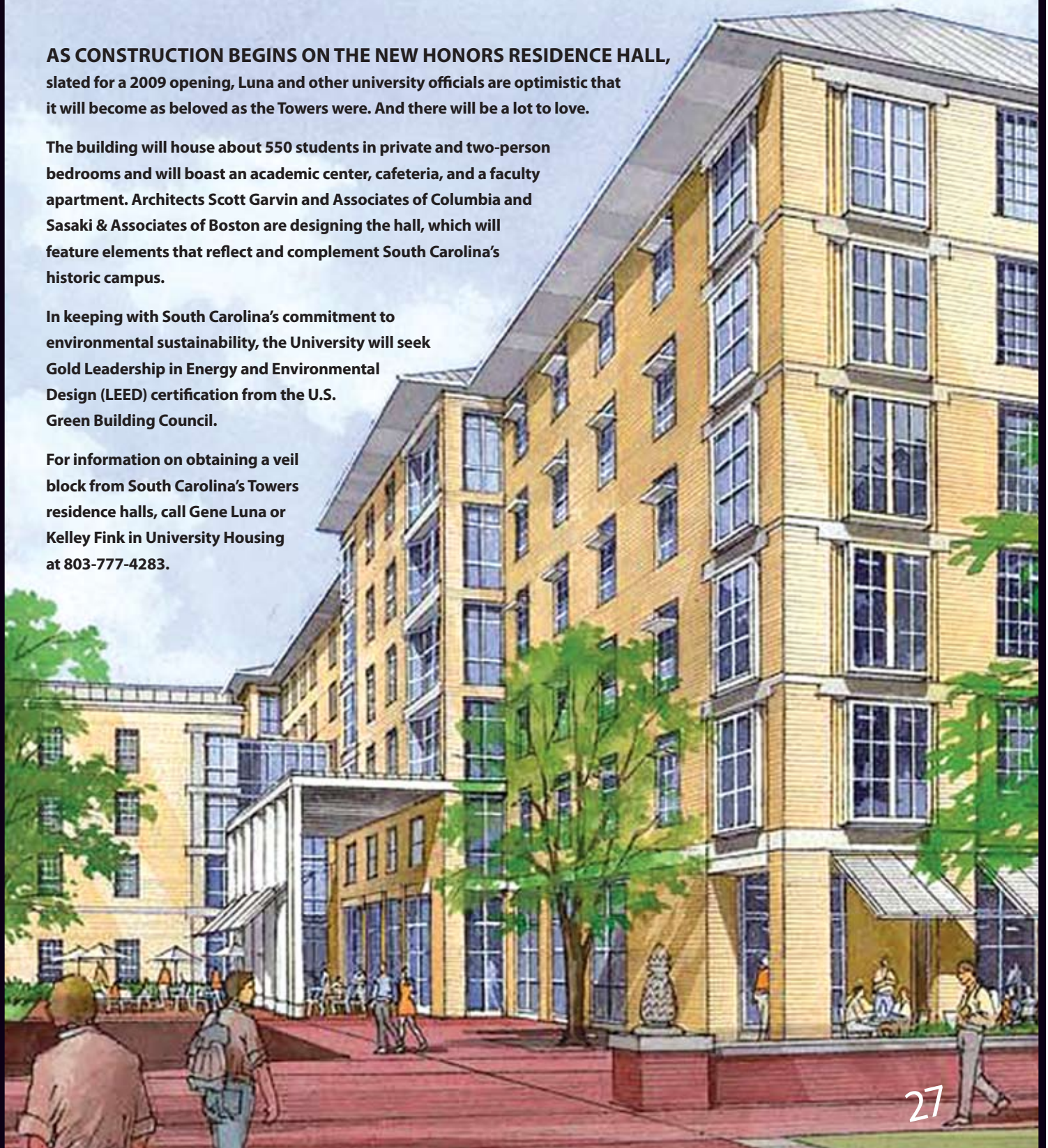
“We had lots of interest from people who wanted to keep pieces of veil block,” Luna said. “One gentleman even asked to keep his old door.”

AS CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON THE NEW HONORS RESIDENCE HALL, slated for a 2009 opening, Luna and other university officials are optimistic that it will become as beloved as the Towers were. And there will be a lot to love.

The building will house about 550 students in private and two-person bedrooms and will boast an academic center, cafeteria, and a faculty apartment. Architects Scott Garvin and Associates of Columbia and Sasaki & Associates of Boston are designing the hall, which will feature elements that reflect and complement South Carolina's historic campus.

In keeping with South Carolina's commitment to environmental sustainability, the University will seek Gold Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

For information on obtaining a veil block from South Carolina's Towers residence halls, call Gene Luna or Kelley Fink in University Housing at 803-777-4283.



A close-up photograph of a yellow emergency call box. The box has a red light on the right side and a speaker grille. The text 'CALL RECEIVED WHEN LIT' is embossed on the top. Below it, the words 'student government steps out for safety' are written in a large, bold, red font. Further down, there are several paragraphs of black text. On the right side, a red rectangular plate with the letters 'HE' and three dots below it is visible. At the bottom left, the number '28' is printed in a blue font.

student government steps out for safety

About 25 University of South Carolina students, faculty and staff scoured the University's historic Horseshoe on a cold night in January 2007. They were assessing the safety of the area as part of student government's Safety Walk.

"In the past, student government has sponsored the walk once a year," said Lauren Riga, student government secretary for safety. "This time, we partnered with Law Enforcement, Parking Services, and the University Safety Committee, something we'd like to continue in the future, along with increasing the number of times we do the walk."

Participants in the Safety Walk were divided into four groups and assigned small areas of the Horseshoe, where they looked for safety issues like broken lights or sidewalks, overgrown hedges, and areas in need of lighting or emergency call boxes. Concerns were noted on detailed maps of the areas and submitted to the University Safety Committee.

Though Riga, a junior from Greenville, said not every safety concern can be addressed immediately, the Safety Walk was a success. "As a result of the walk, lights have been replaced or fixed," she said. "It seems small, but it's an important thing. And we're looking for more participation in the future, which we hope will further improve our results."

Future safety walks will take place in the fall and will be advertised by student government. Riga encouraged the Carolina Community to look out for these opportunities. "It doesn't matter who you are," said Riga, "you can participate in the Safety Walk and help keep our campus safe."

congratulations

south carolina student media earns awards, recognition

With a daily newspaper and a growing list of awards, the University of South Carolina has become a nationwide leader among student media. South Carolina's student newspaper *The Daily Gamecock* joined an elite group this year, becoming one of only 80 college and university daily newspapers in the nation and the only one in the state. The transition to daily publication was overwhelmingly successful, and for the second consecutive year, the South Carolina Press Association (SCPA) named *The Daily Gamecock* the top student newspaper in the state. The newspaper's editorial, advertising, and design staff earned other SCPA awards, as well as honors from Southern University Newspapers, the American Advertising Federation, College Newspaper Business and Advertising Managers, and the Columbia Advertising Club. *Garnet & Black*, the University's student magazine, was cited as one of the top 10 student magazines in the country by the Associated Collegiate Press (ACP). *Garnet & Black* was a finalist for ACP's National Pacemaker Award, which is generally considered collegiate journalism's highest honor.



south carolina wins national marketing, recruitment award

The University of South Carolina is one of five American colleges and universities to win a 2006 Noel-Levitz Marketing-Recruitment Excellence Award, which was presented at the National Conference on Student Recruitment in Denver. The award recognizes innovative programs, services, and strategies that have improved student enrollment and retention. In recent years, personalized recruiting strategies such as phone calls from admissions counselors and online chats for prospective students, as well as expanded review of student applications, have helped South Carolina's enrollment increase dramatically in quantity and quality. The 2006 freshman class was the University's biggest and brightest; the 3,697 who enrolled had an average SAT score of 1172. "This prestigious, national award recognizes the progress South Carolina is making in becoming a great university—one that's a destination of choice for the best students from throughout the state, across the country, and around the world," said Dennis Pruitt, vice president for student affairs and vice provost for academic support. "Our enrollment-management and retention efforts have been tremendously successful at attracting academically talented students from diverse backgrounds and helping them succeed at the University, in and beyond the classroom."

Courtesy of the Office of Media Relations

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To comment on an item in *ess-ay* or
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