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ON THE COVER
Dr. Aimee Franklin ’07 returned to Southeastern in 2014 as an assistant professor of biology. Prior to returning, she earned her Ph.D. in Neuroscience at the University of Alabama Birmingham where she studied Fragile X Syndrome, the leading known genetic cause for autism. One of her articles published in Biological Psychology was one of the most cited articles in that journal in 2014.
We are packing up the alumni office and coming to a city near you.

Join us on this journey as we connect to network with other alumni and learn about the great things happening at Southeastern.

**RSVP** at SEU.edu/roadtrip

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**FEBRUARY 23**
Concord, NC
6:30 PM

**FEBRUARY 25**
Jacksonville, FL
6:30 PM

**MARCH 3**
Birmingham, AL
6:30 PM

**APRIL 12**
Nashville, TN
6:30 PM

**MAY 18**
Jerusalem, Israel
We’re in an incredible season of growth at SEU, and as one of our cherished alumni, you are part of the ongoing story of this Christ-centered institution. In this winter 2016 issue of Southeastern, let me invite you to share in some of the events in Southeastern’s most recent chapter as well as in the God-given vision for its future. God’s favor is clearly resting on our community and our mission has never been stronger. We’re passionately dedicated to equipping students to discover and develop their Divine Design to serve Christ and the world through Spirit-empowered life, learning and leadership.

We have many things to celebrate just in this past semester. Early in the semester, we held the ribbon-cutting ceremony for our brand-new Natural & Health Sciences Building. We are tremendously proud of this beautiful, state-of-the-art facility which enables us to generate additional top-tier academic programs. We celebrated yet another record-breaking enrollment of over 4,500 students. In only its second season, Fire Football finished 9-2 in the NAIA Sun Conference. Also, for the first time in the university’s history, the Men’s Fire Soccer team won the Sun Conference and advanced to the NAIA National Tournament! And certainly not least, we celebrated our 2015 Winter Commencement which saw yet another group of talented, highly-trained students join your prestigious ranks as Southeastern alumni.

I believe these achievements are the steps leading us to the doors of unfathomable possibilities. Our gaze is fixed upon an even brighter future. By the end of next semester, Southeastern will be celebrating the completion of the new Live/Learn Facility — a structure 5 ½ times the size of our Natural & Health Sciences Building. This will allow us to accommodate a greater number of students and faculty and expand our academic programs. And even now, we are already projecting another record enrollment for the 2016-17 academic year!

Yet the vision of Southeastern transcends even this dramatic growth. Behind every single diploma is a student and a dream —a God-given vision to engage and transform the culture around them. Our mission is to empower that vision and make their dreams reality. So when you stand on our campus and look at the clamor of construction or the busy students rushing to their classes, you know that beneath it all there are people being shaped in those classrooms, on the sports fields, and in the chapel. Our goal is to cultivate a fertile environment for academic, physical, and spiritual development. We are developing leaders that can truly change our world.

That’s why we are committed to courageous innovation and to pushing the cutting edge of innovation. Our vision — pure and simple — is to see students’ lives transformed, and then see those students released to engage and transform their culture.

At the heart of all we do is a desire to serve our students because we remain steadfast in our conviction to remain a Christ-centered, student-focused institution. Our commitment extends to these students not only when they attend classes on campus, but also when they become one of our esteemed alumni. We take the greatest pride in you — our alumni. I sincerely pray that you will always remember Southeastern as a place of empowerment, and I hope you will stay in touch with us and be a part of the continuing story of Southeastern University.

May God continue to bless you and open many more doors for you as you continue on your own divinely designed journey.
Dynamic, Experiential Training for Ministry Leaders

- Earn a Master of Arts in Ministerial Leadership (MAML) degree with a concentration in church planting
- Blend of online course work and 10 monthly site visits to cutting-edge churches committed to church planting, including
  - New Life Covenant in Chicago, Illinois
    *Pastor Wilfredo “Choco” De Jesus*
  - National Community Church in Washington, D.C.
    *Pastor Mark Batterson*
  - Church of the Highlands in Birmingham, Alabama
    *Pastor Chris Hodges*
  - Trinity Church in Miami, Florida
    *Pastor Rich Wilkerson Sr.*
  - New Life Church in Conway, Arkansas
    *Pastor Rick Bezet*

Visit [SEU.edu/churchplantU](http://SEU.edu/churchplantU) or call 800.500.8760 for more details.

Church planting is essential to spreading the Gospel by empowering ministry leaders to reach the world in their God-given ministry context. Southeastern is committed to providing emerging leaders with an unmatched education coupled with developmental leadership experiences to ensure the success of the church planting movement.  

*Dr. Kent Ingle, President*
Greetings to our alumni family. I find myself contemplating all the tremendous things that have taken place since our last issue and it excites me to think of the many things that are ahead this year. One of the thrills that occurred was the opening of our newest facility, our state-of-the-art Natural and Health Sciences Building. With the excitement of this new facility we decided to highlight several alumni who are already impacting their surrounding communities and beyond in the area of medicine and the sciences. There are research and humanitarian efforts being done by alumni of Southeastern that are already gaining global attention. This issue is filled with stories that are sure to inspire you.

We also had the opportunity this past August to host the Alumni and Friends reception during General Council 2015 of the Assemblies of God which brought nearly 1,300 alumni together. It was great to reconnect with many who we otherwise may not have had the opportunity to see. Several of our retired and long-serving faculty were able to join us, adding an additional highlight to this wonderful evening.

Homecoming this year was an absolute success! Alumni from as far away as California descended on campus to join in the festivities. With a crushing 66-0 victory over our football opponent, it highlighted the depth and quality of our coaching staff and players. Again, the Fourth-of-July-style fireworks lit up the sky afterwards bringing a tremendous celebration to a close.

I would like to extend a special “thank you” to all those who have contributed this year by becoming a member of our newly launched O2 alumni affinity program. I’m thrilled to say that over 300 alumni have already taken advantage of the benefits of this new program. With an annual fee of only $25 – which all goes back into student scholarships – it becomes a win-win for everyone involved. If you have not already joined, consider doing so to take advantage of all that the Alumni Association has to offer.

Another area that the alumni office has been working on diligently this year is our alumni web portal [SEU.edu/alumni]. This portal offers alumni the ability to search for other alumni; update personal information including address, class notes; and even upload current pictures. Connect with friends and help us stay up to date on where you are and what you are doing! We want to hear from you.

Lastly, watch for more information on our spring Road Trip Receptions. This was a huge hit last year and we want to again bring the alumni office to you! Join us to hear updates on your campus, fellowship with other alumni, network with those around you, and enjoy great food. As you enjoy reading the magazine, look at all the great things that God is doing on your campus. Consider how YOU might be a part of this tremendous, and might I say, rapidly growing family.

Thank you for all that you do and for representing Southeastern University as a member of the Alumni Association!
PROGRAM BENEFITS

DISCOUNT PROGRAM
With your O2 alumni card, you will have access to local and national discounts from thousands of hotels, restaurants, movie theaters, automotive repair centers, florists, car dealers, theme parks, national attractions, unique experiences, concerts, events, and much more.

LIBRARY
With your new O2 alumni card you now have online and in-person access to Southeastern’s Steelman Library. Through our complete online database collection, you can access tools to help with sermon preparation, graduate studies, or continued education. Make sure to bring your O2 alumni card with you when you check out books or movies and more.

PORTICO COFFEEHOUSE
Need a pick-me-up in the middle of the day? When you buy a cup of our mission, you support missions trips around the world and save 10% on each drink (or overall purchase).

WEIGHT ROOM
Why make monthly payments at a gym, when a gym membership at Southeastern is included in the O2 program? In order to use the gym, all you need to do is fill out a waiver. Throughout the year, there will be hour restrictions based on athletic needs.

BOOKSTORE
Get geared up in the Southeastern Bookstore with a 10% discount. Save on everything from apparel and gifts, to graduate diploma frames. The discount in the bookstore is available for gifts and merchandise. This discount is also available online at SEU.edu/bookstore.

FIRE FOOTBALL
Make sure to cheer on the Fire at every home football game and receive 50% off your game ticket when you present your alumni card or place your order online.

FORUM DISCOUNT
Alumni will receive a 15% discount on Forum tickets. In order to receive the discount and purchase a ticket, please call 863.667.5558 for more information.

POOL
If you want to stay cool during the hot Florida summers or want to take your kids to a private pool, the Southeastern pool is open to all O2 members. Give us a call at 863.667.5000 to verify the hours of operation before coming.

1 A form must be completed prior to accessing the online databases in the Steelman Library. In order to participate in this benefit, please email library@seu.edu to register.

2 A waiver must be signed before using the weight room.

3 Discount is not available on textbooks and personal hygiene items.

The best way to stop a fire is to deplete the very thing that is feeding it—oxygen (O2). This is the last thing that we want to happen at Southeastern; instead, we want to fan the flame of the Fire by continually supporting the supply of fuel.

The annual giving from our alumni helps to provide scholarship dollars for our students year after year. The revenue generated from this campaign each year directly affects the lives of our students.

The Alumni Association is excited to offer an alumni affinity program called SEU O2. Of course, anyone who has attended or graduated from Southeastern will always be a welcomed member of the Alumni Association, but for those willing to contribute a minimum of $25 a year we want to say a special thank you. Your 100% charitable contribution will come with a number of benefits, which are listed to the right.

Help increase alumni participation by joining SEU O2 and continue to feed the Fire! After signing up you will receive an Alumni ID card (just like a student ID card) in the mail. Use this card to take advantage of all the benefits afforded to you by your Alumni Association. I trust that this will be a blessing to you and your family as you are a blessing to others.

Ed Maner
Director of Alumni and External Relations

For more information, visit: alumni.seu.edu/O2benefits
Every week as I drive onto the campus of our wonderful alma mater, I am moved with a sense of awe as I see the construction of buildings towering 70 feet in the air, along with loaders, cranes and power tools working in synchronicity to the vision of Southeastern University. As I see the students utilizing the new College of Natural and Health Sciences Building and the bands of people going in and out of the “modular city” set up as temporary Arts and Media practice rooms, offices, and classrooms, I can only imagine the caliber of world-class servant leaders that are being trained and equipped on this very campus. In the fall of this year thousands of students will return to a campus with new and incredible amenities: more restaurants, more than 300 new beds, Arts and Media facilities and additional state-of-the-art facilities at our very own Victory football field.

With so much excitement and momentum around a growing campus, a growing student enrollment and a growing faculty, it is imperative that our Alumni Association catch the wave and grow in its offerings to these world-class graduates. As we journey from “Good to Great,” from “Ordinary to Extraordinary,” everything that we do must reflect the cutting-edge caliber of services that our university offers. As a result, we have offered numerous benefits for our alumni through the O2 program. As we extend these benefits, we ask each of you to “come alongside” us and participate in these programs that will be beneficial in both growing our university and leaving a legacy that honors God. Just as Paul thanked the Philippians for their willingness to partner with him in the work of the ministry saying in the 4th chapter: “Now I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it,” on behalf of the university I thank you for your willingness to partner as we extend opportunities to get in on what God is doing as He equips this next generation of leaders.

It doesn’t take much imagination to see that what was then is not now. The ground has shifted beneath our feet. Knowledge has increased, technology has proliferated, innovation is at an all-time high and God is pouring out His Spirit on our sons and daughters. Over the last few weeks I have heard a few prophetic words centered around 2016 being the year for the supernatural. It has been said that just as iniquity has been abounding, the grace of God will much more abound. I don’t know about you, but I am excited to see, almost with an outstretched neck, God move in a supernatural way as we make Christ known in the earth. I pray that each of you have a joyful and extremely prosperous year.
Southeastern Reaches RECORD ENROLLMENT

This fall semester, Southeastern welcomed the largest incoming class in history with 979 freshman students. The total enrollment count is 4,538 students. Enrollment has increased by almost 78 percent since 2011. Southeastern has once again been ranked among the top 10 fastest-growing private baccalaureate colleges in the nation, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education’s 2015-2016 Almanac. This data is based on the 10-year period of 2003 to 2013.
With the continual increase of enrollment, Southeastern has kept pace with construction on various new facilities to meet the needs of a growing student body. In the summer of 2015, Spence Hall, Lindsey Science Center, and the Music Hall were demolished to make way for the new five-story Live/Learn Facility. The 125,000-square-foot facility, designed by SCMH Architects, is due to be completed by the fall of 2016. The new facility will include classrooms, faculty offices, and student housing. The top two floors of the building will be dedicated to student housing and will provide an additional 365 beds. A food court, on the lower level, will offer Papa John’s Pizza, Backyard Burger and Einstein Bros. Bagels. NuJak Construction is heading up the project.

The first segment of construction of the Live/Learn Facility, the Choral and Rehearsal Hall, opened on September 17. The new 2,441-square-foot facility includes dedicated rehearsal and storage space as well as state-of-the-art acoustical design. This is the first building since the inception of the university that is dedicated to the music department.

The fall semester also saw the opening of the new 27,000-square-foot Natural and Health Sciences Building. The new facility includes a 120-seat auditorium, 22 faculty offices, four exam rooms, four patient care rooms, three general labs, two chemistry labs, two computer labs, and one nursing simulation lab. The nursing simulation lab includes realistic patient simulators that blink and have heartbeats that enable students to take their blood pressure, listen to their heartbeats, and hook up IVs.

In the beginning of the spring semester construction was completed on an extension building of the Student Activities Center (SAC). The new facility will be used for men’s wrestling.

Future projects include an Administration and Athletic Operations Building adjacent to the Fire Stadium, as well as a Track-and-Field Facility around the soccer field.
MEET SUZIE  THE MASTODON

In the front entrance of Southeastern University’s newly built Natural and Health Sciences Building stands a 14-foot-tall juvenile mastodon. Suzie, named after the popular song at the time “A Boy Named Sue,” is believed to be a female mastodon.

Two young boys discovered her in 1969 two miles west of the Florida Turnpike on Okeechobee Road in West Palm Beach, FL. Around 75 to 90 percent of her bones were found and were coated in beeswax before being assembled.

Prior to coming to Southeastern, Suzie was held on display at the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium. Suzie is on loan to Southeastern University from the science center until May of 2020. Viewings of Suzie are free of charge and are open to the public from Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. To schedule a visit, please email advancement@seu.edu or call 863.667.5558.

SOUTHEASTERN RECEIVES HIGH REVIEW ON CORE SUBJECTS

Southeastern University recently received high rankings in a study by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni on core academic requirements at major private and public schools in all 50 states. The study is called What Will They Learn? A total of 1,098 four-year institutions were reviewed based on the strength of the schools’ core curricula in seven core subject areas: composition, literature, foreign language at the intermediate level, U.S. government or history, economics, mathematics and natural or physical science. Southeastern scored a B along with the University of Central Florida and Florida State University.

Southeastern was ranked No. 14 for “Best Online Doctorate in Education” by Nonprofit Colleges Online. Programs are ranked based on affordability, accreditation and nonprofit status. There were only two other private institutions listed above Southeastern.
ALBUM RECORDING

SEU Worship, Southeastern’s worship team, recorded their fourth live album "For This Purpose" in November. This year’s live recording included musical guests, such as Luke Breton Von Groll, DawnChere Wilkerson, Joel and Amy Davis, and Micah Massey. The album is available to purchase on iTunes.

SOUTHEASTERN LAUNCHES KINESIOLOGY DEGREE

This fall semester, Southeastern launched a degree in Kinesiology, one of the fastest growing majors in the country. The degree has two concentrations – pre-physical therapy and exercise science. Kinesiology is the study of human movement, and exercise science focuses on the study of how the body functions in response to acute and chronic exercise. Pre-physical therapy prepares students to gain admittance into a doctoral program in physical therapy and exercise science prepares students for a career in exercise science, biomechanics, and personal training. This program offers students a hands-on approach to studying physical activity and its impact on society and health throughout the lifespan.

Professor Tad Carls, chair of human performance and sport studies, saw the need for developing this program when he started as a full-time faculty member in 2012. After working with coaches, athletes, and potential athletic recruits, he realized that Kinesiology was one of the most requested programs. Carls worked with Professor Dominic Stross, the former women’s soccer coach and assistant professor of human performance and sport studies, on developing the curriculum. They originally planned for a total of 20 students in the program – 10 in each concentration. This fall, however, they had an overwhelming response with three to four times the number they had expected, with 30 students enrolled in exercise science and 42 enrolled in pre-physical therapy. “It’s been a resounding success. It allows students another option to consider as they discover their divine design and the career path that God is directing them towards. It also opens the door to minister to more students,” said Carls.

Students that graduate with this degree expect to receive jobs in the fitness industry, clinical settings, universities, and within professional sports teams. They can also continue their education through receiving advanced degrees in physical therapy, exercise physiology, biomechanics, and athletic training.
Southeastern welcomed Justin Lathrop as the vice president of strategic partnership this fall. Lathrop was appointed by President Kent Ingle to serve in this newly created position. In this role, Lathrop will be an ambassador-at-large for the university developing partnerships with organizations and ministry centers throughout the world. He will be using his connections with some of the most influential churches to increase SEU’s footprint of accessible education throughout America.

“Justin will bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the leadership team at Southeastern University,” said Ingle. “As SEU continues to move forward in its visionary and strategic plan, we know that Justin’s expertise and unique gift-set will empower our missional drive and will help us achieve a new level of success and excellence as we serve God and His plans.”

Lathrop has over a dozen years of experience in local ministry. He has spent the last several years starting businesses and ministries that partner with pastors and churches. He is the founder of Helpstaff.me (now Vanderbloemen Search), Oaks School of Leadership, and YoungPastors.com.

Prior to coming to Southeastern, Lathrop has worked as the director of strategic relations for the General Council of the Assemblies of God. He has also worked with the Leadership Network and Convoy of Hope.

“I am looking forward to building upon the incredible reputation that Southeastern already has,” said Lathrop. “I am excited about all of the incredible intellectual assets we have at the university. I look forward to creating more avenues for them to be broadly exposed and listened to and to see these different opportunities grow for all of our faculty, staff and students. Partnerships will make everything. I hope to be the person to bring the right people to that table,” he said.

Lathrop will continue some of his work for the Assemblies of God serving as a consultant in the areas of leadership and church development.

Lathrop lives with his wife, Andrea, and children in West Palm Beach, FL, where Andrea serves as the Executive Director of Ministries for Christ Fellowship.

He is the author of the book *The Likable Christian*. He holds a bachelor’s degree from North Central University in Minneapolis, MN.
THE PENNY STORY
A WORTHY CAUSE
When the topic of human trafficking comes up, most conversations get quiet as a solemn tone accompanies the room on what seems to be a distant and hopeless situation. This is not the case when talking to KENDALL ALTMYER ’13. Her face lights up with passion as she shares the story of hope. She points to the copper penny bracelet stamped with the word “Worthy” and penny tattoo inked on her arm, as she shares the emotional stories of women she worked with that suffered from this treacherous crime.

The inception of the Penny Story began in the fall of 2012, when Kendall took a class at Southeastern with Professor Pat Manzo on human trafficking. In the class, Manzo compared pennies to victims of human trafficking – both trampled on, forgotten and often deemed worthless.

“I knew I would never see a penny in the same way again. I would find pennies on El Prado (the campus walkway). I would find them everywhere. I have become infatuated with the fact that there is a penny lying on the ground. All I can think about are all of the girls and boys that are victims. It is the second largest criminal industry,” said Kendall. Kendall filled jars with all the pennies she found. Each time she would pick one up, she would say a prayer for those trapped in human trafficking. Due to her obsession with pennies, Kendall’s friends gave her the suggestion of making jewelry out of pennies. Without a knack for making jewelry, Kendall held onto that suggestion without knowing where to take it.

A year later, after she completed her bachelor’s degree, Kendall still had a desire to work with human trafficking victims and interned with the A21 Campaign in Thessalonika, Greece. The A21 Campaign was started by Christine Caine as a non-profit organization that fights human trafficking around the world. During Kendall’s time there, she established relationships and cared for the girls that were rescued.

One afternoon, Kendall arrived back to her room in Greece to find a package that was sent from her hometown in Alabama. Kendall’s friend, Sara Beth Chambers, had stamped the word “Worthy” into a penny and had created a bracelet out of it. Sara Beth had also made ten penny bracelets that she sold at a football game, with all of the proceeds given to the A21 Campaign.

The Penny Story started to unfold. “I started praying, ‘Lord, if this penny had a voice, it could change the face of human trafficking.’ I never prayed for me to be the voice of the penny; I just prayed the Lord would give the penny a voice somehow, someday,” said Kendall.

While working with the A21 Campaign in Greece, Kendall had the opportunity to meet Sandy Jobe, the mother of the Grammy-nominated Christian singer Kari Jobe. After Kendall poured out her passion for the Penny Story, Sandy invited her to a conference in Texas with the opportunity to sell the bracelet at Kari’s booth. Kari fell in love with the idea and asked Kendall if she could help by selling the bracelets. For months, Kari had been praying for a way she could support Christine Caine’s ministry and she felt this was the way to do it. To this date, they have sold over 13,000 Penny Bracelets with all funds going to the A21 Campaign.

What started as the small dream of an SEU student has led to a national movement to support the fight against human trafficking. The Penny Story was featured in a documentary by Southeastern called, Common Cents. The documentary won the Gold Award at the Atlanta International Documentary Film Festival. SEU Worship, Southeastern’s worship team, also released a single called “Worthy” with all of the profits going to the A21 Campaign. With both the documentary release and worship song Southeastern was able to raise more than $7,000. “I have wanted to tell this story for a long time. It’s an honor. It’s not my dream, but God’s,” she said.

Kendall will graduate with her second degree from SEU, a master’s degree in professional counseling, this spring. After graduation, she will continue to work as a full-time employee in the department of student development at Southeastern. She hopes to invest in the lives of students. “The Penny Story would not have been real without Southeastern. SEU made me who I am and really got behind my dream. I am excited to be able to give back,” she said.

For more information about the Penny Story, visit www.thepennystory.com.

Photo: Scott Wheeler/The Ledger
It had been nearly 30 years since the state of Florida had a wrestling team competing at the college level.

That changed on November 1, 2015, when the Southeastern University Fire wrestling team took to the mats at The Citadel Invitational in Charleston, SC. The announcement to start wrestling was made on November 20, 2014.

“When wrestling’s popularity at the high school level in Florida is undeniable,” said SEU Director of Athletics Drew Watson. “We look forward to building a national championship caliber program quickly with high-level, mission-fit wrestlers who don’t want to leave the state in order to pursue their dream of competing at the college level.”

The wrestling community immediately lauded the decision by Southeastern.

The National Wrestling Coaches Association and the United States Wrestling Foundation teamed up to provide a start-up grant to the university in appreciation for restoring varsity intercollegiate wrestling to the state of Florida.

“The U.S. Wrestling Foundation is pleased to be able to provide support to Southeastern University as it initiates its varsity wrestling program,” said USWA President Jeff Waters. “The establishment of wrestling in Florida has been a priority for the Foundation and we can consider this to be an important and historic milestone for our sport.”

When the Fire needed a leader for Florida’s college wrestling team, they brought in a coach that understood the importance of wrestling in the Sunshine State.

Javier Maldonado was a two-time state champion at Kissimmee Osceola High School and went on to become a three-time Southern Conference Champion at the University of Tennessee Chattanooga. He was hired on February 12th of 2015 as the program’s first head coach.

“When I’m excited to be a part of the first college wrestling program in the state of Florida,” said Maldonado. “It’s important for wrestlers in Florida to have a chance to compete close to home. My hope is that Southeastern becomes the blueprint as more programs start across the state.”

Former Olympic wrestler Sam Hazewinkle added, “Javier is a Florida native who has not only wrestled at every level but has continually exceeded the expectations others had for him. He has a tremendous work ethic and lives his life true to his Christian values.”
Maldonado got right to work to compile the first wrestling roster, recruiting hard in his home state. When practices began on October 5th, 38 wrestlers hit the mats at the Student Activities Center; 29 of them were from Florida.

It was apropos on that Sunday morning in South Carolina, that the first Fire wrestler called to competition was the first one to sign a letter of intent to SEU. Ethan Owen faced off against Limestone College’s Kyle Lowe. With 1:03 gone in the first period, Owen scored the first win and pin in program history. He also made more history that evening, when in the 133-pound title bout he came away with a 15-3 decision over Gardner Webb’s Phil Anderson to become the first individual title winner.

“I just wanted to treat it like another tournament,” said Owen. “I didn’t want to be intimidated by anyone and just wrestle who’s in front of me. In the final bout, I knew I had to ride him out; I probably wasn’t going to take him down. After feeling him out in the first period, I could tell he was going to be tough to score on.”

Owen also ended up winning the tournament title at the Georgia Intercollegiate and was third at the Shorter Open.

Ryan Strickland earned runner-up honors at the Georgia Intercollegiate, and Frankie Jaramillo was second at the Shorter Open.

In the first NAIA Coaches’ Poll of the season, the Fire were receiving votes - a sign of respect for the infancy of the program. Individually, Owen was ranked 15th in the 133-pound weight class.

On December 4th, the Fire hosted a dual meet for the first time, when the University of South Florida’s club team came to The Furnace.

The night opened with a high school dual between Lake Gibson High School and Kissimmee Osceola. “This is a great experience,” Lake Gibson head coach Daniel Walker told The Ledger, following a 46-19 win over the Kowboys. “They have the curtains, the music blaring… this is big. This is big for Florida wrestling. This is bigger than the two high school teams wrestling. This has been a battle for years for kids that have gone to college, came back and couldn’t finish because it was just too far from home. This is a win for everybody. This is history and I’m just proud that we got invited to be part of it.”

When the Fire came out of the tunnel and through the smoke into the transformed Furnace, the large crowd was ready to watch college wrestling in Polk County. A pin by freshman Jaaziel Santana at the 5:46 mark of the 125-pound bout gave SEU its first win on campus.

“It feels great,” Santana said. “I got to put on for the whole crowd, my team, my coach and for the whole state of Florida.”

The Fire cruised to a 45-6 win over the Bulls, winning five bouts by fall, and also picked up a technical fall, and a major decision.

Southeastern will host its next dual meet on February 6th, when it hosts club teams from Florida Gulf Coast and Brewton-Parker College.
FOOTBALL
Southeastern football continued to build on its success from its inaugural year, compiling a 9-2 record, including a 4-1 in Sun Conference play. Following a loss in its home opener, the Fire went on a five-game winning streak, beating conference opponents Warner, Edward Waters, and Ave Maria. Southeastern continued to be one of the most productive offenses in the NAIA, averaging 413 yards of total offense per game and 6.2 yards per play. The Fire made a big splash in postseason recognitions, placing five on the conference first team and four more on second team. Running back Jarrell Reynolds rushed for 1,016 yards and 12 touchdowns. Sophomore linebacker Will Tillo ended the season as the conference leader in tackles at 10.3 per game.

MEN’S SOCCER
Southeastern men’s soccer had its best season yet, making their way to the NAIA National Tournament for the first time in the program’s history. The Fire were 16-5 overall and 8-1 in the conference. The turning point of their regular season came when they picked up a win over the then Top 10 ranked Thomas 1-0 on the road. Southeastern finished the regular season as The Sun Conference Champions and went on to win the postseason conference tournament, with wins over Keiser and St. Thomas. Southeastern took Keiser into overtime for a 2-1 win off of Jake Van Der Luit’s header in the 7th minute of golden goal overtime. They went on to win the title against St. Thomas 2-1, with Van Der Luit scoring in the 12th and 49th minute. The team faced #11 Cumberland in the opening round of the national tournament and was able to get the win off of yet another Van Der Luit goal in overtime. They would
eventually bow out of the tournament in the round of 16 to Indiana Wesleyan in a close 1-0 game.

**WOMEN’S SOCCER**

The theme for women’s soccer was rebuilding, and with a new coach, they were able to do just that. The program was 10-7 on the year and 5-5 in the very competitive Sun Conference. The Fire were 4-2 at home, and gave fans great shows with quality wins over Bob Jones, Oglethorpe, Warner, and Ave Maria. A 4-0 win on Senior Day was one of the shining moments, with Alyssa Kamiński, Jai Sterling, and Bre Eldridge all scoring in the contest. Over the course of the season, the Fire made 41 goals while allowing only 25. Bre Eldridge led the team in goals, assists, and shots on goal. The team qualified for the post season but were eliminated in the quarter final round of conference play by St. Thomas.

**MEN’S CROSS COUNTRY**

Men’s cross country improved this year, finishing second at the conference meet, which was hosted at Holloway Park in Lakeland. Individually, senior Deion Cossio and freshman Trae Miller earned individual bids to the NAIA National Championship, finishing 209th and 217th, respectively. The men had one of their best performances at the Royals Cross Country Challenge, where each of the top seven runners had personal records or season-best performances.

**WOMEN’S CROSS COUNTRY**

Like the men, the women’s cross country team also finished second at the conference meet. Megan Fitzgerald, who was the clear frontrunner for the team, was able to put together some great performances this year. Most notably was her performance at the Sand Shark Invitational, where she finished 12th in the 5K event with a time of 18:36. Fitzgerald, along with Sydni Ogilvie and Julia Kaster, made the trip at the end of the season to the NAIA National Championship, where they finished 63rd, 162nd, and 164th, respectively, out of 321 total runners.

**VOLLEYBALL**

Volleyball won the program’s Sun Conference Tournament and received an automatic bid to the NAIA National Tournament. Following a 3-3 start to the season, the Fire rattled off six wins in their next seven games, but hit a lull late in the season, dropping two of the last three. In The Sun Conference Tournament, things really changed. In
the semifinals, the Fire knocked off St. Thomas in a five-set thriller, then knocked off Warner 3-1, who was unbeaten in conference play, to win the tournament. The team would go on to face the College of Coastal Georgia and bow out of the tournament in the opening round with a 3-1 loss. Freshman Victoria Trueheart was named to the First Team All-Conference after posting 271 kills and a .249 attacking percentage. Kelsey Morton, a sophomore, was named to the Second Team All-Conference and the league’s Champion of Character.

MEN’S GOLF
The men’s golf team currently holds its highest NAIA ranking in program history, checking in at 13th in the final Coaches’ Poll of the fall season. The men had a very solid showing at the Dave Adamonis Sr. Invitational at Doral, where they finished 4th out of 13 teams, and were right on the heels of the two-time defending national champions, and other Top 10 squads. Freshman Ben Tucker was able to tie for sixth individually in the event with round scores of 70, 73, and 76. Gustavo Vacciaro and Ignacio Estrada tied for the team’s lowest score of the tournament at a solid 5-under par score of 67.

WOMEN’S GOLF
Women’s golf, although one of the newer programs at Southeastern, has not wasted time climbing the ladder and has played quality golf in the fall season. The women’s team was able to win against Faulkner with a team score of 661. Andrea Lopez and Summer Johns tied for 3rd place individually at the Faulkner Invitational with a 20-over performance of 164. After their fall preview, they were able to lock down and hold onto a #25 ranking in the NAIA Coaches’ Poll.

WRESTLING
SEU’s newest athletic program has gotten a hot start as they push on toward the halfway mark of their season. Fire wrestling competed for the first time in program history at The Citadel Invitational on November 1st. Freshman Ethan Owen earned the first win, pin, and tournament title, going unbeaten at 133 pounds. The team hosted the University of South Florida Bulls first home dual meet in the program’s history, which was a 45-6 win with six match wins via fall. The Fire also claimed the team title at the Cougar Duals, going a perfect 5-0 on the day. The team is currently 8-5 in dual meets this season, and 2-3 in Mid-South Conference duals.

MEN’S BASKETBALL
The men’s basketball team finished the 2015 portion of its schedule with an 8-5 record, but concluded the calendar year with a perfect showing at The Athletes’ Meals Classic in Miami Gardens. The Fire then picked up two wins at the English Family Classic in West Palm Beach, which included a 107-102 win over Florida National. The team currently ranks among the national leaders in 3-point field goal percentage (42.7%), and total field goal percentage (49.5%).

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL
The women’s basketball team is working hard to follow up their great success from last year. Under the direction of interim head coach Leann Dahlstein,
the women are finding their new identity and have started off the year with some impressive wins. Their season opened up with a key win over the then-nationally ranked Madonna University, 62-58. Christin Strawbridge, one of the new additions to the team, led the way for the Fire with a double-double performance of 14 points and 12 rebounds. SEU also knocked off sixth-ranked Cardinal Stritch in Milwaukee 77-72, thanks to another double-double from Strawbridge. Junior Alyssa Ramos scored the 1,000th point of her career during an 87-58 win at Brewton-Parker to become just the fourth player in program history to reach this milestone.
As we continue to celebrate the growth and developments in the College of Natural and Health Sciences, we have chosen to highlight the accomplishments of just a few of our alumni and students who have been working in the medical and science fields. In the next few pages, we will share the stories of alumni who have pursued careers in research, medicine and medical missions. You will also read about new science clubs on campus and some of the accomplishments of our students.

**TIMELINE OF HISTORY ON CNHS**

- **Prior to 2001**: Began as the Department of Math and Sciences. Department had no majors except for Secondary Math and Secondary Biology, which were offered through the Department of Education.
- **2001**: Biology degree offered.
- **2002**: Mathematics degree offered.
- **2003**: Biology/Pre-Med degree added.
- **2012**: Became the College of Natural and Health Sciences.
- **2013**: Nursing and RN-BSN program added.
- **2015**: BSN in Nursing offered.
- **2015**: CNHS moved to their new state-of-the-art science building.
- **2016**: Currently 293 CNHS students enrolled.
- **2016**: Total CNHS graduates is 187.
DR. AIMEE FRANKLIN
INVESTIGATING FRAGILE X SYNDROME
As a student, DR. AIMEE (VINSON) FRANKLIN ‘07 never envisioned her career leading to a future in research. While in college and shortly after graduation, she was determined to take the MCAT and get into medical school.

Aimee worked hard in order to graduate from Southeastern in three and a half years with a bachelor’s degree in biology/pre-med. She moved home after graduation and worked delivering newspapers to save up enough money to take the MCAT. Although determined to take the MCAT, Aimee decided to take the GRE instead, at the urging of Dr. Debbie Hazelbaker, dean of the College of Natural and Health Sciences.

She sent her GRE results to three schools – the University of Alabama Birmingham (UAB) and two in Florida. In February of 2008, she received an email from UAB encouraging her to apply for the graduate program in integrated bio medical sciences. She also applied for the Howard Hughes Fellowship. Two weeks later, Aimee was accepted into the program and also received the Fellowship.

“I didn’t go into graduate school knowing what I wanted to study. I hadn’t planned to do any of this. It was all really God’s favor,” said Aimee.

Now, almost nine years later, Aimee is a promising investigator of Fragile X Syndrome, the most commonly inherited form of autism. In addition to her research, Aimee joined the faculty at Southeastern in 2014 as an assistant professor of biology, teaching anatomy and physiology. With a passion for research, she hopes to integrate it into student learning and the courses she teaches.

Aimee is currently working with the College of Natural and Health Sciences to develop a Center for Undergraduate Research in Biomedical Sciences at Southeastern. Plans call for a three-phase process. She has a verbal commitment from her alma mater, the University of Alabama in Birmingham (UAB), to donate mouse brain tissue for students to use for research. The brain tissue will include that of Fragile X Syndrome, Alzheimer’s, and depression. The first phase, which is pending funding, would set up small-scale experiment labs for students where Aimee would oversee and train students to research the various tissues and syndromes. The second phase of the program would enable students to perform imaging, which would enable students to conduct experiments on biological tissues using advanced imaging techniques. The final phase of the program would offer students the opportunity to study live animals.

“When I came to Southeastern, I did not expect everyone to be so excited about my research, but they were. We can do great science here, and I am thrilled for what is to come,” said Aimee.

Aimee’s passion for research developed as a student at UAB. In 2009, she joined the laboratory of Dr. Lori McMahon in the Physiology and Biophysics Department.
where she studied molecular mechanisms underlying cognitive deficits in Fragile X Syndrome. It was under Dr. McMahon’s laboratory that Aimee developed her interest in Fragile X Syndrome. “I owe a great deal of who I am, my passion for what I study, and my research to Lori,” she said.

Under the laboratory of Dr. McMahon, she researched a mouse model of Fragile X Syndrome. The brains of the mice were removed to study their electrical activity. Through her research, Aimee and her collaborators found that the GSK-3 (Glycogen Synthase Kinase-3) protein had too much activity in selective brain regions. They were able to block the protein with lithium and reverse the abnormal electrical activity and some of the learning deficits. Their findings showed that the blockage of the molecule GSK-3 reversed behavioral insufficiencies. Due to these findings and other studies implicating GSK-3 in disease pathologies, drug companies are now interested in developing selective GSK-3 inhibitors that will be safe to use for humans.

In the midst of her research Aimee married her high school sweetheart, Steven, in 2009. During her time at UAB, she received several local and national fellowships including the Civitan Emerging Scholars Award, Cognition and Cognitive Disorders Training Grant Fellowship, and the Ruth I. Kirkstein National Research Service Award. She also published a paper while doing her lab rotations, which is not common for students to do. One of her articles published in *Biological Psychology* was one of the most cited articles in that journal in 2014.

Aimee successfully defended her dissertation in March of 2014 and was awarded a Ph.D. in Neuroscience. Soon after she accepted a post-doctoral research position at the National Institute of Mental Health in Baltimore, MD, she found out that a position had opened at Southeastern for a professor of anatomy and physiology. Two weeks before she was going to start the job in Baltimore, she accepted the position at Southeastern.

Aimee plans to continue her research at SEU, which aims to better understand cognitive deficits in neurological disorder in hopes of identifying novel therapeutic strategies in diseases for the treatment of Fragile X Syndrome, Alzheimer’s disease and depression. She plans to continue her research in collaboration with UAB.

“I feel extremely blessed to have the opportunity to return to Southeastern and work alongside so many of the faculty that influenced not only my career but also my personal life and walk with Christ. It is my hope that I can inspire and guide my students with the same wisdom, humor, and humility that so many of my professors displayed,” said Aimee. Since moving to Lakeland, Aimee and her husband have welcomed their first child, Silas.
Dr. Ida Abraham
Alumna
Opens Chiropractic Center
When I was younger, I would always pray, God these are your hands. Use them. I still pray that prayer every day at the office before I start my day,” said DR. IDA ABRAHAM ’07.

Ida is among one of the few female chiropractors in Lakeland, FL. She has owned her private practice, South Lakeland Chiropractic Center, since October of 2014. “Being a female chiropractor in Lakeland has opened more doors for me because there are not that many of us,” she said.

Ida purchased the practice from a chiropractor who had decided to retire after working in the field for 36 years. At the time the practice went on sale, Ida was looking for something new in her career path. The wooden structured building has two practice rooms, a room with an aqua bed, and a massage room. The quiet and cozy feeling is accompanied with Ida’s bubbly and personable personality.

“It was an absolute answer to prayer. I was in a journey where I was ready to make a change and I didn’t know where the change was going to be; this door opened wide. It was a gift from God,” she said.

Ida is well versed in a variety of techniques, including the Gonstead technique, which involves the individual adjustments of the vertebrae of the spine. Before determining what technique to use on each patient, she asks their preference. “Each patient is unique. The way I adjust a football player is different from how I adjust a swimmer. When you train in different techniques, you can cater to the patient’s preference, so that you are not boxed in on what you can do. If one technique is not working, you can change it,” she said.

While adjusting patients, Ida shares with them her passion for science and the study of the human body. You ask her any question about science or the function of the human body, and her face lights up with an explanation of how it all operates because of its unique design.

“When you study the design of the body you are understanding the nature of God – that He likes things operating. For your heart to beat or your lungs to breathe – God designed it. God just put the most amazing power in your brain and it can control things that we don’t even think about. But God created every part to function as a whole and designed the structure for a purpose,” she said.

Ida’s interest in science and the human body transpired at a young age. When Ida’s brother was in high school, he fell from an 18-foot building at school. His
recovery involved four different surgeries. She spent countless hours at the hospital with her family while her brother underwent surgeries and the recovery process. Her time in the hospital and watching her brother recover from each procedure would develop a fascination of how the human body was able to heal and be restored.

“It was amazing to see how the body could heal. It’s incredible to see how when there is no hope there is something that can be done. There are solutions out there and I loved that,” she said.

Ida pursued a bachelor’s degree in pre-med/biology at Southeastern, without knowing what she wanted to specialize in until after graduation. “Educationally Southeastern helped me to be competitive to get the board scores that I needed to practice and also spiritually at Southeastern you really learn to be God dependent. It’s not just being led in the worldly wisdom, but being Spirit led as well. That kind of training doesn’t come with one-day seminars. The three-and-a-half years I was there, it really helped me to have a relationship with the Lord and to lead off of that relationship. It’s not a private life; it is a daily life,” she said.

During her last year of college, she went on a missions trip to Mexico that changed her perspective. She spent time during the day helping give people medications, and at night they held services for the community. Her time in Mexico also opened her eyes to the reality that there were not a lot of pharmacies available for people to get medicine from. The trip also developed a desire in Ida to pursue medical missions.

“I really liked how you could take care of a community, not just virtually, but also physically. A lot of it is emotional too. When someone is sick, they need hope. When we did those night services, we would point them to Jesus. It gave us access to people groups that have medical needs and we were able to give them the hope of Christ,” she said.

Following graduation, Ida took time off from school and shadowed different medical practices in Lakeland. She also volunteered at Lakeland Regional Health. The moment she stepped foot into a chiropractic office to shadow a chiropractor, she knew that was the field she was supposed to go into. “I absolutely knew that was what I wanted to do. The response patients have to a single treatment is incredible,” she said.

She earned her doctor of chiropractic degree from Palmer College of Chiropractic in 2012. During her rotations, she worked with the Chiropractor Center of Lakeland. She started shadowing the chiropractor on a Friday morning. The following day, he offered Ida a full-time job. Ida worked as the associate doctor for two years before transitioning to her private practice. “I got a lot of training there; we were treating 60 to 80 patients a day. It was a huge blessing. Now that I am in my practice it is easy. I was trained for it,” she said.

In her practice, Ida lives by Psalm 139:4, “I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are your works, and that my soul knows very well” (NJKV). “That is the thing that I stood on, depended on, and lived on, because the power that made the body heals the body. The great thing about faith is there are times when only God can fix it. The great thing about science is it works together. It is not opposing teams. It is like a unity because you learn there is order to things that God designed because you are studying the order and that’s what science is to me,” she said.
College of Natural and Health Sciences

The growth of the College of Natural and Health Sciences has seen the development of two new clubs on campus – the Christian Naturalist Conservation Society and the Florida Nursing Student Association.

The Christian Naturalist Conservation Society (CNCS) was started in September in similarity with other science clubs on university campuses in Florida, however with more of a biblical creation emphasis. The club’s mission statement reads, “CNCS aims to instill a love of science and God’s creation into the hearts of students and faculty, to learn about God and His invisible qualities through His nature as seen in Romans 1:20.”

This semester the club organized a scorpion hunt at Camp Gilead in Polk City, FL. The camp offers a nature center, hand-held blacklights for scorpion hunting, and a gazebo with a fire pit. During their activity, the members hunted for spiders and scorpions, and ended the night around the campfire to enjoy s’mores, while Professor David Revell, faculty advisor of the club and assistant professor of mathematics, closed with a science-filled devotion. The hunting consisted of locating and photographing the spiders and scorpions. In the spring, the club plans to hike and take a fossil trip down Peace River, where they will sift through riverbeds for shark teeth as well as mammoth and manatee bones.

The newest club in the College of Natural and Health Sciences is the Florida Nursing Student Association. The club is a branch of the Florida Nurses Association and has nearly 30 members. The faculty advisors for this club are Dr. Lucy Stella, Dr. Marcia Posey, and Professor Kim Acevedo.

The club’s presidents, Tiffany Stewart and Stephen Stewart, will be working on launching different activities and initiatives for its members to be involved in. One of their future programs is Adopt-a-Grandparent. Members will be reaching out to and spending time with the residents of Carpenter’s Home Estates in Lakeland. They will also host monthly disease awareness events as a way of educating the SEU community about various diseases. They plan to start a mentorship program for new students in order to help them transition into the nursing program. During finals week, they hosted a blood pressure drive on El Prado.
In 2006 with a continuing burden for medical missions, DR. TONYA HAWTHORNE D.O. ’83 ventured to the country of Kenya in hopes of starting a medical outreach center. Still uncertain of the location, Tonya went on five scouting trips outside the capital city of Nairobi, each being a little further from the city and modern conveniences. In her last trip, she visited Ngoswani, a rural village of no more than five buildings. “When we drove into the village of Ngoswani, I heard a voice say, ‘You can make a difference,’” she said.

Tonya is the founder of New Frontiers Health Force (NFHF), a non-profit organization with a vision of reaching the nations through the development of international health centers, medical outreaches and community education programs. She founded the organization in 1997 in her garage and a year later started full-time missions work. “I chose to begin my own faith-based organization to help professionals from all denominations use their medical skills to influence the lives of people around the globe,” she said.

Tonya’s desire to become a doctor developed at the age of eight. She spent the rest of her educational career working with that goal in mind. At the age of 16, she experienced a crisis of faith, which set her on the path to medical missions. “I cried out to God and I made this vow, ‘I will go anywhere you ask me, I will do anything you ask me, I will be anyone you ask me to be, but Lord let me impact lives,’” she said.

Originally from Rockford, IL, Tonya was introduced to Southeastern while attending a Jesus rally in Orlando during her senior year of high school. She applied that same week, having already sent in her application to Florida State University’s Pre-Med program. She prayed over her applications and placed the decision in God’s hands. “I told the Lord that whichever school accepted me first, that is where I would go,” said Tonya.

She received her acceptance letter from Southeastern first, and a day later was accepted to Florida State University. Remembering the vow she made at the age of 16, she decided to enroll at Southeastern. With a heart for ministry, she majored in missions with minors in Bible and English.

“My years at Southeastern were the foundation that has kept me on the path as a career missionary physician. It was in the chapel and prayer rooms where I learned to hear God’s voice and understand His calling for my life. Without that foundation, I would have been content to just give to missions and occasionally go on a short-term trip. And, I would have missed what God destined me for in this life,” she said.
Even after graduating with her bachelor’s degree, Tonya still had an urgency to pursue medicine. She spent the next few years attending community college to finish her prerequisites for medical school. While she attended classes, she worked in a hospital as an EKG (electrocardiogram) technician. She decided to apply to Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine in Missouri after meeting and talking to several osteopathic physicians. She graduated from medical school in 1992 and did her residency in family medicine at Suncoast Hospital in Largo, FL, from 1992 to 1995. After residency, she worked as the assistant director for the Suncoast family practice residency clinic, as an Emergency physician at Suncoast Hospital, and had a private practice in Clearwater, FL. From 1995 to 1998, Tonya used all of her vacation time and unpaid leave to go on medical missions trips.

With missions a passion in her heart, she started working full time as a medical missionary in 1998. To date, NFHF has served in 35 countries, built three clinics, done global work in disaster relief, sent millions of dollars of medical supplies and pharmaceuticals, and brought the hope of God to hundreds of thousands. Because of Tonya’s efforts, President George W. Bush named her the Humanitarian of the Year, an award created to honor volunteers who have given at least two years and over 4,000 hours of community service.

NFHF began a transformation during one of Tonya’s many medical trips. In Liberia, Tonya encountered a life-changing experience after fracturing her foot. “This incident put me on the sidelines for a few months, where I spent time seeking the Lord about the ministry. He spoke very clearly to me that it was time for us to launch out and begin a long-term project, which is what I had purposed in my heart as a young medical intern. My goal was to build clinics around the world and have national staff cover them,” she said.

The longing she had to start a long-term project led Tonya to the community of Ngoswani in Kenya. Nine years after her initial visit, the Ngoswani Community Health Center (NCHC) stands as a thriving medical facility. It is the largest medical center that she has started. The clinic provides 24-hour care, childhood immunizations, labor and delivery, trauma, antenatal clinics, basic dentistry, laboratory, pharmacy, and many other medical services. This year they are hoping to add an X-ray, as well as an in-patient facility. NFHF also developed an additional clinic in Empaash, Kenya, that the non-profit ran for four years before turning it over to the community.
All of the medical staff for NCHC are Kenya licensed and have been university trained. The staff also gets one-on-one training with Tonya in the clinics. Tonya is a board-certified physician and has a wealth of experience in what she does from treating tropical diseases to delivering a baby. Volunteers come from America throughout the year to provide staff holiday relief, continuing medical education training, and teaching new skills to the staff.

“We do face challenges every day. We are from a different culture. We don’t think alike, we don’t act the same, and we have very different ways we self-govern; however, the most rewarding part is that I know I was created for this time, this purpose and these people. I get the privilege of caring for God’s people,” she said.

In addition to the health center, NFHF has also opened a school for the local community children near Ngoswani. Linda’s Kids Academy is run by Tonya’s teammate, Rev. Linda Brown. After a 25-year career in television working for CTN (Christian Television Network), Linda decided to join NFHF as a full-time missionary using her passion to begin the educational program.

After the first year of Linda’s Kids program, which started with four children, they now have 50 students enrolled. Forty-six are enrolled in the Academy and the original four are in area primary schools. Their motto is “Education is our Legacy.” “By educating the children, we are investing in the next generation which will begin to change the nation from the inside out,” said Tonya.

Tonya is permanently stationed in Kenya, however, she often returns back to the states for a few months each year. While stateside, Tonya often has the opportunity to lecture in classes at Southeastern and invest into the lives of current pre-med students. In 2014, 31 years after graduating from Southeastern, she hosted her first missions team led by HANNAH (FLORES) SUDDRETH ’15 at the medical center in Ngoswani. “The team was amazing and I was proud to mentor these young people,” Tonya said.

As Tonya continues to bring hope to the community of Ngoswani, her advice for people desiring to follow in similar footsteps is, “Follow God with abandon. Always stay close to Him so that you can hear and discern His voice. Life will be challenging, but walk with the Lord to discover it was you He foreordained to be where you are for His purpose. I was created to be the woman I am today. I was gifted to be the physician I am today. I was allowed to be the ambassador of the King, and it’s all because of Jesus,” she said.
“I clearly remember God calling me to Africa, but I did not want to go alone,” said **DR. AARON SANTMYIRE ’00.** Aaron felt called to be a missionary to Africa at the age of 12, while attending a youth camp where evangelist Greg Hubbard was speaking. Several years later, Aaron would meet his wife **HEATHER (SEYMOUR) ’01, a missionary kid who was born and raised in Zimbabwe for 12 years.** Heather also felt called to missions and to work with orphans in Africa. With a similar calling and passion to reach the lost in Africa, Aaron and Heather would move to the country of Madagascar as full-time missionaries with the Assemblies of God in 2007.

Their journey began while they were undergraduate students at Southeastern. “She dropped a picture from a recent wedding and I held onto the picture so I would have a reason to talk to her. Eventually, our friend Brandon orchestrated a date and the rest is history,” Aaron said. The two were married in August of 2000 and now have two children, Isabelle, 11, and Josiah, 9.

Although Aaron graduated with a bachelor’s degree in missions, he worked as a registered nurse while taking classes in order to help pay his bills and graduate debt-free. He received his associate’s degree in nursing from Allegany College of Maryland prior to attending Southeastern. He first went into nursing as a means to an end. “I wanted a profession that I could use overseas as a missionary,” he said. Heather graduated with her bachelor’s degree in elementary education to pursue her passion of teaching and working with children.

The couple first moved to Africa in 2004, to work in the country of Burkina Faso. During the two years they were there, Aaron worked in clinics treating women and their children that were infected with HIV/AIDS. He also helped educate the community on the virus and disease. While Aaron
worked in the clinics, Heather taught English and Social Studies at the local Bible school.

In 2007, the couple and their two children packed up everything they owned and moved to the island of Madagascar. The island is located off of the southeast coast of Africa. “Madagascar is Asia meets Africa. It is a unique blend of the two continents with great diversity, but a people united in being Malagasy. The landscape is diverse from desert to tropical rainforest,” he said.

As Aaron transitioned from Burkina Faso to Madagascar, his medical focus and research shifted, due to the need that was prevalent amongst his patients. Aaron has worked as a family nurse practitioner since 2006 focusing more recently on skin diseases.

“In Madagascar, we use nursing skills to conduct medical clinics and more recently to work with skin diseases, such as leprosy and chromoblastomycosis [a chronic fungal infection of the skin]. I am also able to care for the broader missionary community’s health needs,” he said.

Aaron and a Malagasy doctor often fly to a remote town and treat over 200 people for their skin diseases on a medical bush missions trip. They specifically look for leprosy and chromoblastomycosis, but also treat all common skin diseases such as tinea versicolor, acne, eczema, psoriasis, bacterial infections, and many more. “The patients walk for up to four days to come and be treated. We show the ‘Jesus’ film, ‘GodMan,’ and ‘Magdalena’ film and present the Gospel message,” he said.

As an American family nurse practitioner serving in Madagascar, Aaron has had to overcome various cultural barriers. One of the first barriers he has faced is that most people in Madagascar are not familiar with the role of a family nurse practitioner.

“A cultural barrier we face is communicating and verifying the care we are providing is effectively understood and applied. So much is lost in translation or in western style medicine. Most doctors never tell the patient bad news, because doctors are supposed to help, not discourage their patients with bad news. In the west, we are taught to be compassionate, but direct. Trying to find a balance is sometimes very difficult,” he said.

Similar to other African countries, witch doctors have a strong hold on the Malagasy people. “The spiritual side of care is very rarely considered in healthcare in the U.S., but is prevalent in the developing world. Often times in Madagascar, the patient has been to the witch doctor multiple times and when their money is all used up, they come to our clinic, broke and with a disease process that is far more advanced than it should be. Fear and intimidation of the witch doctor has a powerful hold in Madagascar,” Aaron said.
Living in a country where skin diseases like leprosy are prevalent, Aaron has continued to learn more about them not only through experiences, but also through furthering his education. He earned his master's in nursing in 2006 and completed his doctorate in nursing practice from West Virginia University in Morgantown, WV, in 2013. His research for his doctoral degree focused on skin and soft tissue infections in the age of Community Acquired Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus – meaning skin infections from bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics. Aaron has been able to apply what he studied into what he is currently doing.

“We used a change model as a structure to train practitioners on the guidelines to treat these infections and provide resources to empower them to do so. It was published in a few places," he said. His research article, “Challenges of Implementing Evidence-Based Practice in the Developing World,” was published in the May 2013 issue of *The Journal for Nurse Practitioners* (JNP). He also had two articles in the *Journal of the Dermatology Nurses’ Association*.

In addition to serving in medical missions, Aaron and Heather currently serve as team leaders in Madagascar. “We have a great team of missionaries who love Jesus, love their families, and love Madagascar. You cannot ask for much more than that,” he said. They have also found their house to be a “grand central station” in the evenings as many people come and go who are sick or in need of health care.

Heather teaches English and a class for transformation at the local Bible school. She continues to take classes in order to keep her teaching license up to date. She has also lived out her calling of working with orphans, as she coordinates Hope Orphanage. The orphanage was started as a partnership between Africa’s Children and the Malagasy National Church in the early 1990s. The Santmyire family works together to oversee the orphanage. There are currently 19 children in the orphanage that they look after.

Isabelle and Josiah attend a French-speaking school and are bilingual in English and French. When they are not at school, they help out at the orphanage and often help Aaron with bush medical trips through taking blood pressure and temperatures of patients.

Aaron balances his time between going to the bush for medical outreaches, teaching at the Bible school, helping maintain the orphanage and working with the Assemblies of God national churches. Aaron also teaches in a nursing school to train future nurses and helps equip their national church pastors to be community health agents.

When asked what advice he would give to future Southeastern alumni about pursuing a career in medical missions he said, “Try not to accumulate debt. Dr. Rodney White gave me that advice and that was very wise counsel. Secondly, keep your focus. If God has called you to serve in the developing world, all decisions need to be held in light of that calling.”

Aaron and Heather are currently in the United States for the next year in order to raise support to return to Madagascar. While in the States, Aaron has been working with his sister, Beth, at her dermatology office, Appalachian Spring Dermatology, in Fairmont, WV, to maintain his licensure. The Santmyire family will return to Madagascar in the summer of 2016.

As team leaders in Madagascar, Aaron and Heather’s goal for when they return is to work with their team on focusing more on discipleship and developing more Bible schools. “As our regional director Gregg Beggs so clearly shares, ‘There will be no lost people in Heaven.’ We treat physical needs to show the compassion of Christ and believe in the importance of proclamation of the Gospel message,” he said.
TEGHAN (MILLER) SHEETS ’14 was the first student to graduate from SEU’s nursing program. She currently works as an ICU manager at Florida Hospital Zephyrhills. She lives in Dade City, FL, with her husband, Charles, and their children: Carlee Jo (7), Mason Dean (5), and Jackson Lee (2). Southeastern had the opportunity to ask her a few questions about what it was like to be the first nursing graduate from Southeastern.

What does it feel like to be the first nursing graduate from SEU? It is an honor to be the first nursing graduate from SEU. In a way, it is a dream come true for me. I initially went to SEU after graduation from high school. I wanted to be a nurse, but more importantly I wanted an education with a biblical foundation, so I decided to spend my first year at Southeastern University. Looking back, I can see where God had a master plan for my career and my education that would be more rewarding than I ever could have imagined. Graduating with my BSN from Southeastern wasn’t just another advancement, but it allowed me to be a part of a Christ-centered healthcare foundation that is being built at SEU.

At graduation they said that you were working, raising your children and in school. What was the most challenging thing about juggling all three of those areas? Working full time and raising a family is not easy. Adding school to that mix seemed like an impossibility, but with God all things are possible. Balancing my time was the biggest challenge throughout this journey. It was difficult to make sure my priorities stayed in line by carefully dedicating the appropriate amount of time and energy into each of these areas. There were many weeks that there were more tasks to complete than there was time to do them, but with God’s help, all things balanced in the end.

Where are you currently working? How long have you worked there? I have worked at Florida Hospital Zephyrhills in the Intensive Care Unit since August 2010. I have worked as a bedside nurse, charge nurse and then was promoted to manager of Critical Care in July 2013.

How do you think that Southeastern equipped you for what you are doing now? My experience at SEU gave me the tools I need to improve my clinical and leadership skills. A large focus of the program is servant leadership providing instruction on how to grow as a nurse leader while maintaining an attitude of service for patients, their families, staff, peers and physicians. Dr. Ingle shared the story of Christ washing feet at graduation and signified that with the gift of a towel for graduates as they passed the stage. While I am proud to have the diploma, I am honored to have the towel because it represents the value of what I received through this experience. Jesus was able to teach a crowd, lead followers and never let pride get in the way of washing feet. I believe Southeastern helped me understand how to lead healthcare professionals while still remaining grateful for the opportunity to wash the feet of those around me.

Is there a professor that impacted your life at Southeastern? YES! Dr. Posey and Dr. Lucy have become mentors and friends to me. They always saw my potential even when I didn’t know I had any left. I thank God for the opportunity to learn from them.
Michael Hughes is not your ordinary college student. While many Florida students spend their weekends at the beach, Michael spends his free time writing and self-publishing his books. Over the past four years, Michael, an Arizona native and senior studying biology, has published three books on wildlife in Arizona, Brazil, and Florida. He is in the process of completing his fourth book.

Michael is also the first student from Southeastern to be published in a scientific peer-reviewed journal, along with his co-author and recent graduate JESSICA LOGUE ’15. Michael spent his spring break in 2015 writing and submitting a manuscript to the Florida Field Naturalist Journal, along with Jessica. The manuscript is about a research study they designed and performed that investigates the composition, structure, and activity patterns of the bird community that uses an individual live oak tree. The paper entitled “A Temporal Analysis of a Single Live Oak Tree’s Avian Community in Central Florida During Autumn Warbler Migration” was printed in Volume 43 Number 4 of the Florida Field Naturalist (FFN), the last issue of 2015.

Michael’s first book, Wildlife in the Desert, examines 80 species of animals in the Sonoran Desert and was written when he was a senior in high school. Although there are plenty of books written on the Sonoran Desert, each usually focuses on one particular animal group; Michael wanted to write a book that encompassed birds, reptiles, mammals, and insects/arthropods. He started writing the book from his personal encounters in the desert and completed it in six months. The book includes over 250 photos he took and descriptions of the extensive research he did on each species.

“I grew up in the desert and I wanted a book that encompassed each animal group, but it did not exist. I wrote this book to provide resources that I wished I had and to show the beauty of God’s creation,” said Michael.

In 2013, Michael co-wrote Florida A to Z as an educational tool with Southeastern alumnus CASON WHITLOCK ’14. Cason currently works as a 7th grade science teacher at Southwest Middle School in Lakeland, FL. The two met during Michael’s first semester in...
Zoology class. Cason did the research on the animals, wrote the content, and Michael photographed the animals and edited the piece. Each page of the book has a picture of an animal, a description, and is followed by an interactive page for students. The book is used by teachers in Lakeland, including Lakeland Christian School.

“It goes home frequently!” said Frederic Wiechmann, science resource teacher at Lakeland Christian.

My Amazon Experience, Michael’s third book, was written after he went on a missions trip to Brazil between his freshman and sophomore years of college. Michael spent three weeks on a boat in the Amazon and he took over 3,000 photos and completed 110 pages of extensive journaling and notes. He created the book from his photos from the trip. His observations are interwoven throughout the book.

“I am amazed at the accomplishments of this young man as he continues to write and publish books while a student at SEU,” said Dr. Samuel Bennett, professor of education at Southeastern.

After he graduates in the spring of 2016, he plans to pursue a master’s in field biology, wildlife biology or ecology and eventually plans to work as a wildlife biologist. In the fall of 2016, he plans to marry his fiancée Jessica Logue.

His books are for sale online at his website michaelswildlife.weebly.com or at the Southeastern bookstore, the Casa Grande National Monument in Coolidge, AZ, and the Pueblo Grande Museum and the Butterfly Wonderland in Phoenix, AZ.
In 2007, when Stephanie Snipes graduated with her bachelor's degree in business and professional leadership, she never imagined going back to school for a second degree, until she met Carolyn Murphy. “My first experience at Southeastern was great. I love how our professors were attuned to our busy schedules and helpful in working around our schedules,” said Stephanie.

Carolyn and Stephanie met four years ago while they were both working at Winter Haven Hospital. Stephanie served as the manager of physician and professional billing for BayCare Health Systems. She worked at Winter Haven Hospital for four years. Carolyn served as the director of health information management. She worked at Winter Haven Hospital for 14 years.

This past fall, they both transitioned over to Lakeland Regional Health. Stephanie is working as the manager of health information management. Carolyn is working as the manager of coding and clinical documentation improvement.

A little over a year ago, Carolyn expressed an interest in pursuing her master’s degree and Stephanie decided to join her. They decided to enroll in the MBA program at Southeastern.

“I wanted to attend a Christian-based school. After not having been to school in 25 years, an online platform was scary. I liked the idea of having a hybrid classroom environment. It has been a great networking opportunity and we have made lots of friends,” said Carolyn.

The two started their classes in 2014 and took every class together. They spent countless afternoons at each other’s houses working on homework together and studying around the pool in the hot Florida sun. “Since our classes are blended in ages there have been some mentoring and learning from each other. We have also been able to incorporate some of our homework projects into our careers,” said Stephanie.

Stephanie and Carolyn plan to graduate from Southeastern together in the fall of 2016.
At the time LeAnn Fulton '09 graduated from Southeastern, she was working as a clinical research assistant at a cardiology practice in Ohio. She had also completed a certificate in Patient Advocacy from Cleveland State University in September of 2009, in hopes of pursuing a career in patient advocacy.

“I had previously been a nursing major many years before, but decided that was not what I was called to so I did not finish. The goal of my degree and certificate was to move south to the Raleigh/Durham area to escape the long Ohio winters and work at Duke University Hospital as a patient advocate,” said LeAnn. “My first husband had passed away from leukemia in 2003, and I wanted to help other families who were going through similar trials.” In June of 2010, LeAnn moved with her family to the Raleigh/Durham area. The only patient advocacy position open at the time was during the nights. With two children still in school, she looked for something else. Living in the heart of the Research Triangle, she saw several opportunities in the research field and was hired by Duke Clinical Research Institute.

She currently serves as a clinical research associate. She works on a large global clinical drug study, which is investigating the cardiovascular outcomes of a diabetes medication. She assists 60 research sites nationwide conducting the study according to protocol. The principal investigators and study coordinators see the patients they have enrolled into the trial, and LeAnn provides training and makes sure that they follow the protocol and study procedures correctly. She also ensures that they are collecting and entering the needed data, makes sure they have the supplies they need, acts as a liaison with the sponsor and other system vendors, and works with the rest of the study management team to ensure best practices and regulatory compliance. In her position, LeAnn has also been able to apply her passion for patient advocacy, as well as volunteer as a patient advocate at Duke University Hospital for a year.

One of the most difficult aspects of LeAnn’s job is to help her sites keep their patients engaged and participating in the study, as research is voluntary and patients have the right to withdraw from participation if they choose. Their study is expected to take seven to eight years and they are currently in their fifth year. In order for the study to meet the FDA requirements for the study results analysis, the study sponsor needs a high level of completion from their patients. “I love being able to help a study coordinator or physician work through difficult issues as they come up – whether that is in data entry, providing talking points to discuss the study with a patient who is considering dropping out, or providing protocol training for new staff coming onto their study team,” said LeAnn.

She has one son still at home, a senior in high school, and her daughter graduated with a bachelor’s degree in elementary education in May and is teaching first grade in Phoenix. LeAnn also remarried in 2006 and her husband works as a commercial construction superintendent. She is also active on the Mission Development Committee at her church, Salem Baptist Church in Apex, NC.
Retiree Chaplain (COL) Richard Quinn ’78 is not ready to settle down following his 34-year career as a chaplain in the U.S. Army. With his sights set on Washington, Quinn aims to launch the first-ever chaplaincy program in the U.S. State Department.

Being sensitive to God’s call has always been important to Chaplain (COL) Richard Quinn ’78, who retired this past October following 34 years of service as a chaplain in the U.S. Army.

As a senior in high school, Richard planned to pursue a degree in biology and was driving to take a science CLEP at a local community college when he sensed God speaking to him about his future in the ministry.

“I felt the call of God while driving, strong enough that I turned the car around and went back home. I got dressed and went down to the church, where I was the president of the youth group at the time,” Richard recalled.

Having been encouraged for years by his mother to attend Bible college, Richard enrolled at Southeastern University, where he pursued a bachelor’s degree in biblical studies and a minor in music.

Professor Darryl Goldman was one of several at Southeastern who would impact the direction of Richard’s life. Goldman taught at Southeastern while waiting to enter active duty as a chaplain and led a summer mission trip to Gulfport, Mississippi, which Richard joined.

The next year, Goldman, dressed in his Army beret and jump boots, having since entered active duty, returned to Southeastern to speak during missions week. This was one of Richard’s first times hearing or even thinking about the possibility of working as a chaplain.

Following their graduation from Southeastern, Richard and his new bride, Margene (Wortz) ’78, moved to Hawaii, where she taught elementary school and he served as the youth pastor at Kailua Church and Christian School. Many of the children Richard and his wife worked with were from military families, stationed at the nearby Kaneohe Marine Corps Air Station.

“Some of the guys were coming back pretty spiritually messed up,” Richard said of the Marines stationed there. Several who were part of Richard’s congregation had done back-to-back deployments to Subic Bay in the Philippines, an island nation under martial law and characterized by unrest and violence.
“Subic Bay was a nasty place. What I got from the six Marines from our church who went was they were getting no support from their chaplains. It was a rough time. That’s when I decided to join the military to be a chaplain and take care of service members and their families.”

During his 34-year career in chaplaincy, Richard had the opportunity to minister all across the globe. However, he cites the initial years of his career, while he was waiting to enter active duty, as being some of the most critical.

“I realize that those years were some of the most powerful for what I learned as a young pastor,” Richard said, reflecting on his time as the installation chaplain at the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site, then known as the Kwajalein Missile Range. The island population of 2,300 Americans consisted of mostly civilian rocket scientists for the “Star Wars” initiative, family members, and about a dozen military.

Some other highlights of Richard’s career include deploying to Central America during the Iran-Contra scandal — just one month after entering active duty — and in the Middle East during Operation Desert Storm. During his final years in the Army, he also had the opportunity to help update the ecclesiastical supply system available to chaplains through the Defense Logistics Agency, a system Richard had helped to create in the late 1990s.

Now as Richard looks to the future, he is considering how to leverage the experience and know-how he gained as a chaplain in the Army.

“I’ve got all of this experience pumped into me for the past 34 years. How can I use what no one except someone else in my boots would know? Rather than go back to a civilian pastorate or some other form of administrative position or job, the real next step is to try to leverage what I’ve gained of systems knowledge in the federal government, ministry and legislative law and to try to incorporate ministries into places in the federal government that currently do not have them,” Richard said.

The U.S. State Department is his first target. According to Richard, there are approximately 235 diplomatic missions and 12,500 diplomats, plus all their families, around the globe — but there is no chaplaincy to provide support to them.

“Diplomats and their families go through many of the same stresses that a military family would go through when they’re in a foreign country. They have restrictions, they have separation time and they have fear,” Richard explained.

He aims to initially create a corps of 15 chaplains in the State Department. To assist with the endeavor, he formed a firm called Chaplaincy Solutions Research and Consulting. For this new chaplain initiative to move forward, the State Department would need to accept the concept, the U.S. Senate write and approve the legislation, and the U.S. Congress authorize the funding.

“My piece is to be faithful to God’s calling,” Richard said, “to be available and to be wise and shrewd as the opportunities happen.”
In recognition of Chaplain (COL) **RICHARD QUINN '78** and his 34 years spent serving in the armed forces, SEU honored him with the game ball at the Homecoming football game on October 17, 2015.
HOMECOMING 2015

On October 16 and 17, we held our Legacy on Fire Homecoming Event! Over 100 alumni and friends joined us for the Alumni Annual Dinner. We also celebrated the 50th reunion of the class of 1965 and we celebrated the 25th reunion of the class of 1990. Around 200 alumni joined us as we cheered our Fire Football team as they went on to beat Ave Maria University 66-0. Mark your calendars for Homecoming 2016 – October 21 & 22.
DECLUTTERING YOUR IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS
As we approach the end of winter (or what we call “winter” in Florida), many of us begin to think about spring cleaning and getting rid of the clutter that seems to accumulate each year. If we haven’t yet organized our papers and receipts for filing our income tax, we may start sorting through a collection of W-2s, giving receipts, mortgage paperwork, etc., as April 15th gets closer. Some of us may have even made a New Year’s resolution to organize that junk drawer or closet and clean out the garage this year, and now console ourselves in the fact that it’s still early 2016.

One area that is often overlooked as we organize our financial records is the area of estate documents. Perhaps we don’t focus on our estate plan because we tell ourselves we don’t really have enough of “an estate” to worry about. But regardless of your current financial situation, your age, or your health, planning for your future and the future of the people you care about requires some organization of documents and a review of items that everyone should be able to put their hands on.

A Wall Street Journal article published a few years ago listed 25 documents that you need to have in one place where you and your spouse or other family member can find them. Some of these documents are specific to property you own; others are health-related; still others are items you might not think of as essential documents until the need arises to get into a family member’s account and you find you don’t know their password.

Not all of these documents will apply to everyone, but any that do apply to you and your immediate family should be located and organized into one safe place so that you can avoid searching through boxes or stacks of papers when one of these documents is needed.

Happy hunting!
This past August, nearly 1,300 alumni joined us for an Alumni Reception held during the General Council of the Assemblies of God in Orlando, FL. Take a look through these photos and see who you may recognize!
DR. WILLIAM HACKETT, provost, was presented the Distinguished Educator award by the Alliance for the Assemblies of God Higher Education during the Assemblies of God 56th General Council in Orlando, FL. This award recognizes educators that distinguish themselves in the alliance by consistent excellence in scholarship and service in teaching, as well as outstanding contribution and lifetime commitment to postsecondary education in the Assemblies of God.
Southeastern celebrated with 208 new alumni at the graduation ceremony held at Victory Church this past December. The commencement speaker was Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd. The student speaker was BARBARAH (REYNOLDS) PERTTULA, an international business major. Barbarah is currently working as an intern with the U.S. Embassy in Paris, France, before attending graduate school in the fall. The spring commencement will be held on April 29, 2016. If you would like to watch the spring graduation online, you can view the ceremony live at SEU.edu. Previous ceremonies are also available for view at SEU.edu/academics/graduation/videos.
When Eugene Williams '52 attended Southeastern, it was a three-year Bible institute located at Lodwick Field military barracks, now known as Tiger Town. He was a part of the last class to graduate from that location. He recalls the hot days spent in the dorms that did not have air conditioning. After completing a theology degree at Southeastern, he attended Florida Southern College and graduated with a degree in English and education. Eugene met his wife of 64 years, Ruth, while attending Southeastern.

Prior to attending Southeastern, Eugene was drafted from 1943 to 1946 to serve in World War II. "I volunteered for the tank destroyer. It was not altogether pleasant, but had advantages over the infantry. The only disadvantage is that we were a bigger target," he said. He was wounded in action near the Rhine River in Germany around the age of 19 and received a Purple Heart for his service. In his glass case of medals contains a medal with four bronze stars — each representing the four major battles he fought in. He was recently interviewed by the Library of Congress, in which he recounted his time during WWII.

Eugene not only served his country, but also served as an educator and part-time missionary overseas in Africa. He and his family lived in Congo for two years and in Senegal for one year. He can still recount some French and Lingala, a Bantu language commonly spoken in Congo, and shares the memories he had there. While in Congo, Eugene worked as the librarian at the American School of Kinshasa. In Senegal, Eugene was the principal of Dakar Academy. He spent some of his time overseas travelling from village to village preaching the gospel.

Eugene also spent many years in the education field. He taught in Columbus, GA, and at Southeastern as a professor of Greek and English. He also worked as a librarian in Steelman Library (Mary M. Stribling Library). He eventually went on to earn his master’s of administration and education from Auburn University in Auburn, AL.

This past May, Eugene celebrated his 90th birthday with his family and loving wife by his side. All three of Eugene’s children attended Southeastern. His eldest son, Ken, attended Southeastern for some time and then went on to graduate from USF, the University of South Carolina and the University of Hartford. He currently works as a CPA in Connecticut. Ken has been married to his wife, Susan, for 28 years and has two children, James and Stephanie.
Eugene’s daughter, BRENTA “FAYE” (WILLIAMS) LENNA ’75, and her husband, JOSEPH ’76, met and graduated from Southeastern. They have been married 42 years. Faye retired from 33 years of teaching and has recently been substitute teaching in 2014. She served as an educator for 24 years at a Guilford County Title I elementary school and received four awards in teaching excellence. She also graduated with her master’s degree in reading from State University of New York at Albany. Joseph has worked as a faith-based prison chaplain for 23 years. Faye has also been involved with prison ministry for 16 years.

Eugene’s second son, STEPHEN, attended Southeastern from 1975 to 1976. For the past 34 years, he has worked as an air conditioning contractor. He started his own Lakeland-based air conditioning company, Enjoy Heating and Cooling. He and his wife, Lisa, have been married for 27 years. They volunteer with Believer’s Fellowship’s prison ministry. Stephen has been volunteering in jail ministry for the past 18 years. Stephen and his wife have also been on several missions trips to the Philippines and India.

William Williams, Eugene’s grandson, is working on his bachelor’s degree in human services from SEU and plans to graduate in 2018. He works full time as a maintenance technician at Southeastern, maintaining Bethany Hall, Bauer Hall, Smith Building and Tuscana Ristorante. “I love the aspect of getting to help students and being able to pray with them,” said William. He has worked at Southeastern since 2010. He and his wife, Brittanay, have two children, Calin and Liam. Eugene and Ruth’s legacy lives on through their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

If you would like to see your family highlighted in an upcoming Family Legacy article, please send your stories and photos to alumni@seu.edu.
WANT TO WALK WHERE JESUS WALKED AND VISIT THE MOMENTOUS PLACES THAT YOU READ ABOUT IN YOUR BIBLE?

Then check out this opportunity to travel with fellow SEU alumni. The trip will be led by Dr. Joe Davis, professor of religion.

May 12-21, 2016

Visit the birthplace of Jesus
See the Garden Tomb
Walk the Palm Sunday Path
See the remains of King David’s Palace
Be baptized in the Jordan River

For more information, please visit TheIsraelAdventure.com or contact Dr. Joe Davis at jhdavis@seu.edu.
DR. PETER ALTHOUSE, professor of theology, spoke at two conferences including the International Society for the Sociology of Religion in Belgium and the Society for Pentecostal Studies in Florida. He also published chapters in four books on the topics of “Eschatology in the Theology of Paul Tillich and the ‘Toronto Blessing’: The Ontological and Relational Implications of Love,” “Musical Bodies in the Charismatic Renewal,” “The Embodiment of Prayer in Charismatic Christianity,” and “Soaking Prayer and the Advancement of the Kingdom of Love: Charismatic Renewal as Mission.”

DR. KENNETH ARCHER, professor of theology, was the keynote speaker for an international conference held at the Methodist University of Sao Paulo, Brazil. The keynote address was “Pentecostal Hermeneutic: Issues and Challenges.” He also co-presented a paper on “A Pentecostal Hermeneutic and Latin Liberation Hermeneutic: Similarities and Differences.”

DR. BRIAN CARROLL ’06, ’07 MBA, executive vice president, presented a paper at the 17th annual International Leadership Association conference in Barcelona, Spain, this past October. He presented the paper, “Increasing Narcissism: Are Millennials the Death of Servant Leadership,” in a panel discussion along with co-authors, Dr. Kathleen Patterson and Dr. Hane Waddel. He was also featured in an article by Influence magazine on “Growing Yourself and Your Organization.”

DR. PAUL CORRIGAN ’07, assistant professor of English, had his article “A Conversation with Li-Young Lee” published in Image: Art, Faith, Mystery and his article “Error in Student Writing: A Balanced, Developmental Approach” published online on The Writing Campus. He also wrote an article with DR. CAMERON MCNABB, assistant professor of English, on “Re: Your Recent Email to Your Professor” which was published online in Inside Higher Ed.

DR. ROBERT CROSBY ’80, professor of practical theology, served as a consultant with the Assemblies of God on the strategic plan and design of a new leadership magazine, Influence, which replaced their previous magazine, Enrichment. He has also been asked to write eight Team Training Lessons in each of the first four issues.

DR. JERRY CUMMINGS, assistant professor of psychology, co-authored an article that was published online in the peer-reviewed journal Military Behavioral Health. The article, “Mediating Role of Maladaptive Coping on Race and Illness Intrusiveness in Chronically Ill Older Veterans,” compared coping styles used by African-American and white veterans. He was also granted licensure as a psychologist in Florida by the Florida Department of Health.

DR. MARGARET DEALMINANA, assistant professor of biblical studies, had her article “Patriarchy, Pentecostalism: Script and Counterscript” accepted for publication in the Journal of Pentecostal Theology.
ANNABELLE GARDINER, associate professor of violin, and her husband, RONALD GARDINER, associate professor of cello, taught at the MasterWorks Festival in the String Intensive Studies program. The MasterWorks Festival is comprised of professional Christian musicians that mentor high school, college and post-graduate students during a four-week music festival. Annabelle also performed as lead violinist for nationally acclaimed artist Idina Menzel, with performances in Orlando, Boca Raton, and Clearwater. Along with Annabelle, Ronald will perform with Opera Tampa, Disney’s Candlelight Orchestra, and Spiritus Piano Trio.

DR. CHARLES GAULDEN, professor of religion, was featured in the September/October 2015 Ministry Today magazine in an article with John Maxwell and others about Legacy Leadership.

DR. ROSALIND GOODRICH, assistant professor of psychology, was on the iWork4Him Radio Show in August. She represented Southeastern and addressed the topics of psychology, counseling and a Christian perspective.

DR. LARRY HAZELBAKER, professor of psychology, presented two sessions at the Peninsular Florida District Council’s Experience Conference in September. His topic was “Staying Physically, Spiritually, and Psychologically Healthy in Ministry.”

DR. KENT INGLE, president, recently published an article, “5 Steps to Planning Your Best Year Yet,” in Vital magazine and an article, “Living Generously,” in Influence magazine. He also launched the Southeastern University’s government relations platform and presented the strategic goals and objectives to government representatives including Senator Rand Paul, Congressman Dennis Ross, Congressman Carlos Curbelo and Congressman Daniel Webster. His second book, Disciplines for Enduring Leadership, was also recently released.

DR. CAMERON MCNABB, assistant professor of English, had her article “The Secret History of ‘Y’all’: The murky origins of a legendary Southern slang word” published in Salon.


DR. SHERRIE NICKELL, professor of education, was appointed to the Johnnie B. Byrd Alzheimer’s Center for Research Institute’s board of directors by Governor Rick Scott.

DR. ANDREW PERMENTER, vice president of institutional research and extended education, and CODY LLOYD, executive director of information management, led a workshop on Academic Review: Balancing Philosophy and Reality at the Southern Association for Institutional Research (SAIR) in October in Savannah, GA.

ROY ROWLAND IV, vice president for enrollment management, recently presented on Best Practices in Enrollment Management at Learning House’s Online Education Conference.
DR. ERICA SIRRINE, dean of the college of behavioral and social sciences, was asked to serve as a member of the Polk Vision Quality of Life Task Force. The Quality of Life Task Force seeks to enhance the physical, spiritual, mental, and cultural health of Polk County residents through various programs and strategies. She also presented a workshop entitled “You Say Goodbye, I Say Hello: Maintaining Bonds After Death” at the National Association for Social Workers Florida Conference this past June.


DR. KENNETH STEPHENS, chair of the department of human services, was invited to speak at a youth summit on the topic of “Absent Fathers and Empowerment.”

DR. DANNY TINDALL, professor of music, has been asked to adjudicate for two high school/middle school solo/ensemble festivals in Florida. He also founded and directed a senior choir in Lakeland for people aged 55 and older. He was also asked to perform with the Lakeland Choral Society as a percussionist.

DR. ROBBY WADDELL, professor of New Testament and early Christian literature, had articles published in Teaching the Bible in the Liberal Arts Classroom Volume 2 and the Journal of Pentecostal Theology. He also attended the President’s Interfaith Community Service Campus Challenge at Howard University in September. This event was hosted jointly by the White House and the U.S. Department of Education.

NEW SCHOLARSHIP ESTABLISHED HONORING DR. LARRY HAZELBAKER

A new scholarship was recently established and funded in honor of Dr. Larry Hazelbaker, professor and past dean of the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences. The Larry Hazelbaker Graduate Counselor Scholarship was created and initially funded by several faculty members of the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences to assist first year graduate students pursuing a master’s degree in Professional Counseling, Marriage and Family Therapy, or School Counseling.

The faculty members who established this scholarship named the scholarship to honor Dr. Hazelbaker as the individual who developed and presented the initial proposal for these graduate counseling degree programs, and to honor his dedication and commitment to the Southeastern University College of Behavioral and Social Sciences. The faculty members who donated the initial funding stated that Dr. Hazelbaker provided pivotal administrative leadership and support for the program from its inception.

Larry Hazelbaker began his teaching career in the Psychology department at Southeastern in the spring of 1986 and was instrumental in developing the department’s programs over the next 30 years. Dr. Hazelbaker led the department as chair, and then later as dean when the department became the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences in 2011. Dr. Hazelbaker stepped down as dean at the end of the 2014-15 academic year, but continues to leave his mark as Professor Hazelbaker.

This scholarship was established to assist students with the financial needs associated with the pursuit of a graduate degree in counseling. The faculty members who started this scholarship fund hope that others will also want to contribute to the scholarship so that many more students pursuing a career in counseling will be able to complete their graduate studies. Most of the financial aid available to Southeastern University students is not available for the graduate level programs.

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the Larry Hazelbaker Graduate Counselor Scholarship to assist students with a demonstrated financial need, contact the Southeastern University Advancement Office at 863.667.5455 or email advancement@seu.edu.
DAWN MOORE retired from teaching for 22 years in public elementary schools. She taught 3rd to 4th graders. She currently volunteers at a local hospital and also sings in the church choir.

VASHTI FORD retired from 30 years of serving as the Christian education director at the former Cypress Cathedral (now Champion’s Church) in Winter Haven, FL. She currently volunteers at New Life South Winter Haven Assembly of God and will be taking her 39th missions trip to Colombia.

KENNETH and PEGGY (MCGLOTHLIN) SCHLOE live in Haymarket, VA. They have been married and been in ministry for 51 years. They have seven grandchildren.

ED WHITE taught in the public school system for seven years. He has also been the senior pastor at First Assembly of God Sebring and East Point Assembly of God in Tampa for 25 years. For the last 15 years, he was the men’s and Royal Rangers’ director for the Peninsular Florida district. He currently is ministering in prisons and training men to do over 100 hours of faith-based curriculum. He is also building Hope Now transition centers across the state.

SHELBY LANIER is currently working in children’s ministry at Word Up Ministries in Lakeland, FL. In his spare time he rescues horses and raises chickens. He has been married to his wife, Kathie, for ten years.

AUGUST and MARY (JACKSON) SCHUH have been involved in the MAPS (Mission America Placement Service) RV ministry since 2002. They have traveled throughout the U.S. helping to build churches. Their son, Craig, and his family live in Titusville, FL. Both of their granddaughters attend SEU.

FRANKLIN and WANDA (BARKER) BAZ are ministering in churches and independent senior care homes. They have three children and five grandchildren.

MARGARET MIKI (BIRD) JACKSON and her husband, Richard, are highly involved in prison ministry in the state of Virginia. They are both ordained ministers from the Chuck Colson Prison Fellowship. Her husband is also highly involved in ministering to the homeless.

WILLIAM ANDERSON JR. taught at Gateway Christian Academy in Tampa, FL, for eight years. He has worked in the Hillsborough County School District from 1996 to 2006, and 2014 to present. He is also the pastor of Suncoast Christian Church in Brooksville, FL. William also graduated from St. Petersburg Theological Seminary. His wife, Sue, has worked for the Hillsborough County School District for 25 years.

LAWRENCE LARRY BOAN celebrated his 34th anniversary as the associate pastor at Central Assembly in Vero Beach, FL. He is the administrator of the Amber Fund (short-term missions scholarships). Since the launch of the Amber Fund in 2010, they have awarded more than 325 scholarships.

LARRY DANIEL serves as dean of Zucker Family School of Education at The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina in Charleston, SC. He and his wife, DORIS CAREN (PEDE), have four adult children and three grandchildren.
TIM LASTINGER and his wife, Gwen, are pastors at the Church on the Hill Belleview First Assembly of God in Belleview, FL.

SIMEON JOHN SISK graduated with his master’s in Christian Ministries from the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary in May of 2015. One week later, his daughter, STEPHANIE ’15, received her bachelor’s degree in organizational leadership from SEU and started working as an admission counselor at Southeastern. John and his wife, Joy, pastored in the U.S. for 12 years in the Appalachian and South Carolina Districts. Seventeen years ago, they were appointed as Assemblies of God World Missionaries. They have served in Cambodia, Taiwan, and most recently, directing the Bible College in Micronesia. Last year, they also served as interim pastors at International Christian Fellowship, Kolonia, Pohnpei. In the first three months the fellowship grew from 85 to over 200 and 29 people were baptized. Currently, they are itinerating in the U.S. with their youngest daughter, Sarah. She hopes to begin attending SEU in the fall of 2017.

SCOTT and CHRISTINE (EDWARDS) SHERRETZ ’88 live in Brandenburg, KY. Christine is currently an assistant principal at Ft. Knox, Kentucky. She has a doctorate in curriculum and instruction and a master’s in literacy. She has been in education for 25 years.

MICHAEL CREIG and SUSAN (RATCLIFF) CAVENAUGH ’88 live in Loganville, GA. They have served at Evangel Community Church for 18 years. Creig has also earned his master’s in business leadership and is presently in pursuit of his doctorate. Creig works as a U.S. missionary and is the Georgia representative for Compact Family Services. Susan teaches Gifted High School English at Parkview High School in Gwinnett County, GA. They have two daughters, Hannah and Sarah Grace. Hannah is a sophomore at SEU and Sarah Grace is a junior in high school.

SANDRA (AUCOIN) DENNIS is a teacher in Martin County, FL. In 1998, she and her husband went to Jordan to learn Arabic. In 2000, they moved to Tunisia and lived there for eight years. They worked among the people and experienced some come to faith in Jesus.

ALFRED JONES is a P.E. aid at Southside Elementary School in Sarasota, FL. He attends Fellowship of Believers Church in Sarasota, FL.

DAN ROBINSON is the superintendent of Franklin Road Christian School in Novi, MI. Franklin Road is a K-12 Christian school serving the families of southeast Michigan. This is his third year as superintendent. Prior to that, he served in the public school system as a teacher, coach, athletic director, and principal for 22 years.

KEITH and KATHY (BUSBEE) SIKES ’93 met at Southeastern and celebrated their 25th anniversary this past May. Keith has been employed as a pilot by Republic Airlines since 2003. He is currently teaching Run for God at Gospel Temple Worship Center in Florence, SC. Kathy is active as an officer with Aglow and has been speaking frequently throughout South Carolina.

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WILLIAM and SHAY (LEWIS) COLE have two sons that are 17 and 19 years old. They are in their seventh year of being the lead pastors at Real Life Church in Coconut Creek, FL.

RODNEY MAURONER serves as the executive pastor at Fountain of Life Church in Saraland, AZ.

DENITA (HAMILTON) NEWBY and her husband, Jeric, live in Charlotte, NC. Their twins started their first year of kindergarten this fall.

ALLEN GRIFFIN founded a program for orphaned teens called ExcellerateYouth.org in 2012. His charity is launching new programs nationally with the help of two other SEU alumni, J. TORO and TAYLOR MURPHY.

TIMOTHY HASS and his wife, Lanoray, pastor Cornerstone Assembly of God in Williston, FL. They have four children: Tyler, Madison, Caiden, and Andrew. They have spent over 15 years in youth ministry in Florida.

SAM and ALLISON (PINION) DO NEAL are youth pastors at Faith Assembly in North Fort Myers, FL. Allison is a computer teacher in a local elementary school. They adopted four boys: Jaxon, Liam, Deacon and Cooper.

JEREMY and BRITTANI (DAWSON) DUNN are living in Marion, OH. Britanni is an assistant principal. Jeremy has an international financial curriculum company called Life.Money, a financial literacy provider for young adults and secondary school students. He is launching a financial literacy effort in Zambia, Africa, in partnership with YMCA Zambia, Peace Corps Zambia and the Zambian Ministry of Education. Jeremy was also welcomed to the Marion Community Foundation Board of Directors. He is also an adjunct professor at Southeastern.

ANGEL GONZALEZ was named community president for the Marion/ Putnam market by CenterState Bank in September. He began his career with CenterState Bank as a management trainee in 2007 and recently served as vice president/commercial loan officer.

TALITHA MOON graduated from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine with a doctor in osteopathic medicine in 2015. She currently serves as an Active Duty Medical Corp Officer in the U.S. Army, while she completes her internship and applies for residency within the military’s Graduate Education program. She was commissioned in 2011 in the F. Edward Hébert Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship Program. She is an active duty military member, working with troops, their dependents, and veterans to provide healthcare service as a physician in training. She works primarily in the hospital setting, but sometimes in a clinic, seeing and evaluating patients, ordering medical tests, treatments, and medications.

ANGEL GONZALEZ TALITHA MOON

SARAH (KATIE) (RADCLIFFE) MAKAR moved to Kansas City, MO, and joined International House of Prayer as a staff member after graduating. Her role was to teach language arts and social studies to 7th grade students. She also spent 10 hours a week praying in a prayer room and singing on worship teams.
She relocated to Jacksonville, FL, and taught in a Title 1 school for two years. She married her husband, Matthew, on June 13, 2015. They met discipling youth in the summer of 2013. They recently moved to Orlando, where Matthew is on staff with Orlando House of Prayer and working on his M.Div. at Gordon Conwell.

2010

JAYEN and ASHLEY (ROLLINS) BHAKTA were married in May of 2015. Jayen graduated from Medical University of the Americas in Nevis (West Indies) in September and also passed his medical licensing exams. He is currently applying for residency and volunteering at a free clinic in Durham, NC. Ashley is a nursing student at Duke University and will be graduating in 2016.

MITCHELL BUSH started working at Lakeland Regional Medical Center Inpatient Mental Health Unit as a mental health technician after graduation. He taught group therapy to the inpatient mental health patients there for a year and a half. He then started physician assistant school at Mercer University in Atlanta, GA, in January 2013 and recently graduated with his master’s degree in May 2015. Mitchell is currently working as an emergency medicine physician assistant at Southern Regional Medical Center in Atlanta, GA.

GEOFFREY GOLDSBERRY is in his second year of medical school at William Carey University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Hattiesburg, MS. Since graduating, he got his master’s from USF College of Medicine in 2012, taught briefly at middle school, high school, and college (as an adjunct) levels. After finishing his first year of medical school, he was inducted into the Osteopathic Honor’s Fraternity based on his performance. In December, he married AUDREY GILBERT ’07. Audrey is currently the SEU women’s volleyball coach.

KAYLA SWISHER has worked as a marketing manager for WME Live in Dallas, TX, for over a year. WME Live’s experience includes touring Women of Faith, Oprah’s The Life You Want Weekend and Cosmo’s Fun Fearless Life. As a marketing manager, she works on media buying, brand creative, sales promotions and public relations at the events. Her prior work experience includes three years at the Tampa Bay Lightning and one year at Triad Retail Media as a project manager. She was also a youth leader in Tampa for four years.

KELLY WILLIAMS currently works at the John J. Pershing VA Medical Center as a medical support assistant, supporting a staff of mental health doctors, nurses and social workers providing services for American veterans. His wife, Laura, is a clinical licensed social worker at the medical center. He is also still currently serving in the Missouri Army National Guard as a staff sergeant and a chaplain for Amvets Post 29 (American Veterans) in Poplar Bluff, MO. He is also the president and evangelist for Walking with Jesus Ministries in Poplar Bluff and an elder with Christian Family Fellowship International. He and his wife have eight children.

2011

Tori (Mills) Albright is living in Sioux City, Iowa, working as an ELL (English Language Learners) Instructional Coach for the Sioux City Community School District, as well as an adjunct professor in the TESOL program at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa. Tori received her master’s degree in Educational Leadership in May of 2014. She married her husband, Ben, in June of 2015. Together, they lead a college ministry at their local church.

Lauren (Kasmar) Applehof is an internal medicine resident at Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point in Hudson, FL. She plans to complete her three-year residency and then practice as a hospitalist.

Kelly Wood hiked the entire length of the Appalachian Trail from April to October of 2015. The
Appalachian Trail is the longest hiking-only footpath in the world, ranging from Maine to Georgia. The trail is 2,190 miles long and travels through 14 states along the East Coast.

### 2012

SHELDON and TAJA (SCOTT) FOX live in Bermuda. Taja has been a published writer for various publications such as The Royal Gazette, Bermuda Parent Magazine and now has her own publication called Bermuda Bliss. Sheldon currently is the director of music at Sandys Secondary Middle School and started his master’s degree in the fall at Walden University. Sheldon is also a published composer and attended his second Salvation Army Composers Symposium in January 2016 to share more of his music with fellow composers.

WESTON and KARLEE (RIKARD) MARSH live in Charleston, SC. Weston is working as a custom homebuilder for Ashton Woods Homes and Karlee works part time for a local non-profit, Doors to Freedom. They welcomed their first child, Charlie Weston, in August of 2015.

### 2013

MATTHEW MADISON began a doctoral program at Baylor College of Medicine in the fall of 2013. He is currently in his third year as a Ph.D. student at Baylor in the Translational Biology and Molecular Medicine graduate program. The program is unique in that it trains its students for careers as clinically minded scientists who bridge the gap between the laboratory and the clinic. In particular, he studies the effects of tobacco smoke and tobacco alternatives on the lung and how they can promote inflammation and cancer.

### 2014

HANNAH (CROWELL) BENEFIELD married her husband, Daniel, two days after she graduated. She is currently working as the administrative coordinator for the department of behavioral and social sciences at Southeastern.

GABRIEL and LAURA (ACKART) GERENA live in Spring Hill, FL. Gabriel is a deputy and Laura is a teacher in Pasco County.

KATHRYN (FERGUSON) HAYWOOD lives in Roanoke, VA. Kathryn is a special education teacher at a local elementary school and her husband, Joel, is the director of music ministries at a local church.

### 2015

JENNIFER BROOK is working on her master’s in ministerial leadership at Southeastern. She works at Sam’s Club in Shelby, OH, and is starting a Bible study.

RACHEL WARD works as a marketing and administrative assistant at HealthMarkets, a life and health insurance company in Lakeland, FL. She started a worship arts internship in September with Trinity Presbyterian Church. She has also enrolled in Chamber Singers at Southeastern as an alumna guest.

#### IN MEMORIAM

JOHN (JACK) CRAMER passed away on September 7, 2015. He was the first basketball player in SEU’s history to score 1,000 points. He served as a school psychologist for the Cobb County School System for several years before he started his own practice as a child psychologist in Roswell, GA. He is survived by his wife, Chris Oshima; his daughter, Jessica Lia Cramer; his mother, Eleanor Cramer; and his brother, David Cramer.
JOE PHILIPS ’86 had no idea where one thought that he had while listening to his pastor Dr. Rick Ross at Concord First Assembly in Concord, NC, in November of 2010 might take him. The thought he had was to spend less time traveling and be in a play the following December. Having played the role of Slim in Oklahoma during high school, Joe was not a stranger to theater.

When the local community theatre put out a call for auditions a few months later, Joe auditioned for a part in Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol. Surprised at his casted role of Ebenezer Scrooge, Joe asked the producer if he could share the gospel message in four minutes at the end of each performance.

Twenty-one productions later over the course of five years, many people have accepted Christ through Ebenezer’s message at the end of A Christmas Carol. Even some in the cast gave their hearts to the Lord.

In 2012, Joe took the show on the road as a one-man monologue called “The Ebenezer Experience.” Since that time, Ebenezer has shared the Gospel in seven states with more than 21,000 people.

On December 13, 2015, at 7 p.m., the curtain would be lifted one last time for the show. To a packed house the cast entertained the audience with a Broadway-level production with a cast and crew of 85 persons.

On the night of the final production, Ebenezer Scrooge stood in front of the audience and exclaimed one final time, as was done year after year, that he suspects when we see each other in heaven that someone will say, “I heard about Jesus from Ebenezer Scrooge.”
In the 29 years I have taught at Southeastern, one of the things I have loved most is what I would describe as the incredible opportunities for spiritual friendship. We are surrounded by brothers and sisters who deeply love God. I use the term spiritual friendship broadly and basically mean relationships that encourage and help us grow spiritually.

At Southeastern I experience the joy of spiritual friendship in something as simple as walking across campus between classes and encountering colleagues or students whose greetings lift my heart and bring a smile to my face. I am amazed again and again by these brief but delightful encounters. But most strikingly, I experience spiritual friendship in life-giving conversations, perhaps over lunch or late afternoon coffee. In these meetings I am able to encounter both God and my brother or sister in an in-depth and intentional way.

One way to define spiritual friendship is as a Christ-centered, intentional relationship where individuals focus on the nurture of each other’s spiritual life. Spiritual friends come together in a commitment to growing in Christ. They give one another the gifts of presence, awareness, and dialogue. We need spiritual friends who can be elders to us, and we need spiritual friends who are peers. Both matter. In both we seek a kind of relationship that is more than just “hanging out” or sharing the same natural interests, though these too are important for full and fulfilling lives.

There is an old Irish saying that says, “A person without a soul-friend is like a body without a head.” Many scriptures speak of the kind of love Christians can have for one another. I highlight some special phrases in several examples. In Philippians 1:3-8 the Apostle Paul writes, “I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy….It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart….all of you share in God’s grace with me. God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.” John 11:35-36 speaks of Jesus’s love for Lazarus: “[At Lazarus’s tomb] Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, ‘See how he loved him!’” In John 17, Jesus prayed for us “that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us.”

If we are not careful, if we do not take care, we can forget to be present to and invested in the spiritual friendships available to us even in Christian settings like Southeastern. We can get too busy or too stressed taking care of the practical tasks of our lives—things that of course must be done, but which should not dominate. The ancient church father Tertullian (c. 155 – c. 240) wrote about how the Romans were amazed by the Christians in their midst and would exclaim, “Look how they love one another!” My prayer is that we would be aware and intentional about how we love one another, taking advantage of the opportunities we have to just be together, listening, encouraging, and strengthening one another in the Lord.
Southeastern University is proud to bring together elite leadership experts for the 10TH ANNUAL LEADERSHIP FORUM. Join us on the Southeastern campus to hear presentations by five renowned speakers who are sure to educate and engage those seeking to strengthen their leadership skills. Tickets are on sale now! The 2016 Forum will kick off Friday morning and will consist of presentations by outstanding speakers throughout the day. Also, save the date for the FORUM SCHOLARSHIP GALA, which raises much needed funds to support the SEU student scholarship programs.

PRE-FORUM INTENSIVE SPEAKER
DR. MARK ESPOSITO
VIP ticket holders are provided an opportunity to attend a half-day Pre-Forum Intensive, which includes a luncheon with Dr. Mark Esposito, Harvard University professor, as well as three hours of targeted leadership development on March 17, 2016.

LT. COL. OLIVER NORTH, combat decorated Marine, best-selling author, and host of War Stories, will be the keynote speaker at the SCHOLARSHIP GALA dinner following the Forum on March 18.

TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW
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