

9-1-2011

Record \$5 million gift provides major boost to student life initiative

Furman University

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Recommended Citation

University, Furman (2011) "Record \$5 million gift provides major boost to student life initiative," *Furman Magazine*: Vol. 54 : Iss. 3 , Article 11.

Available at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine/vol54/iss3/11>

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Record \$5 million gift provides major boost to student life initiative

ONE OF THE CHIEF PRIORITIES of the final phase of the \$400 million Because Furman Matters Campaign is to raise \$20 million to strengthen the overall student experience. Thanks to a \$5 million pledge from an alumnus who has requested anonymity, the university is well on its way to reaching this goal.

The majority of the gift — the largest outright commitment by an individual in the university's history — will support the renovation and expansion of the University Center and strengthen its role as the hub of campus activities and student involvement. The designation for the remainder of the \$5 million will be announced at a later date.

With the \$5 million gift, the campaign has reached \$340 million in commitments.

"This gift gives us great momentum in the concluding phase of our campaign and signifies the tremendous support we enjoy among our alumni," says Rod Smolla, Furman's president. "A major emphasis of the campaign is to transform the undergraduate experience at the university, and this generous commitment will help us accomplish our goal by transforming the University Center from a campus crossroads to an energized campus destination."

The redesign of the University Center will be geared toward making the facility a more central part

of student life. It will feature greater space for student organizations and administrative offices, an expansion of the food court, and the addition of a night-time student entertainment club.

hall (or halls), flanking a graded and leveled E-field in front of Blackwell Hall, may be added.

Classroom and advising space will be incorporated into South Housing to more fully integrate

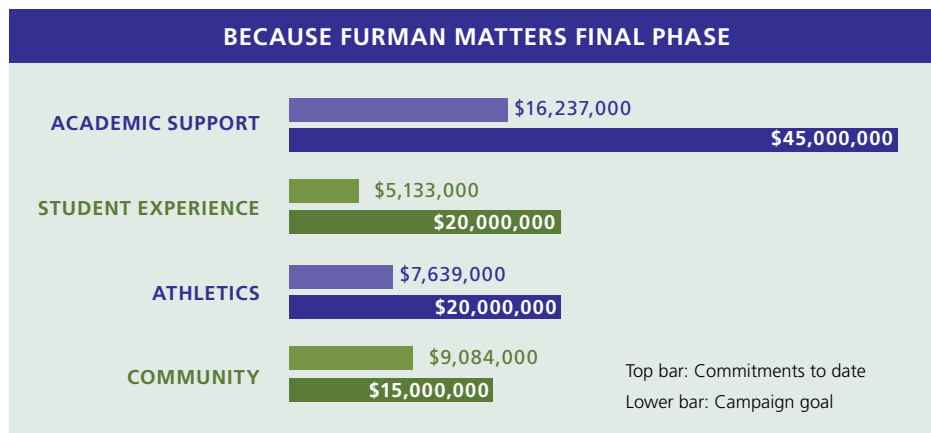
world. The Lilly Center's programs extend to students, faculty, alumni and the greater community. (Estimated need: \$4 million).

■ Increasing support for such high profile student life programs as career services, Shucker Leadership Institute, Heller Service Corps, multicultural affairs, club and intramural sports, and others. (Estimated need: \$1 million).

Connie Carson, vice president for student life, says, "We want to change the culture of the campus, to blend and bridge academics and student life. They should meld together and complement one another."

Besides student life, the campaign's concluding phase is focusing on three other priority areas: reinforcing academic excellence and increasing scholarship support, with a goal of \$45 million; renewing excellence in intercollegiate athletics (\$20 million); and enhancing the university's relationship with the community (\$15 million).

For updates on the campaign, visit www.becausefurmanmatters.com.



The upgrade to the University Center is one of several aspects of the campaign's student experience initiative. With a new student life master plan as its blueprint, the initiative calls for additional changes to the campus and enhancements for specific programs. They include:

■ Developing a freshman residential village by reconfiguring South Housing, the former men's residence halls. The five buildings that make up the complex (Blackwell, Geer, Manly, McGlothlin, Poteat) will be updated, with some areas converted to meeting spaces and lounges. The quadrangle in the center of the complex will be transformed into a student commons with seating areas. A new residence

the academic and residential lives of students. Professors and their families will be invited to live in the village in an effort to strengthen the intellectual and social bonds among students and their mentors.

Similar upgrades are planned for Lakeside Housing (the former women's residence halls). Meeting areas and casual spaces will be added, and landscaping will be reshaped. (Estimated need: \$10 million.)

■ Expanding the work of the Lilly Center for Vocational Reflection (see page 40), which encourages the exploration of ultimate questions and concerns in an effort to help individuals match their gifts and values with the needs of the