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Record-setting year

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Record-setting year

Grants supporting Furman projects reach \$11.8 million

Colleges and universities throughout the country benefit annually from funding in the form of grants from government agencies, corporations and philanthropic foundations. These grants support innovative projects, student research, faculty travel opportunities and many other activities.

Furman is no exception, and for the 2004-05 academic year the university received more major awards than at any time in history. When the fiscal year ended June 30, Furman had received \$11.8 million to fund 74 grant proposals.

Previously, the highest one-year grant total at Furman was \$7.035 million for 88 grants in 2000-01.

According to Thomas Kazee, vice president for academic affairs and dean, "We saw an increase in funding this year due to support for the planned new science complex and increased grant-seeking activity by Furman's faculty. They are submitting highly competitive grant proposals for challenging research projects."

This year The Duke Endowment made two special awards to Furman: \$2 million to enhance the James B. Duke Scholarship program and \$2 million to establish an endowment in support of Furman's proposed new first-year seminar program.

Duke scholarships support some of the university's most academically gifted students. The proposal for a first-year seminar program is under development and will be considered by the faculty this fall.

Another noteworthy award in 2004-05 was a two-year,

\$600,000 grant to the Richard W. Riley Institute of Government, Politics and Public Leadership. Provided by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the grant will support research among major stakeholder groups tied to public education in South Carolina and the Southeast. Don Gordon, professor of political science and executive director of the Riley Institute, will work with project coordinator Brooke Culclasure to provide information that is expected to inform policy debate on public education in the state and, eventually, across the region and the nation.

Chemistry professor John Wheeler received a \$1.75 million Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence award to support a five-year, multidisciplinary project. The focus of the research will be areas of molecular biology and biochemistry related to neuroscience and cancer therapy. Wheeler and biology professor Sandra Larson also received a three-year, \$60,000 grant from the Merck/American Association for the Advancement of Science Undergraduate Research Program.

For the third time since 1999, the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation provided funding to Furman for undergraduate research in the sciences. The \$77,200 grant will benefit four students in the chemistry department during the next three years. Laura Glish '06 of Chapel Hill, N.C., and Michael Vagnini '07 of Winter Springs, Fla., are Furman's 2005 Beckman Scholars.

— **Sheila J. Manchester**
Grants Administrator

Paladin Club continues to build athletic scholarship coffers

The Paladin Club enjoyed one of its most successful years in 2004-05, setting records in average gifts and surpassing its fund-raising goal.

Challenged by president Doris Mansfield and vice president Ed Stein '93, the 30-member Paladin Club Board of Directors voted last June to pursue an ambitious \$1.2 million for athletic scholarships. Thanks to the hard work of many individuals, the organization surpassed its goal by raising \$1.25 million — more than \$130,000 ahead of 2003-04. The average gift in 2004-05 increased 16 percent, from \$743 to \$861.

According to Ken Pettus, director of athletic development, three factors contributed to the growth in average gifts. "Our athletic donors realized the advantages of the Hollingsworth Initiative, which provided supporting funds to help match their donations, and they used it to move up in giving levels. Secondly, we were able to meet an anonymous donor's generous challenge to match a \$100,000 gift for the baseball team. And membership in the Order of the Paladin [for those who contribute at the quarter-, half-, or



full-scholarship levels] increased substantially. We now have 50 donors at this level."

Established in 1998, the Order of the Paladin was created to construct a solid base for athletic scholarship funding, encourage people to join the Paladin Club at a high level, and recognize the most generous donors. The organization began with three members who contributed \$61,000; in 2004-05, 50 members contributed more than \$450,000.

Lucius Weeks '54, Hayden Hays '64 and members of the Furman coaching

staff have worked to identify potential Order of the Paladin supporters. "I truly believe the quality of our coaches and student-athletes encourages folks to open their pocketbooks because they realize they are making a sound investment in the life of a young man or woman," says Hays, acting president for 2005-06.

In addition to meeting its annual funding goals, athletic development continues to seek endowed athletic scholarships and to assist the Department of Athletics with new facility projects. Three new endowed athletic scholarships were established in 2004-05, and renovated facilities for men's and women's basketball, softball, volleyball, women's track and women's soccer await the return of their respective athletes in the fall.

"We had a great year in 2004-05, but there is much more to be done," says Pettus. "If we are to continue to be competitive in the Southern Conference and on a regional and national basis, we must have the necessary funding to support our great kids. I know Furman folks, and I believe they will continue their amazing generosity."