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Furman University

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Furman reports

Three alumni among major honorees during Founders Week

The Student Alumni Council planned a Founders Week program April 14-18 that was a worthy complement to the university's yearlong commemoration of its 175th birthday. From a birthday cake and purple and white M&M's to a "Centiseptuageniquinquennial Carnival" complete with rides and games, Furman celebrated its heritage in high style.

Among the week's more academic pursuits were theatre arts professor Doug Cummins' re-enactment of a sermon by the university's founder, Richard Furman; a program on the history of the Bell Tower, featuring Carl Clawson, former director of physical planning and construction, and Thomas Goldsmith '31, professor emeritus of physics; a lecture on Furman's Baptist heritage (and subsequent break with the denomination) by Jeff Rogers, minister at Greenville's First Baptist Church and former associate academic dean at Furman; and an evening of chamber music featuring the work of music professor Mark Kilstofte.

A.V. Huff, vice president for academic affairs and dean, headlined the annual Founders convocation April 16 with a talk on Furman's history. (See page 2.) During the convocation, the university presented four major awards.

Betsy McDavid Campbell '38 received an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree in recognition of her tireless advocacy for disadvantaged children. Through her assistance, many young people have overcome the challenges of poverty, emotional distress, illiteracy and abuse.

She and her husband, Robert S. Campbell, Jr., created the Campbell Young Leaders program, through which students from Furman and Clemson University assist hundreds of at-risk children to achieve their potential, working with them in the Upstate and at Camp Kanuga in North Carolina. The Campbells are also longtime university supporters and are members of the Richard Furman Society and the Furman Heritage Society.

Elija M. Hicks '41, a past recipient of an honorary Doctor of Laws degree and the Alumni Service Award from Furman, was honored with the Bell Tower Award, presented by the board of trustees for exceptional achievement and meritorious service to the university.



Award winners gather after the Founders Week convocation, from left: Nancy Cooper, Chiles-Harrill Award winner; Betsy McDavid Campbell, honorary Doctor of Humanities degree recipient; Lige Hicks, Bell Tower Award winner; and Lillian Brock Fleming, who was presented the Richard Furman Baptist Heritage Award.

Hicks holds a Ph.D. from Princeton University, where his graduate research led to the development of the drug family known today as cortisones. He later enjoyed a long career as an executive with the DuPont Company, from which he retired in 1981. A role model for students and faculty in Furman's chemistry program, he is a past chair of the university's Advisory Council. He has served as head agent for the Class of '41 since the class agent program began, and through his leadership his class became the first to reach 100 percent participation in annual giving to Furman.

Lillian Brock Fleming '71 received the Richard Furman Baptist Heritage Award, which goes to a Furman graduate who reflects Baptist ideals by thinking critically, living compassionately and making life-changing commitments.

One of the first two African-American women to graduate from Furman, she is a member of the Greenville City Council and is the city's mayor pro tem. A Furman trustee, she is active in civic and community

organizations and is a faithful member of Mountain View Baptist Church, which has presented her its service award. She was recognized for her leadership and "dedication to the ideal of free and faithful service to all of God's people."

Nancy Miller Cooper, University Center coordinator and advisor to the May Day Play Day committee, was presented the Chiles-Harrill Award, which recognizes a member of the faculty or staff who has made substantial contributions to the lives of students.

Cooper was cited for her compassion, good cheer and devotion to students' best interests. As a colleague wrote in a nominating letter, "The students are her first priority. She works diligently to make sure that their needs come first, and she is always willing to give of her personal time to assist students." The Chiles-Harrill Award is named for Marguerite Chiles and Ernest E. Harrill, former student services administrators at Furman.