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Book cites Furman chemistry as model undergraduate program

Furman University

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Book cites Furman chemistry as model undergraduate program

Through the years, the Furman chemistry department has held steadfastly to the belief that undergraduate research — specifically, joint faculty-student research of publishable quality — is not only compatible with chemical education but is vital to its effectiveness.

By combining that philosophy with first-rate instrumental and laboratory facilities, an outstanding, well-rounded faculty and a rigorous yet flexible curriculum, the department has developed a program that consistently receives recognition as a national model for undergraduate education.

This winter brought more attention to the department when a leading foundation for the advancement of science published a book that trumpets the program's success.

In *Academic Excellence*, Research Corporation explores the role of research in the physical sciences at undergraduate institutions. A profile of the Furman chemistry department, written by faculty members Lon B. Knight, Jr., and Larry S. Trzuppek, is included as an example of a "model program."

Says Knight, chair of the department

for the last 20 years, "The heart and soul of Furman's chemistry program is its passionate commitment to ongoing student-faculty research at a level suitable for publication in the major scientific journals."

The results bear witness to the department's success. Furman students are consistently among the national leaders in publishing and presenting the results of their research, and the department's innovative curriculum has been cited by the American Chemical Society as a model for other schools. The summer undergraduate research program annually involves 45 to 55 students in original research with faculty members, making it the largest program of its kind in the nation.

In addition, Furman ranks among the top 10 undergraduate colleges in the country in producing Ph.D. candidates in chemistry and among the top 25 of all universities in graduates certified by the American Chemical Society, averaging 25 per year. The department receives substantial support from alumni and local corporations, as well as major national agencies.

Chilling out

University constructing central cooling plant

With energy conservation and cost savings in mind, Furman is installing a central cooling plant to serve the buildings in the heart of the campus.

The new plant, scheduled to be completed by the end of 2001, is expected to help Furman reduce its total electricity load by approximately 10 percent.

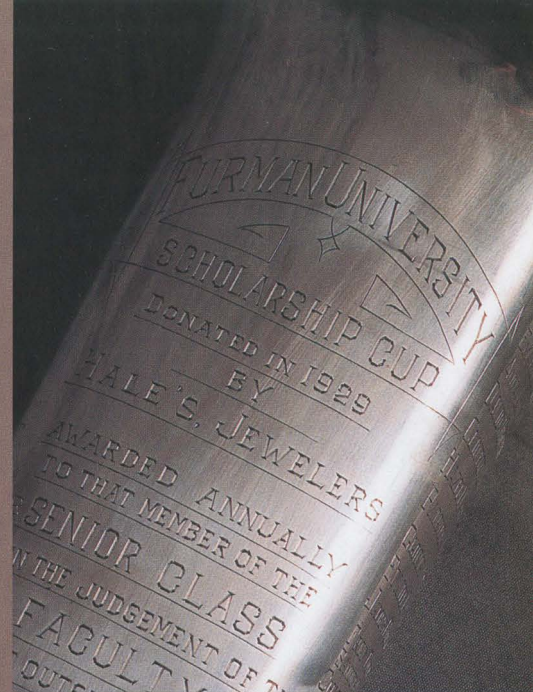
Currently, individual chillers cool each campus building. These bulky machines, often located in the basement of buildings, chill water that is used to cool the interior air. Exterior coolers that are hidden by brick walls and foliage serve the library and Johns Hall, as well as a number of residence halls.

Faced with the prospect of having to replace several of the aging chillers, the university chose to construct the new plant. To be located at the facilities services complex on the south end of

the campus (near the doughboy), the plant will house two large chillers, one powered by electricity and the other by gas.

Workers spent much of the summer digging a trench five feet deep along the main mall and installing insulator piping that will transport the chilled water from the plant to the buildings and back again. Work continued this fall and winter in other central areas of the campus.

"It acts as a closed system," says Jeff Redderson, associate director of facilities services. "After the chilled water is used, the heated water will be pumped back to the central plant where it will be cooled and pumped out for reuse. Operating the two chillers, as opposed to running many smaller units, will save us about \$50,000 a year in electricity. It is also much easier to maintain and is more reliable."



The Cup is full

Since Hale's Jewelers of Greenville donated the Hale's Jewelers-Furman Scholarship Cup to the university in 1929, the award has been engraved with the name of the leading academic star (or stars) in each graduating class.

Officially, the cup is "awarded annually to that member of the senior class who in the judgement of the faculty is the outstanding scholar of the class." The list of recipients features an impressive Who's Who of Furman alumni and includes such familiar names as Nobel Laureate Charles Townes '35 and Rhodes Scholars George Ligler '71 and Matt Martin '85. Furman retains possession of the cup; the winners receive smaller replicas.

As names were added over the years, however, the cup gradually began to run out of space. And in 1999, after 70 graduating classes and 101 names (well, actually 103; for some reason, Class of '79 recipients Russell Ware and Clifton McCormick are on there twice), the limit was reached. The cup was full.

Fortunately a quick solution arrived, and from a familiar source. Hewlett K. Sullivan '51, chairman of the board at Hale's, and his brother, company president Heyward Sullivan '59, stepped forward and offered to donate a new cup — just in time for a new millennium.

"We wanted to carry on the tradition," says Heyward. "We're proud of Furman and what it does for young people. Here's to another 70 years."

The new cup, he says, will be about the same size as its predecessor but will have a slightly different design. First to have their names engraved on the new award will be the Class of 2000 recipients: Richard Benjamin Brooks, Rima Jaber Dakhllallah and Daniell Elizabeth Farrier.

— Jim Stewart