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Center to offer guests high-tech welcome

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Furman campaign

Center to offer guests high-tech welcome

Josh Jacobs, a high school senior from Jacksonville, Fla., is a dream student. His grade-point average is 4.2. He speaks four languages, scored 1520 on the SAT, is his school's valedictorian, plays football and soccer, and is student body president. He's interested in majoring in political science.

Harvard and Yale are recruiting him, but he wants to stay closer to home. Duke, Wake Forest, Davidson and Furman have all come courting. On this day, he's visiting Furman.

Once on campus, the Jacobs family follows the signs to the Welcome Center, a new facility located beside the Alester G. Furman, Jr., Administration Building. Parking just feet from the building, Josh and his family admire the garden at the center's entrance which honors Mr. Furman, a longtime trustee and board chair who was instrumental in the university's move to the new campus.

In the building's beautiful reception area, they check in with the guest coordinator and are directed to a waiting room. A sign reads, "Welcome Jacobs Family."

Suddenly, a projection screen in the room comes to life and begins displaying the names of students from Josh's high school who are now attending Furman. The presentation dissolves into campus scenes, then moves on to show students involved in the Washington Experience, a popular political science internship program. The short presentation closes with images of Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley '54 and Congressman Mark Sanford '83.



An admissions counselor emerges and escorts the Jacobses down the hall to a 40-seat theatre. The lights dim, and the family views the Furman admissions video. After this presentation, Josh tells the counselor that he is also interested in the music program.

"We can take care of that," says the counselor. She touches the screen of a nearby computer and a video of the Furman Singers' 1996 July 4 performance with the Boston Pops appears. She touches the screen again and there is Keith Lockhart '81, conductor of the Pops, talking about his days at Furman.

Josh is amazed. And impressed. He commits to Furman on the spot.

You've just had a glimpse of college recruiting in the new millennium — highly technical, full of bells and whistles and custom-designed with individual students in mind. It arrives at Furman this fall when the Welcome Center opens.

"The first impression a prospective student gets is key," says Benny Walker, vice president for enrollment. "A lot of colleges are moving in this direction. Davidson just completed a new admissions

house. So did Vanderbilt. We are kind of catching up. But we are attempting to take it to a new level."

In the Welcome Center, Admissions counselors will be able to tailor power-point presentations for individual students. Admissions is also compiling a large database of university photographs, videos and other material, all of which will be accessible with the mere touch of a screen.

Besides student recruiting, the 2,600-square-foot Welcome Center will serve another important purpose: as the gateway to the campus. Visitors will stop there to get directions, pick up information on Furman and learn about campus events.

To make room for the Welcome Center, the visitors parking lot adjacent to the administration building no longer exists. To accommodate the loss in parking, about 25 spaces are being added near the administration building, which has also undergone extensive first-floor renovations for the offices of Admissions, Financial Aid and Academic Records.

— John Roberts

Paladin Club sustains record growth

The Paladin Club, Furman's athletic fund-raising organization, enjoyed a second consecutive record year in 1999-2000. In addition to raising \$917,583 — an increase of more than \$130,000 over 1998-99 — the Paladin Club sponsored a variety of programs and activities designed to promote school spirit and support Furman's athletic teams.

Under the leadership of Hayden Hays, the Paladin Club Board of Directors provided outstanding direction for the club's activities and, with the help of many outstanding volunteers, worked diligently to insure a successful year.

In particular, the Paladin Club noted significant increases in the endowed athletic scholarships it funds. The number of full

scholarships (worth \$23,414 in 1999-00) and half-scholarships (\$11,707) increased from five to eight each, and 11 members chose to contribute at the new quarter-scholarship level.

Other highlights from 1999-2000 revolved around club activities. During football season, the Paladin Club joined forces with the Alumni Office and local Furman Clubs as it took its show on the road to five games. The highlight was the early-season trip to Williamsburg, Va., where the Paladins routed William & Mary and set the tone for their outstanding football season.

Another major program was the Paladin Club Golf Tour, which featured tournaments for Club members in Atlanta, Ga., Columbia, S.C., and Dalton, Ga. These events proved to be

popular, with more than 400 golfers participating. The championship tournament will be played in Greenville during Homecoming weekend.

During basketball season, the Paladin Club continued its tradition of hosting drop-ins before the men's and women's home games. One of the most enjoyable events of the season was the NCAA Selection Party for the women's basketball team.

The Paladin Club has a tremendous impact on the lives of student athletes. Paladin Club members now help to fund the efforts of more than 300 young men and women who represent Furman so well both on the playing fields and in the classroom.

— Gary Clark '74