

2024-2025 **YEAR END SUMMARY**



TRANSFORMING
LIVES FOR
ETERNITY

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MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT KEN SHAW

As we bring the 2024–2025 academic year to an end, I am filled with gratitude for the dedication, creativity, and faithfulness of our university community. This year’s strategic accomplishments reflect not only careful planning but also the collective spirit that defines who we are at Southern Adventist University, a Christ-centered institution committed to excellence, service, and transformation. Through your hard work, we advanced key initiatives that strengthen our mission: enhancing student success, investing in our people and infrastructure, expanding our impact through partnerships, and deepening the integration of faith and learning. These milestones are more than goals achieved; they are testimonies to God’s continued leading and blessing over Southern Adventist University.



We remain steadfast in our vision to prepare students to serve as leaders for Christ in a changing world. The foundation we have strengthened this year positions us to meet emerging challenges with resilience and hope, always anchored in our mission. Thank you for playing a vital role in this work, whether in the classroom, the office, the residence hall, or beyond; your efforts have eternal significance. Together, let us continue to seek God’s wisdom and favor as we build on the progress we celebrate today, always striving to transform lives for His kingdom.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Shaw".

Ken Shaw, EdD

President, Southern Adventist University

OUR FAITH

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

VP for Spiritual Life

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Students continue to grow spiritually. Spiritual growth supports greater student agreement with Adventist beliefs and lifestyle, as shown in the Spiritual Life Survey.
- 1. Fifty percent, 70%, and 55% of student respondents across the Non-Believer, Beginner, and Believer segments of the Spiritual Continuum Profile will experience spiritual growth as a result of their engagement in LifeGroups, Student Missions, and Vision Trips, respectively.
 - + Fifty-three percent, 93%, and 92% of student respondents experienced spiritual growth across the Non-Believer, Beginner, and Believer segments due to their engagement in LifeGroups, Student Missions, and Vision Trips, respectively.
- 2. Evaluate the five-part video series created to help students process doubt and determine the viability of future social media video productions.
 - + A five-part video series was successfully recorded to help students navigate doubts in their faith, covering topics such as understanding doubt, biblical interpretation, scriptural examples, community support, and available resources. The series is in final editing, featuring student voices and expert insights from campus pastors, professors, and chaplains. Preliminary evaluation shows strong potential for engaging students who prefer digital and visual content, with further assessment planned.
- 3. Create a Next Steps initiative that would be held during vespers to help students take practical steps toward faith development, providing an opportunity for students to actively engage in belonging and put their faith into action; success would be measured through an assessment survey.
 - + The Next Steps Initiative provided students with a simple path for faith growth: Step 1 – Accept Jesus, Step 2 – Find community, and Step 3 – Serve in mission. These steps were reinforced at Vespers throughout the year. Pastors hosted Afterglow sessions during Smart Start to connect new students to the church. The August 23 Ministry Expo invited students into campus ministries and missions. A March 28 Vespers speaker encouraged post-grad church involvement. At GradFest, seniors received LifeGroup resources and mission invitations supported by regional leaders. Weeks of Worship prompted decisions for Bible study, baptism, LifeGroups, or missions. GroupLink events (September 13 and January 24) connected students to LifeGroups. An automated NextSteps form ensured timely follow-up, and four Vespers dates (October 25, November 8, February 14, and May 2) directly challenged students to consider mission service. An assessment conducted in October 2025 identified this as a high-priority area for students with potential for future growth. A follow-up assessment is scheduled for October 2026.
- ▶ **Benchmark:** To create a spiritually vibrant and connected community within Southern Adventist University by fostering a strong ministry partnership between the Collegedale Church and the university, while serving the diverse spiritual needs of students, faculty, staff, and leadership.
- 1. Continue to have a special dedication service for Office of Ministry and Missions student leaders and the Student Association leaders at the beginning of the fall semester.
 - + Pastors at the Collegedale Church dedicated one hundred student leaders during the renewal service on August 24.

2. Schedule the senior church pastor and the associate collegiate pastor to speak at vespers at least once per school year, providing students with direct exposure to church leadership and fostering a deeper connection between the church and the university community.

+ The associate collegiate pastor at the Collegedale Church spoke at Vespers on prayer on August 16. The senior pastor spoke on the cross of Calvary and the abundant life on September 6.

3. Have the university chaplains meet regularly with the Collegedale Church pastoral staff to facilitate collaborative planning and effective communication.

+ All three university chaplains have been successfully integrated into the Collegedale Church pastoral staff structure through regular participation in Tuesday morning meetings. They also contribute to staff worship on a rotational basis. This ongoing collaboration has significantly strengthened campus–church alignment and resulted in more cohesive planning and communication.

4. Partner with the Southern Union Youth Department to host a Sabbath lunch in September encouraging interaction between students and the wider church family.

+ The goal of fostering connections between students and the wider church family was successfully achieved through “The Great Haystack,” a well-attended Sabbath luncheon on September 7 with over 1,000 participants. This collaborative event, organized by the Southern Union, the Office of Ministry and Missions, and the Collegedale Seventh-day Adventist Church, featured a meal prepared by Southern’s cafeteria and desserts contributed by church members, creating opportunities for meaningful interactions. Positive feedback from students, church members, and the Southern Union underscored the success of this initiative.

5. Continue to have the Student Association president serve as a board member of the Collegedale Church, ensuring student participation and active involvement in church decisions.

+ The Student Association President was invited to serve on the Collegedale Church board.

6. Request the Collegedale Church to highlight the university’s Student Missions, Vision Trips, and ERC missions programs during the worship service to foster missional collaboration.

+ This goal was not fully achieved due to staffing changes. After a part-time employee transitioned out, the new Student Missions Director—who began in January—was unable to find a Sabbath date that aligned with the church’s schedule. This opportunity will be revisited in the next academic year.

7. Provide four summer AfterGlow Vespers experiences on August 2, 9, 16, 23.

+ As part of efforts to foster meaningful relationships between students and the Collegedale Church pastoral team, four AfterGlow Vespers experiences were successfully held. Led by the Collegedale Church pastoral staff, these events provided intentional spaces for students—particularly first-year students—to engage in meaningful conversations and build connections with church leadership. This initiative is committed to enhancing students’ sense of belonging and integrating them into the broader church community.

8. Hold fellowship Sabbath lunches through Connections Café and Merge that encourage interaction between students and the wider church family.

+ The Merge Church hosted a Sabbath lunch for students on the first Sabbath of each month throughout the semester, immediately following the Merge worship service. Additionally, Connections Cafe collaborated with The Great Haystack event, encouraging families from the Collegedale Church to invite students into their homes during the semester to foster meaningful connections.

9. Have a special dedication service in the winter semester for students who are graduating.

+ The special dedication occurred on Sabbath, May 3, during the Renewal Service.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

VP for Spiritual Life

- **Benchmark:** Implement five micro-credential competency-based digital badges that utilize the transformation process to aid students in developing an Adventist Worldview, Empathy, Teamwork, Resilience, and Vocational Calling, with assessment instruments to determine the modules' effectiveness and students' skill level when awarding a badge.

	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
Total Number of Badges Issued (Empathy, Resilience, Teamwork, Vocational Calling, Adventist Worldview)	400	287 (excluding Summer Vision Trips)

1. Ensure the infrastructure is in place to support the badging system. Establish a systematic approach to measure, assess, and approve badges through the Office of Ministry and Missions through the online platform.

+ The infrastructure is now in place through a partnership with Online Campus. An automated badging system through eClass that issues electronic durable skills badges/micro-credentials to students.

2. Develop marketing materials and a communication plan for the launch of the badges. This includes branding, messaging, and communication strategies for students, staff, and faculty. Clearly articulate the "WHY" for students of badges connected with character development.

+ Created in collaboration with the Online Campus, Marketing and University Relations, and the Office of Ministry and Missions, the program focuses on key "durable skills," including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, fortitude, growth mindset, and leadership. These micro-credentials address employer demands for better ways to assess soft skills and give students a competitive edge in the job market. The webpage clearly outlines how students can benefit from earning these badges to enhance their career readiness.

3. Conduct the initial launch of badges to students, including speaking at orientation for all first-year students/ transfers and rolling out announcements to returning students.

+ Since the initial launch, students have actively earned badges. The team created a dedicated web page and shared announcements during orientation. To move forward strategically, additional discussions are needed to build campus-wide buy-in and ensure alignment with broader institutional goals—laying the foundation for a more impactful and cohesive implementation.

4. Highlight involvement of students to create a sense of team and positive energy on campus.

+ Survey tools have gathered positive student feedback, including testimonies highlighting the meaningful impact of earning micro-credentials. Student involvement will be showcased and emphasized as part of the implementation and execution of task 3 above.

5. Invite School of Religion faculty to review the Adventist Worldview co-curriculum before launch and creation of badge.

+ A preaching and Adventist studies professor in the School of Religion extensively reviewed the Adventist Worldview badge. They provided valuable feedback to the VP of Spiritual Life in the fall.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

► **Benchmark:** Increase students’ sense of belonging through transformational LifeGroups.

	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
Percentage of student respondents who experience a sense of belonging in LifeGroups	90%	94%

1. Maintain the quality of mentorship by adding two additional student coaches through the student labor budget to allow for 96 LifeGroup opportunities on campus.

+ The goal of maintaining quality mentorship was exceeded by adding two additional student coaches through the student labor budget, which led to 104 LifeGroups being offered on campus in the fall—surpassing the original target of 96.

2. Create automated system for processing Office of Ministry and Missions applications, LifeGroup registration, pairing LifeGroup coaches and leaders, LifeGroup time reports, and midterm assessments to increase efficiencies for the associate chaplain.

+ Leveraging the JotForm online platform, key processes—including the student worker application, LifeGroup registrations, coach-leader pairings, time reporting, and midterm assessments—were successfully automated, resulting in increased operational efficiency and improved data management.

3. Assign end-of-semester assessment to LifeGroup leaders and coaches for Outside the Classroom Curriculum badging and discipleship journey. Create processes for qualitative responses within assessments to be summarized into “next step” themes.

+ The assessment was created and LifeGroup Leaders self-identified their interest in pursuing the badge. They distributed the assessment on December 1. As a result of their leadership in the fall, 88 LifeGroup Leaders qualified for the Teamwork badges.

4. Explore the idea with the Spiritual Life Committee to reward LifeGroup leaders and participants who have attended nine or more weeks with additional enrichment credits equal to the value of a student’s investment of time to increase the number of consistent participants.

+ The Spiritual Life Committee discussed offering bonuses for LifeGroup participation on April 14. While bonuses could encourage involvement, committee members expressed concerns about creating a hierarchy among spiritual activities and turning participation into a transactional experience—where students attend solely for rewards and disengage afterward.

5. Explore the idea for LifeGroup directors to facilitate a SmartStart vespers and AfterGlow annually to serve as a means to recruit freshmen to engage in LifeGroups.

+ The August 8 vespers was dedicated to introducing LifeGroups to incoming freshmen and transfer students.

6. Contract a recent graduate to create a resource to be distributed annually at GradFest for alumni to launch LifeGroups in local churches upon graduating.

+ The former LifeGroup Director/Coach originally drafted this resource during the summer of 2024.

7. Partner with Marketing and University Relations to design a LifeGroup guidebook for GradFest.

+ A LifeGroup guidebook was made available to graduates for the first time during GradFest in May.

8. Seek approval for a temporary graduate assistant position to research small group ministries at private Christian universities.

+ Research efforts are advancing through collaboration with the Director of CLIR, using existing graduate assistants. The team scheduled a winter benchmarking survey of 10–15 private Christian universities following the release of Student and Employee Perceptions of Belonging data.

STUDENT MISSIONARIES

VP for Spiritual Life

- **Benchmark:** Increase the number of students participating as student missionaries to experience transformation along the discipleship continuum as a result of their engagement, with the aim of training and equipping all students who seek to be missionaries.

	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
Number of Student Missionaries	65	74

1. Assess the pilot programs based on student feedback surveys, as well as with the local union/mission field. Make adjustments if needed based on assessment results.

+ Due to personnel changes, this task was not completed.
2. Have the Vice President for Spiritual Life and Student Missions director collaborate with Vice President for Advancement to prioritize and identify missional giving opportunities.

+ Partnered with Alumni President and Advancement to set day goals. The Alumni President partnered with the Student Missions director and chose student missions as a focus for Giving Day, which raised over \$9,000. Choose 2027 and a strategic initiative to maximize the missional giving opportunities for student missions. The goal would be \$600,000 (\$10,000 for each year of student missions).
3. Have the Student Missions director partner with the Evangelism and Resource Center (ERC) director to integrate public evangelism, vacation bible school programs, Fun Learning About God (FLAG) camp or personal Bible studies initiatives in 12% of student mission locations.

+ Due to personnel changes, this task was not completed.
4. Conduct feasibility study of Student Missions locations.

+ Due to personnel changes, this task was not completed.
5. Provide annual report to Southern Union Conferences of constituent students who will be serving as student missionaries.

+ A comprehensive list of Student Missionary names was collated and categorized by conference; however, due to the absence of a Student Missions Director by the October Board of Trustees meeting, a formal report—customarily provided during the past two October meetings—was not able to be provided. Include goal in 2025.
6. Begin initial planning stages for Southern Adventist University's 60-year Student Missionary Celebration in 2027-2028 in partnership with the Alumni office and Marketing and University Relations to formulate a communication plan.

+ The Alumni Office and the Office of Ministry and Missions have begun conversations in preparation for the 2027/2028 celebration. The team is forming "Southern's 60-years of Student Missions Anniversary Planning Group" and collecting names of former student missionaries.

VISION TRIPS

VP for Spiritual Life

	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
Vision Trip Participants Receiving Badges	65	100% (69 students as of May 5, 2025)

► **Benchmark:** Increase the number of students participating in vision trips who receive badges.

1. Have the Trips Committee give study to strategic methods that highlight the transformational impact of short-term mission trips on student volunteers.

+ To support the Christian Service Director workload, the Trips Committee could not provide a study of strategic methods highlighting transformational impact due to interim restructuring in 2024-2025. The committee recommends deferring the goal to 2025-2026, contingent upon appointing a potential full-time Vision Trips Director by Summer 2025.

2. Have the vice president for Spiritual Life collaborate with the vice president for Advancement to prioritize and identify missional giving opportunities for short-term mission trips.

+ The Vice President for Spiritual Life collaborated with the vice president for Advancement to prioritize missional giving opportunities, resulting in \$100,000 raised to support short-term mission trips this year.

3. Collaborate with Alumni Relations to develop a volunteer program specifically designed for alumni and former missionaries.

+ Not able to be completed due to interim restructure for 2024-2025 to support Christian Service Director workload.

4. Give study to partnering with Maranatha Missions to launch short-term missions projects.

+ In the fall, program leaders explored a potential partnership with Maranatha Missions, identifying strong alignment in vision and approach. Maranatha offers budget-friendly, student-centered mission opportunities with a scalable model for expanding short-term projects. Although the future of Vision Trips remains uncertain, leaders are thoughtfully considering this partnership as a strategic option to sustain and enhance the program's long-term impact.

5. Achieve 50% of Vision Trip participants receiving the empathy durable skill badge as part of the character development initiative.

+ As part of the character development initiative, 100% of Spring Break Vision Trip participants—69 students—earned the empathy durable skill badge, surpassing the goal of 50% participation.

OUR STUDENTS

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

VP for Student Development

► **Benchmark:** Students will report higher levels of well-being and lower levels of psychological distress.

1. Expand QEP programming.

a. Launch anxiety symposium (fall).

- + As part of efforts to expand QEP programming, the University hosted the Anxiety Symposium on October 25 in partnership with the University Counseling Center and the School of Psychology, Education, and Counseling (SPEC). SPEC's Reynolds Chair sponsored the event, which featured clinical experts presenting on topics such as brain-body responses to anxiety, treatment approaches, relational resilience, and living with anxiety. A total of 217 students attended, along with alumni and employees. Organizers acknowledged the oversight of not conducting an end-of-program evaluation and plan to include formal assessments in future events.

b. Launch "Know Your Brain," event with the following goals (winter):

- + Provide information on important structures and functions of the brain, as well as ways to increase brain health.
 - a. During the winter term, a nurse practitioner specializing in brain health presented the neurobiology of forgiveness, explaining how brain structures like the amygdala are involved in guilt and forgiveness and how forgiveness can reduce anxiety and fear. Students also participated in various events promoting brain health through physical activity, social connection, nature, worship, and stress management strategies.
- + Provide practical steps towards mental well-being through multiple interdisciplinary sessions with student research and expert presentations.
 - b. As part of a series of interdisciplinary sessions, students and experts presented practical strategies for mental well-being. Topics included the impact of digital devices on mood and productivity, recognizing signs of emotional distress, the role of community in fostering mental health and connecting spiritual identity to emotional well-being through biblical insights.

2. Adjust current programming and resources in response to the results from annual assessment results, which, after one full year, reveal that Southern students are experiencing higher levels of well-being but are not reporting lower levels of psychological distress.

Two observations are noteworthy here:

1. *Technological constraints had previously prevented the university from shifting the class registration start time from midnight to earlier in the evening (between 8:00 and 10:00 p.m.). However, the university recently received approval from the vendor to make this adjustment, enabling registration to begin at a more accessible hour moving forward.*
2. *Year three assessments on the inventories (the Kessler Distress Scale, the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule Well-being Scale, and the Perceived Stress Scale) reveal that Southern students are experiencing both higher levels of well-being and lower levels of psychological distress. While mental health continues to be a major concern because students are arriving on campus sicker than ever before, the QEP and Counseling Services are making a positive impact in this area through the stated initiatives.*

ACCESSIBILITY

SR VP for Financial Administration, VP for Student Development

► **Benchmark:** Create a more accessible campus.

1. Create an accessibility map. Ensure that all renovations and buildings of new construction are ADA compliant.

+ The map has been completed by Marketing and University Relations. The goal is to keep the map updated as renovations and new construction result in more facilities being ADA compliant.

2. Install tactile signs on all buildings.

+ No progress on this goal has occurred during this Strategic Planning cycle. This initiative will be moved to the 2025-26 year.

3. Install handicap push buttons on buildings including bathrooms inside buildings, on at least 10% of all buildings.

+ A \$100,000 grant from the Student Senate during Winter 2025 enabled the advancement of this initiative within the current strategic planning cycle. Efforts were focused on the installation of handicap-accessible push buttons on three campus buildings: Wright Hall, Hulsey Wellness Center, and the Bietz Center. At the April 28, 2025, President's Committee meeting, the Associate Vice President for Financial Administration reported that installation work has been scheduled to begin.

BADGING FOR STUDENT LEADERSHIP

VP for Student Development

► **Benchmark:** Student leaders will be recognized for acquiring the durable skills of teamwork, effective communication, leadership, and problem solving on their co-curricular transcript.

1. Inventory student leaders through interviews regarding what skills they use most often in their roles

+ The Student Development office has interviewed student leaders to gather this information. Specifically, Student Association officers were asked to discuss the skills they are developing while putting them to use in their positions. Student government officers discussed teamwork, accountability, problem solving, critical thinking, and communication as those durable skills most often used.

2. Create appropriate badging for 2 of the 4 Student Leadership modules

+ Badging for the Critical Thinking module has been completed. Development of the Teamwork and Leadership modules is currently in progress.

3. Explore the possibility of a Student Leadership module on Financial Management

+ This module did not receive attention because the Student Leadership module was not part of the durable skills wheel. In the future, this will be created by the Office of Student Development.

4. Develop assessment tool for determining that student leaders have met the requirements for earning a badge in Student Leadership.

+ The assessment rubric has been completed for the Critical Thinking module. The completion of the module in Student Leadership is now more likely to be summer 2025.

5. Work with Senior Vice President for Academic Administration, Online Campus, and the Vice President for Spiritual Life to create a roadmap towards accomplishing this benchmark

+ Senior VP for Academic Administration, has shared the work done in academics on durable skills. VP for Spiritual Life, has shared their work on the badges that students will be able to acquire through the Office of Ministry and Mission. However, consolidating individual efforts into one road map has not been completed.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

SR VP for Academic Administration

UNDERGRADUATE

- **Benchmark:** Increase academic programs offered in high-demand areas: begin EdD/PhD Education in fall 2026, BS in Audiology/Speech Pathology in fall in 2027, Criminal Justice in the Adult Degree Completion Program in fall 2027, Chemical Engineering fall 2027, Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) degree in fall 2027 if feasibility study from prior years shows demand and likely program success; as a result of new program launches, expect an increase in enrollment.

1. Set up a team to investigate the requirements for a BS in Audiology/Speech Pathology and lay out an initial process for developing the necessary prospectus.

+ The BS in Audiology/Speech Pathology has been renamed to BS in Communication Sciences and Disorders. The prospectus for the program will be developed and approvals from ASHA/CAA to begin these programs.

2. Determine the need for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges substantive change for BS Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) degree fall 2024.

+ Based on the number of new courses and faculty the university would need to hire, a full Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges substantive change document is needed. This document will be developed in the next academic year.

3. Set up a task force to explore Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) of Tennessee-like BlueSky program in business/IT with AdventHealth, Unum, etc.

+ No work was done on this initiative this year although through a separate process, the School of Business is exploring a B2B model for delivery of its executive MBA to AdventHealth, Bolingbrook (Chicago).

4. Set up a task force to explore financially viable models for expanded technical/trade programming and develop a prospectus if warranted. Keep an eye on gainful employment rules as this area is explored.

+ A task force was established and met during the winter term, 2025. The Dean of the School of Engineering and Physics has worked to identify prospective programs using the Gray DI student demand and employer demand tool. Information gathering is still in process including competitor analysis and how local tech schools, including Chattanooga State Technical Community College's TCAT program delivers educational programs. During the next academic year, 2025-2026, equipment and facilities needed for various programs will be developed, program prioritization will occur, and a budget model will be developed

5. Explore offering a degree in communication in collaboration with Fulton College, Fiji.

+ An MOU with Fulton College, Fiji, has been signed and delivery of four foundational and four applied courses in communication will begin in August 2025.

6. Track Bachelor of Science in Engineering (BSE) students, faculty, and staff as compared to the prospectus. See on the following page.

BSE Projections by Year	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
Projected # Students	61	98 (includes 10 AS students)
Projected #FTE (Faculty/Staff)	5/1	5/1

ADULT DEGREE COMPLETION

- **Benchmark:** Increase part-time enrollment in the Adult Degree Completion (ADC) Program to 88 by winter 2026.

The following table reflects enrollments and net tuition revenue projections over the next two years. Current programs include Business, Psychology, Communication, and Integrative Studies.

ADC Projections by Year	Fall 2024/Winter 2025 Goal	Fall 2024/Winter 2025 Actual
Projected # Students	46 / 60	35 / 37
Projected #FTE (Faculty/Staff)	2 / 2	1 / 2
Net Tuition Revenue	-\$56,000	-\$110,000

1. Update the prospectus for ADC programs identified in Gray Associates PES work from the prior year.

+ This work is ongoing.

2. Develop and fill a new ADC position - enrollment counselor/advisor/academic support (track program performance against prospectus).

+ The position has been filled and training of the enrollment and advisor function of the position is in progress.

3. Hire enrollment counselor/advisor/academic support position

+ This position has not been filled.

GRADUATE

- **Benchmark:** Increase the number of graduate students to 500 by fiscal year 2028

1. Develop a Business Analytics stackable credential within the MBA program.

+ This strategy was abandoned as a result of a redesign of the MBA program to an executive MBA with a restricted credit count and no areas of emphasis.

2. Begin writing prospectus and curriculum for EdD/PhD program and seek approval for the same from the Graduate Curriculum Committee, Faculty Senate, President's Committee, and Board of Trustees. Complete in winter semester.

+ The prospectus has been developed and taken through the university approval process with the exception of Board approval. Once Board approval is in hand the prospectus will be submitted to SACSCOC this summer 2025 as a substantive change. Anticipated degree launch is winter 2026 or fall 2026.

3. Hire DPT director and/or explore branch DPT campus of AdventHealth University (AHU) at Southern with AHU leadership and DPT director.

- + This idea has been abandoned due to the inability to locate a qualified director, the anticipated \$3,000,000 expense of program launch, and the approximately 10-year lag between hiring a program director and program break-even.

4. Set up a team to investigate audiology/speech pathology (AuD/MS) program requirements and lay out an initial process for developing the necessary prospectuses and approvals from ASHA/CAA to begin these programs of study.

- + The undergraduate program prospectus is in development. Given the accreditation process, the undergraduate program will open first followed by the graduate program approximately 5 years later. However, the graduate program prospectus is also being developed to support the filing of an intent to launch the program with the accreditor.

5. Investigate the MS/MA in Communication degree demand using Gray DI data in summer 2024.

- + The Dean of the School of Journalism and Communication is working on the development of a prospectus. The first step, which involved determining student and employer demand, has been completed. However, further progress is still in process due to the Dean's Winter 2025 sabbatical.

6. Prepare prospectus based on degree demand.

- + The prospectus is still in development, as progress was delayed as a result of the Dean of the School of Journalism and Communication winter 2025 sabbatical.

7. Analyze and then improve the recruiting process from inquiry to enrollment. Especially work to improve the process from application start to admission.

- + The analysis has been completed, and implementation of the findings is underway. This included a secret shopper analysis that found that automated communication for some programs was not working as intended and for others had not been set up. Web links that did not work. And an overly passive communication plan. These errors have been corrected.

8. Review the strategies proposed by Online Campus to grow graduate enrollment.

- + The strategies have been reviewed. No immediate action has been taken. However, the document is still under consideration for future use.

9. Conduct and implement changes in the graduate enrollment processes developed by Direct Development Agency.

- + The Direct Development Agency recommendations have been implemented where indicated.

CREDENTIAL DURABLE SKILLS

SR VP for Academic Administration

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Ensure graduates possess durable skills that employers identify s most important for workplace success

1. Implement system developed in prior-year work with faculty and test badging and co-curricular transcript concept.

- + Faculty testing of rubrics developed in the prior year is completed. Work to incorporate rubrics use in future years was not done this year and has been moved to the 2025-2030 strategic plan.

STUDENT GRADUATION AND RETENTION RATES

SR VP for Academic Administration

- **Benchmark:** Maintain a four-year graduation rate of 40% and six-year graduation rate of 55%

+ This benchmark was achieved with four-year graduation rates being 40.8% and six-year graduation rates being 56.6%, as reflected in the table below.

Cohort Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
4 Year Rate (Goal 40%)	31.3	32.7	32.4	37.7	41.8	37.8	36.5	37.0	38.0	41.2	42.1
6 Year Rate (Goal 55%)	51.6	51.8	53.1	57.5	64.4	56.7	56.8	57.0	56.5	58.6	

- **Benchmark:** Maintain overall 1st year retention (retention to sophomore year) at 80% and 2nd year retention at 90% (retention to junior year).

Cohort Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1st Year Retention (Goal 80%)	79.2	74.1	74.1	79.1	80.3	79.5	81.4	80.3	80.3
2nd Year Retention (Goal 90%)	80.8	86.8	86.9	87.4	89.3	87.5	88.4	92.5	

1. Develop comprehensive cohort reporting in PowerBI based on cohort assignments made to existing students not currently in a cohort.

+ The automated cohort assignment has been completed, and retention reporting using this system in Power BI was finalized during the winter 2025 semester. Testing against the current retention reporting system is still in progress.

2. Complete literature review of strategies to support the success of underperforming student populations (male/ Hispanic/ black/first generation/Pell-eligible).

+ The literature review has been developed. The results of the literature review were incorporated in a white paper. The strategies that do not require external funding have been placed in the 2025-2030 strategic plan. Grant funding will be sought to implement major recommendations that are not currently financially feasible.

3. Consult with peer institutions that have retention and graduation rates exceeding Southern's rates for male/ Hispanic/Black/ first generation/Pell-eligible students.

+ Consultation took place with a full professor at National University, an online Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), to explore effective retention strategies for underrepresented students. Key insights included the importance of support services, mentorship, trauma-informed teaching and learning practices, and intentional community-building. These insights have been incorporated into the white paper referenced above.

4. Develop strategies for implementation based on literature review and peer consultation.

+ Ongoing research through literature review and consultation with peer institutions informed the development of a proposal for the Male Success Academy, submitted as a white paper. The initiative focuses on improving retention and graduation rates for male students, including Hispanic, Black, White, first-generation, international, and Pell-eligible populations. Elements of the proposal appear in the 2025–2030 strategic plan.

5. Begin implementation of DHSI grant programs to improve overall Hispanic success in STEM fields (DHSI staff).

+ **DHSI Grant Implementation**

- a. The HSI team is fully staffed, as of 12/2/24.
- b. Committees have been formed to help with implementation and oversight:
 - HSI Oversight Committee
 - HSI Implementation Advisory Committee
 - HSI Student Success Committee
- c. Required external evaluators have been hired.
- d. An evaluation plan has been successfully developed.
- e. All designated funds for STEM equipment were spent for year one of the grant.

6. Train faculty during colloquium, especially those teaching first-year students, in using the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) data to support first-year student success. In this training, the Executive Director for Institutional Planning and Research will review survey data for the current year, and the Director of the Center of Teaching Excellence will speak about how to use the data in first-year classes. Include success stories of those advisors who used BCSSE data last year.

+ This initiative has been completed and will be operationalized in future years.

ENROLLMENT

VPs for Enrollment Management & Marketing and University Relations

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Identify and recruit 8800 Adventist high school students in the Southern Union that are not enrolled in the Southern Union Academy system.

1. Continue to build a database of Adventist high school students who are not enrolled in an academy.

+ Eighth-grade graduates from Seventh-Day Adventist schools in the Southern Union who do not continue on to an SDA academy have been added to the communication system.

2. Establish an updated communication plan targeted to encourage applications and visits.

+ The communication plan was updated to target individuals who are not in Seventh-Day Adventist academies by sending awareness emails to 9th and 10th graders who do not attend our academies. Public high schools in the Chattanooga region showed an increase in inquiries following distribution of application and visit communications. The task remains ongoing.

3. Create a plan to invite these students to visit our campus.

+ **The current plan includes the following:**

- a. Communicate with prospective 9th grade students (last year's 8th grade graduates) that do not enroll into our Southern Union academies to visit and apply to Southern Adventist University.
- b. Non-academy recruiter has connected with key Hamilton County high school college counselors. Scheduled class visits and attended college fairs, and at least 2 public schools have visited our campus in the current recruitment cycle.
- c. Engage Ministries has been completed and will complete 13 total praise/worship events at churches, youth rallies, and Southern recruitment events.
- d. In June, contact information for 15-18 year olds in the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference, South Central Conference, and Gulf States Conference will occur.

4. Invest in FAFSA training for DHSI Outreach specialists to assist Hamilton County high school students with completing the FAFSA. The goal is to help increase financial literacy, awareness of Southern Adventist University, and applications within the Chattanooga region.

- + An outreach specialist has been hired, received training on FAFSA, and is currently working with Hamilton County students to increase financial awareness.

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Create a plan to grow total enrollment to 4000 students while also protecting the institution's strong Adventist identity.

1. The Enrollment Council along with the Graduate Professional Studies leadership team will oversee the following 3 phases of the creation of the enrollment growth plan:

- + **Phase 1: Determine and forecast primary target market future enrollment growth in both Southern Union and NAD over 10 years. Analyze Adventist population migration trends as the first phase of a three-phase approach to strategically accomplish and sustain a 4000 total enrollment goal (Undergraduate and Graduate).**
 - Analysis from a higher education marketing research firm indicates that the primary target market is projected to have a sufficient number of prospective students to support future enrollment over the next 10 years.
- + **Phase 2: Develop a Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) that requires campus collaboration to numerically establish a strategic road map that includes multiple scenarios to accomplish the total enrollment goal in 5 years.**
 - The Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) will be completed by Summer 2025. Engagement with 3E, an enrollment strategy firm, is supporting the development of a strategic growth plan that outlines the numerical pathway to reach a total enrollment of 4,000 students by 2030.
- + **Phase 3. Develop a campus resource plan to accommodate enrollment goal of 4000 total students.**
 - This task will be moved to 2025-2026. At the conclusion of phase 2 (completing the SEP), the plan will be submitted to the President to consider the campus resource plan to accommodate the strategy to grow the University to 4000 total enrollment.

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Increase by 20% the number of applications from non-academy students in the greater Chattanooga region.

Applications increased by 19% from 188 applications in fall 2023 to 224 applications in fall 2024.

1. Establish an updated communication plan targeted to local non-academy high school students to encourage applications and visits.

- + Student names indicating Adventist affiliation were added to the communication flow, accompanied by tailored value messaging. This effort will be supported by 3E, a digital enrollment marketing firm specializing in reaching underserved audiences through strategies designed to boost applications. Engagement with 3E is planned for the 2025–2026 cycle.

2. Evaluate and develop financial aid strategies to determine affordability effectiveness for families.

- + Scholarship outlay from prior years and future years have been reviewed to increase enrollment and net tuition revenue.

3. Conduct a feasibility study for non-academy high school campus visit day and/or evening programs.

- + Campus visit days took place with Ooltewah High School and East Hamilton High School, the two largest feeders of non-academy Adventist students. Plans are in place to expand the program to 2–3 additional Hamilton County high schools in 2025.

4. Increase presence at Hamilton County, Bradley County, and North Georgia college fairs in order to increase non-Academy applications.

- + A local recruiter has attended 8 college fairs in Hamilton, Bradley, and North Georgia counties.

5. Leverage DHSI Outreach Coordinator to drive inquiries and applications from financial literacy efforts in the Chattanooga region.

- + An Outreach Coordinator was hired in December 2024. The position is expected to be fully leveraged by summer 2025.

- **Benchmark:** Establish guaranteed job after graduation initiative for graduates who fulfill established requirements. This will support the need to meet government requirements for the gainful employment rule requiring that graduates of certain programs can afford their college debt payments and are making more money than an adult in their state with a high school diploma and no postsecondary degree.

1. Consult DHSI coordinator to determine overlapping goals and how that position might assist this item.

+ In consultation with appropriate employees, it was determined that the interests do not align enough to be a key part of the initiative and that the DHSI coordinator will not be part of future meetings.

2. Establish a cross-disciplinary task force to determine the critical considerations for Southern in implementing this type of program and to shape how the program should work. The program should be a way to express the confidence Southern has in the product it is delivering.

+ A Task Force has been established and will consist of the Director of Admissions, AVP for Financial Administration (budgeting), Director of Records and Advisement, AVP for Academic Administration, and VP for Marketing and University Relations.

3. Research past related program(s) at Southern and at other universities and previous proposals.

+ A similar program was identified at Southern, however, the program was from decades ago and not useful for current project. Initial research was conducted for similar programs offered at other universities, such as Thomas College and Davenport University. Taskforce will continue in its research efforts to examine best practices in this area.

4. Research related concept of a Loan Repayment Assistance Programs.

+ Initial research on the LRAP program has begun. A decision regarding implementation will be made following further consultation with additional areas, including Student Finance, during the 2025–2026 academic year.

5. Form a task force to make a research-based proposal to the President's Council for feedback and/or approval.

+ The Task Force from task 2 did not have sufficient information and details to make a proposal.

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

VP for Student Development

- **Benchmark:** Students will identify Southern's chapel and convocation programming as beneficial to their educational experience at Southern

1. Evaluate convocation programming and attendance requirements using the results from the 2023-2024 inventory to measure students' feelings towards convocation.

+ During the Winter 2024 semester, Student Development engaged an external vendor to assess student sentiments regarding Convocation. The following observations summarize the findings from those focus groups:

- Seventy-two percent of students rate their enjoyment a 3, 4, or 5 on a 5-point Likert scale.
- Seventy-five percent of students would not voluntarily attend Convocation despite largely enjoying the event, suggesting that credit requirements play a significant role in attendance.
- Students particularly enjoy Convocations at which speakers' personal story is the message of the presentation.
- Overall, the results suggest that no changes to the requirements are needed.

+ Despite this, the Student Development Committee, along with a group of student senators, has scheduled a re-assessment of the Convocation program for the Fall 2025 semester to recommend any necessary changes.

2. Increase chapel and convocation attendance to fall 2019 totals: 82,000+ by tying enrichment credits to housing and leadership eligibility as well as pre-registration

+ During the 2023-24 academic year, attendance at chapels and convocations exceeded the goal but not by a significant number. This year, attendance increased by 23%.

EVENT	2024-25 ATTENDANCE
Vespers	28,310
Convocations	21,461
Lifegroups	15,760
Morning Meditations	10,321
Sunday Night Hall Worship (Ra-Led)	7,431
New Student Orientations	4,515
Performing Arts Programming	3,851
Alternative Vespers (Home, Departmental)	2,388
Tuesday Chapel	1,521
Evensong	1,500
Alternative Convocations (Departmental)	1,480
Week Of Worship (Fall)	726
Evening Convocations (Lynn Sauls, Etc)	584
Meet The Firms	280
Anxiety Symposium	222
Engage Ministries	173
Title Ix Training (Winter)	30
Total	100,553

3. Coordinate with the Belonging task force to find ways to bring students and employees together for worship

+ The Belonging task force believes that the most direct way to accomplish this goal was to have campus offices closed during Convocation. Employees were encouraged to not employ their student workers during the Convocation hour, unless the student labor is necessary at that hour, e.g., Food Services.

The task force believes the best method to bring employees and students together is through home Vespers.

► **Benchmark:** Complete the revamping of career services, transitioning it fully to a life-calling center

1. 90% of our juniors and seniors perceive their internships, externships, or clinical training as a valuable part of their education experience as reflected in their exit survey

+ Data was not collected to obtain this information.

2. Launch the Life-calling initiative for juniors.

+ Classes such as Meet the Firms and Fit for Hire in addition to Internships are next-steps in the student's life-calling growth. The Life Calling and Career office offers assistance with resume composition and interview skills for juniors. It will consider an inventory of need to determine if there are shortcomings in its services to juniors and seniors.

OUR FACULTY

RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ENDEAVORS

SR VP for Academic Administration

► **Benchmark:** Create a structure and financing to support more research, creative, and professional endeavors (faculty assignments, university promotion and recruitment, etc.).

1. Increase level of internal funding from \$85,000 to \$95,000.

+ This change in funding was placed in the Fiscal Year 2025 operating budget that has been approved by administration and the Board of Trustees.

2. Create an online hub for university research resources.

+ This initiative was not pursued during 2024-2025 and has been rescheduled for inclusion in the 2025–2030 strategic plan.

3. Revise university policies to clarify and support faculty participation in research.

+ University policies have been revised to better clarify and support faculty participation in research. The following policies have been revised and reviewed by the Academic Administration Council and approved by the Faculty Senate:

- a. 5010 - Employment Status Definition
- b. 5030 - Promotion
- c. 5110 - Teaching
- d. 5120 - Assignment and documentation of Faculty Loads
- e. 5130 - Guidelines for Faculty Load
- f. 5150 - Job Description for Full-Time Faculty
- g. 5170 - Evaluation of Faculty
- h. 5300 - Research, 5310 - Committees
- i. 5740 - Research Leave

OUR EMPLOYEES

CHRISTIAN CULTURE

SR VP for Financial Administration, VP for Student Development, VP for Spiritual Life

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Create a robust Christian culture where love and kindness emanate through every interaction with students, colleagues, and guests; Southern's culture will be defined by our positive and healthy interactions and relationships so that we may collectively "transform lives for eternity".

1. Share previous Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCC) survey results before conducting a subsequent CCCC Employee Thriving survey in the fall. Review the results of the survey and develop strategies to address areas where growth/improvement is needed.

- + The Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCC) Employee Thriving survey results were reported during colloquium. Various groups and committees are continuing to follow up on these results. A second CCCC Employee Thriving survey was conducted in the fall. The results from this survey were received in March. A task force is reviewing the results of the survey and will develop strategies to address areas where growth/improvement is needed.

2. Implement strategies approved by the President's Council based on recommendations/strategies of the task force working in this area.

- + Summary results from the survey were shared with all employees during the colloquium meetings. Certain items from the survey have been referred to the Staff Advisory Council and the Diversity Committee for follow-up. The next survey of employees was sent out on November 12, and the preliminary results were received in December. The final report was received in March. The task force overseeing this process will review the results and will report the findings to administration by August 2025.

3. Continue growing and promoting employee LifeGroups, moving from a current employee participation rate of 15% to a targeted rate of 25% over five years.

- + The 18% target for employee LifeGroup participation (86 employees) has been reached this year.

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Support a robust Christian culture through Faculty and Staff LifeGroups that encourage love and kindness to emanate through every interaction with students, colleagues, and guests.

	2024-2025 Goal	2025-2026 Actual
Percentage of total faculty and staff involved in a LifeGroup	18% (85)	18% (86)

1. Expand the LifeGroup program by collaborating with additional leaders from different schools and departments, aiming to involve 18% (85 faculty and staff) in LifeGroups by the end of the year.

- + During the 2024-2025 academic year, 86 employees participated in LifeGroups.

2. Present information during new employee orientation for faculty and staff, emphasizing the impact and value of LifeGroups in fostering community, support, and spiritual growth.

- + Information about LifeGroups was presented during new employee orientations held on October 29 and January 28

3. Engage deans, chairs, and administrators to support and encourage LifeGroups within their respective areas.

+ With the Spiritual Life Committee focused on the development of a new campus mission statement, this goal will be moved to 2025-2026.

4. Assign Spiritual Life Committee members to personally reach out to faculty and staff, sharing their own LifeGroup experiences.

+ On April 29, LifeGroup participants received a survey to collect year-end stories and feedback about their experiences in LifeGroups. This will help gather valuable insights from employees and provide a better understanding of the impact of these groups.

5. Provide information and resources to committee members to help them promote LifeGroups among faculty and staff.

+ Relevant materials, including numerous positive employee testimonies, were compiled to support promotion efforts. A promotional banner was created and displayed during Colloquium and the February Employee Worship Service.

6. Continue to provide incentives to LifeGroups through lunch meal vouchers and resources for each participant.

+ Meal vouchers continue to be distributed to LifeGroup leaders and made available to group participants as part of ongoing support efforts. committee focused first on improving internal communications with students—an issue identified in the annual customer service survey to students. The committee used the winners of the President's Award for Customer Service to inform the selection of the rotating members.

► **Benchmark:** Improve and increase Southern's customer service orientation

1. Resolve pain points identified in website journey mapping.

+ Journey map research results from 2023-2024 have been delivered to the web development team who are working on resolving the issues. This will include a rework of the academic degrees page and undergraduate pages of the website.

2. Begin journey map for the Enrollment Checklist, testing/optimizing the path a student and parent takes in working through the process through to the first day of class.

+ Initial journey mapping of Enrollment Checklist has been completed, but more is needed before the project can be considered fully complete.

3. Analyze results of 2023-2024 student customer service survey that identified problems with campus communications to students; more specifically the Customer Service Committee will identify those problems and potential solutions.

+ The current year's (2024–2025) student customer service survey identified ongoing issues with campus communication to students. The Customer Service Committee will use the results to identify specific problems and potential solutions and though providing clear and timely communication remains a recurring concern, it will be a focus area for 2025–2026.

4. Create a taskforce to develop processes and procedures that will impact campus-wide communication to parents of current students and identify a home for these processes and procedures to be operationalized.

+ Discussions about a new communications initiative that would encompass parents of current students occurred with the VP for Enrollment and the VP for Student Development. New action items are being added in this area for future years and will widen the audiences to more than parents of current students.

5. Operationalize schedule for regularly performing secret shop of Enrollment.

+ The schedule for regularly conducting secret shopping of Enrollment is being operationalized. The current round, conducted by a freelancer, is expected to be completed by the end of May. A preliminary mid-point report has already identified at least one area in need of improvement.

EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE, AND RIGHTSIZED OPERATIONS

SR VPs for Financial Administration and Academic Administration

- **Benchmark:** Implement innovative solutions to make university operations more efficient, effective, and right sized.

1. Continue implementation of the Credo Administrative Efficiency Assessment recommendations.

- + An evaluation of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software usage across the university was conducted to identify opportunities for vendor consolidation. The analysis, completed in collaboration with an ad hoc team, concluded that—aside from a few exceptions—CRM efforts should be centralized around the use of SLATE. In support of this, oversight of SLATE has been consolidated from two offices into one, and a decision was made to merge the graduate SLATE recruiting instance with the undergraduate instance. This consolidation will free up an instance for CRM functions focused on current students and employees. Implementation of the merger will require time, and to further support the transition, a portion of the data analysis position within Records and Advisement has been reallocated to SLATE support.

2. Review all vendors to which the university pays more than \$50,000 per year and seek to negotiate savings and/or discounts.

- + A list of vendors has been compiled with an annual spend of over \$25,000 and are in the process of reviewing this list for opportunities to reduce costs, negotiate volume discounts, etc.

3. Review university operations to identify areas where expenses can be reduced or eliminated and/or revenues can be increased and implemented as approved by the President's Council.

- + This is an ongoing process that was conducted as part of the budgeting process.

4. Complete academic reorganization analysis with faculty senate.

- + The Faculty Senate is working on this initiative and a recommendation should be complete by the end of the winter semester.

5. Establish benchmarks for the expected contribution margin of academic programs using Net-Revenue Dashboard data.

- + No work has been done on this initiative.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

SR VP for Financial Administration

- **Benchmark:** Promote a continuous learning culture by delivering strategies focused on motivating, engaging, and educating a high-performing workforce.

1. Implement the employee development plan as approved by senior administration.

- + The employee development plan began in April 2024 with a dedicated part-time Human Resources team member serving as Training and Development Manager focused on this effort.

2. Develop a schedule of employee development requirements and/or opportunities and communicate these to employees at the appropriate times.

+ In support of continuous professional development, a range of training sessions and learning opportunities have been scheduled for 2024–2025. These initiatives are designed to enhance employee engagement, supervisory effectiveness, and alignment with institutional values. The schedule includes four New Employee Orientation sessions and three Customer Service Training sessions. Additional offerings include a Lunch & Learn session covering policy highlights and the employee handbook, a Workplace Ergonomics training, and two sessions in the Manager's Skills Building series: *Supervising Student Employees* and *Interviewing & Hiring for Optimal Success and Missional Alignment*. A speed-through review and discussion of the book *The Power of 2* is also planned. Employee development offerings are reviewed and updated annually. We are currently working toward the capability to record and archive these sessions on the HR website, expanding access and flexibility for all employees

3. Research the availability of online employee development opportunities and make available as possible.

+ This research is continuing. A recommendation from a Human Resources Representative will be forthcoming by the summer of 2025.

4. Develop a means of tracking employee participation in education/development opportunities.

+ Options for employee development are continuing to be researched, including the possibility of developing this in-house. A recommendation from a Human Resources representative will be forthcoming by the summer of 2025.

EMPLOYEE STUDENT INTERACTIONS

SR VP for Financial Administration

► **Benchmark:** Develop meaningful experiences between employees and students.

1. Continue and increase promotion of the following initiatives, and seek to increase employee/departmental participation:

- a. Promote employees hosting students in their homes.

- For the 2024-25 fiscal year 30 different employees have hosted 1,277 students over a total of 57 events. The number of students hosted has increased each year since the first post-COVID year of 2021-22, and this is the largest number of students that have been hosted since 2016-17. The 1,277 students hosted represents a 61% increase over the prior year and is almost 3 times the number of students hosted three years ago (2021-22).

- b. Continue to provide free employee lunches in campus venues.

- Free employee campus lunches were implemented in April 2025 with the distribution of 4 meal tickets to each employee.

- c. Promote mid-semester social events and seek to increase the number of academic departments participating during the year from 6 in 2023-24 to at least 8.

- Social events have been promoted to all the academic departments through the Deans and Chairs. For fall, nine departments submitted receipts and 569 students participated. For winter, eight departments submitted receipts and 464 students participated. With 11 different departments participating within the fiscal year, the goal was exceeded.

- d. Promote employee utilization of the "Give 'em the Pickle" funding to assist students.

- The university disbursed \$2,846.40 in "Give 'em the Pickle" funds in 2024-2025 to support student needs. This is more than twice the amount disbursed in the prior year, reflecting ongoing employee engagement with this initiative to enhance the student experience.

- e. Expand the Christmas Angel Tree initiative to wider student and employee participation.

- Increased promotion of the Christmas Angel Tree initiative led to greater employee participation and a 50% increase in the number of students assisted, rising from 50 to 75.

- f. Promote "Prayer on the Promenade" initiative the week before final exams each semester. Increase the interactions with students by having food items at each prayer location.

- "Prayer on the Promenade" took place on December 10, with 21 employees registered to facilitate the prayers. Both students and employees participated, fostering a supportive atmosphere during finals week. The winter semester event occurred on April 29, continuing this tradition of campus-wide prayer and encouragement.

2. Implement the following new initiatives on campus.

- + Since this task was assigned for years 2024-2029, the ad hoc task force is still considering whether or not to implement these initiatives, and if we are to implement them, how best to do it.
 - a. Encourage more employee attendance at weekly Thursday convocation.
 - b. Encourage campus-wide attendance at Thursday convocation during the Spiritual Weeks of Emphasis (this will provide an employee/student worship experience).
 - c. Encourage more employee attendance at vespers and student social programs.
 - d. Encourage employees to “host” Sabbath afternoon at the Bietz Center during the winter months (November through February).
 - e. Encourage “Mentoring in the Moment”/“Just-in-Time Mentoring” opportunities (Relationship Rich Education). The office of Ministry and Mission will provide a business card/bookmark sized “cheat sheet” that has possible conversation question suggestions, along with some instruction as to what this could look like on campus.
 - f. Give additional consideration to having an employee hosted potluck on campus one Sabbath lunch per semester (with perhaps the cafeteria providing a salad/haystack backup). This could be the Southern Family Fellowship meal or the Great Southern Potluck.

WAGE SCALE

SR VPs for Financial Administration and Academic Administration

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Adopt and implement equitable and market-based wage approach for positions identified as most out of line with similar positions at peer institutions.

1. Implement phase 3 of wage scale.

- + Phase 3 of wage scale adjustment was implemented on June 1, 2024.



OURALUMNI

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

VP for Advancement

- **Benchmark:** Increase alumni engagement with the university in three key areas: communication, experience, and volunteerism.

Overall	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
Alumni Engagement	11.5%	13.3%
Communication		
Interactive communication with alumni (phone calls, in -office visits).	1,000	1,786
Experiences		
Alumni engaged in Southern related events (homecoming, regional gatherings).	2,000	2,222
Volunteerism		
Alumni volunteering in University activities(guest speakers on campus, Lights Volunteers).	185	175

1. Launch an Alumni LifeGroup initiative with at least three active LifeGroups.

+ Initial efforts during the current year, 2024-2025, were unsuccessful but will be attempted once more in 2025-2026. The original plan to engage a former campus LifeGroup leader to launch the initiative did not materialize. In response, Alumni Relations and the Alumni Council are pursuing a revised strategy. A leadership kit is being developed to equip potential facilitators, with plans to recruit a dedicated leader—potentially from the Lights Volunteers network—to pilot the program. Once established, the goal is to expand the initiative into a series of organically formed alumni LifeGroups.

2. Lay the groundwork for a sustainable alumni-to-alumni and alumni-to-student mentoring program.

+ The objective has been completed with the development of supporting software infrastructure. Alumni Relations is now collaborating with graduating seniors and Career Services to implement and operationalize the mentoring program.

3. Reach 400 alumni users on our newly developed online community: The Promenade (which includes a business directory, alumni finder, lifestyle and education videos, and a mentoring platform).

+ This goal to reach 400 alumni users has not yet been met. Promenade was successfully secured and tested and officially launched during the fall Homecoming. There are currently 337 users registered.

4. Initiate alumni mission trips.

+ The alumni mission trip initiative is underway. Alumni Relations is partnering with a Southern Adventist University alum affiliated with Maranatha to plan the first alumni mission trip, scheduled for the 2025–2026 academic year.

OURCOMMUNITY

CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY OF CHOICE

VPs for Enrollment Management and Marketing and University Relations

► **Benchmark:** Increase awareness of Southern among local Adventist/non-Adventist educators and pastors.

1. Create a task force with the goal of hosting up to two ministerial annual meeting events on Southern's campus during the summer of 2025 in order to raise awareness from 30% (currently) to 35% (+40 new pastors with no SAU affinity) in year one.

+ The creation of a task force to host up to two annual ministerial meetings is currently on hold. Discussions are underway with several conferences to explore the possibility of either inviting Southern to participate in their ministerial gatherings or selecting Southern Adventist University as a host site. Once a conference confirms its interest, the task force will be established.

2. Distribute surveys pre and post events to determine efficacy of hosting annual ministerial and educational events.

+ Survey distribution is pending conference approval of Southern's attendance at, or selection as the host site for, upcoming ministerial and educational events. Once confirmation is received, pre- and post-event surveys will be administered to assess impact and effectiveness.

3. Assess survey data and increase/decrease frequency of events, if found impactful.

+ This initiative is currently on hold until an event is scheduled on Southern's campus. There will be an update in 2025-2026 as to the direction of hosting events.

4. Confirm Hamilton County annual educators visit in summer 2024 and provide programming to help raise awareness of Southern Adventist University.

+ Hamilton County annual educators chose a different venue in Summer 2024. There is currently no plan to host local educator visits on campus through the enrollment office at this time.

► **Benchmark:** Become a top 25% regional university in the South, as ranked by US News; be in the top 10 in social mobility of regional universities in the South, as ranked by US News.

In 2022, 2023, and 2024, Southern ranked #65, #49, and #41 among its peer group. In 2025, Southern Adventist University ranked #34 or 25% among the 135 regional universities in the South, meeting this benchmark for the first time. However, Southern is only ranked #75 among its peers in social mobility.

1. Assess whether or not peer assessment marker has been improved after increased promotion campaign to relevant institutional leaders and if the peer communication campaign should continue.

+ Peer assessment rank this year is actually the lowest it has been since 2016. Due to lack of improvement since this campaign was launched, we are considering whether the ROI is high enough to continue running the campaign. The VP of Marketing and University Relations has determined to give the peer communication one more year to see if the results improve.

2. Based on completed research into the factors that influence the rankings and on conversations with and information gathered from VPs, the VP for MUR will present to the president specific improvement recommendations for each factor influencing the rankings in which Southern is performing poorer than top 25%.

+ VP for Marketing & University Relations has met with the appropriate VPs but more meetings are still needed. There has been an issue that has been identified with the US News data. As of May, the US News team is still working to fix the problem.

► **Benchmark:** Increase Southern awareness through existing venues and events.

1. Complete promotion plans for WSMC and the School of Health and Kinesiology.

+ The development of comprehensive promotion plans for both WSMC and the School of Health and Kinesiology is currently in progress. A contracted freelancer has been engaged to complete this work, with final deliverables expected by the end of May. These plans will support strategic communication, increase visibility, and enhance outreach for both areas.

2. Complete research with School of Music, Village Market, and campus museums to determine how to bring better community awareness and build connections.

+ This has been moved to be completed in 2025-26.

► **Benchmark:** Target promotion campaign focused on the value of Adventist education and specifically a Southern education to Adventist teachers and pastors in the Southern Union.

1. Create and distribute a video highlighting the value of a Southern education that can be shared at Conference executive meetings and elsewhere.

+ Marketing and University Relations is working with an outside videographer who is scheduled to complete the project by the end of May.

2. Use the Marketing and University Relations Council to create an annual communication plan for pastors and teachers to highlight the importance of Adventist higher education and Southern Adventist University.

+ Responsibility for this initiative has been shifted to a contracted freelancer, who is currently developing the communication plan with a draft expected by the end of May. Completion of the project also depends on forthcoming national research regarding the value of Adventist education.

HERITAGE AND LEGACY

VP for Marketing and University Relations

► **Benchmark:** Improve and increase institutional focus on Southern's heritage through preservation of history, identification/creation of institutional traditions, and showcasing Southern's legacy.

1. Broadcast and disseminate the presidential legacy video.

+ Throughout the year, the presidential legacy video was shared with stakeholders in places such as the university colloquium meeting.

2. Complete and distribute to campus the environmental brand guidelines.

+ The policies of the new guide are awaiting approval by the campus Facilities Committee and, if approved, will move forward to printing and distribution.

3. Identify locations where institutional decisions and historic memory is being archived and determine if more is needed to create an actively known repository.

+ This did not get completed in 2024-2025, and will move to the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

4. Monitor campus usage of the mascot and create new tradition(s) around the bear.

- + The bear is receiving a lot of use by Enrollment for prospective students, but use is limited by the campus overall. Creating new tradition(s) is still ongoing. In 2025-26 brand guidelines will be created for making sure bear images are used consistently and in ways that protect and do not overtake the institution's official logo.

COMMUNITY EVENTS, GUEST SERVICES, AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

VP for Advancement

► **Benchmark:** Strategically align university mission and goals with six to eight on-campus and off-campus related events specifically related to fundraising.

1. Develop event orders process for on-campus events.

- + Event order software decision to be made in Quarter 2, 2025. The Director of Guest Services will present a banquet event order template to key campus stakeholders for feedback on its functionality and relevance. Based on their input, a decision will be made regarding the purchase of event management software.

2. Begin transition of Illuminate conference to academic departments.

- + Sub-committees were established with School of Music and School of Visual Art & Design (SVAD) to involve them more in the planning in 2024-2025. The VP for Advancement has discussed with both the SVAD dean and English department chair about a 2025-2026 operational transition.

3. Partner with School of Religion (archeology comb exhibit); School of Journalism and Communications (R. Lynn Sauls Lecture); Education, Psychology, and Counseling and Student Development (Schutte Family Lecture); Enrollment (NAD Teachers' and Pastors' meetings), and others as identified by the Community Engagement Committee for community events.

- + The Engagement Committee has worked with Marketing & University Relations to advertise the Comb Exhibit. The Engagement Committee worked closely with SJC on VIP attendees for the R. Lynn Sauls Lecture; and is engaged with local school counselors and community psychologists for the Shutte Family Lecture; NAD Pastor's meetings are not occurring this year.



OUR FACILITIES

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS FACILITY

SR VP for Financial Administration

► **Benchmark:** Build a new School of Business facility with funds raised.

1. Continue construction of the new School of Business building with a projected completion date of December 2025.

+ The updated projected completion date is June of 2026.

STUDENT HOUSING

SR VP for Financial Administration

► **Benchmark:** Construct new student housing as determined necessary based on enrollment projections.

The Board will review the need for additional student housing in its June 2025 meeting.

1. Construct 26 cottages on the hill behind Colcord Drive for student housing

+ The cottages are complete and students moved in in December 2024.

2. Construct 1 new Southern Village Apartment building (Building #11) to be ready for students fall of 2024.

+ One new Southern Village Apartment building was completed and students have moved in.

3. Construct 2 additional Southern Village Apartment buildings (Buildings #12 & 13) to be ready for students fall of 2025.

+ The 12th Southern Village building is in the process of being constructed and is expected to be ready for the start of the 2025-26 school year. Buildings 13 & 14 are on hold until enrollment can be analyzed for fall 2025.

4. Consider additional student housing needs in September 2024 based on fall 2024 enrollment and recently completed student housing costs. Present a plan to the Board of Trustees for approval if deemed necessary.

+ The plan for student housing was presented and voted by the Board of Trustees at the October 6 meeting.

5. Design and determine a location for a social gathering and storage building for the cottages development

+ This is currently being considered by the Facilities Committee. One location being considered is going into the hill near the parking lot by WSMC. The university architect has created an initial design of this building for consideration by administration and the board Facilities Committee.

BUILDING SPACE UTILIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

SR VP for Financial Administration

- **Benchmark:** Maximize building backfill opportunities of vacancies created by the Bietz Center for Student Life, the new Spanish-American Church, a new School of Business building, and the Collegedale Academy elementary school building.

1. Renovate the dining hall (paint, carpet, lighting, furnishings).

+ The dining hall received new paint, lighting and furnishings prior to the beginning of the fall semester, and new carpet was installed during the Christmas break.

2. Continue Miller Hall renovation for Nursing Simulation Lab with a target completion date of summer 2025.

+ Miller Hall renovations are ongoing and on target for the summer 2025 completion.

3. Complete Phase 2 of Lynn Wood Hall renovation for use by Engineering (second floor offices and hallway).

+ Phase 2 of Lynn Wood Hall was completed in August prior to the fall semester.

4. Construct new restrooms on the 4th floor of Wright Hall.

+ Construction of new restrooms is on hold until next fiscal year 2025-2026.

5. Determine the best use for the old SuCasa Spanish-American Church building and design use of the space based on agreed upon usage.

+ Currently this building is being leased to the High Point Chinese Church. Administration is reviewing space needs for potential future uses.

6. Determine best use of the current Collegedale Academy Elementary School building and design the space accordingly.

+ Administration has determined the best use of the Collegedale Academy Elementary School building in early December. Plans are under development for renovations.

BEAUTIFUL AND SAFE CAMPUS

SR VP for Financial Administration

- **Benchmark:** Maintain a beautiful and safe campus

1. Repair Jones Drive in summer 2025 to include the addition of parking spaces.

+ The current plan is to reinforce Jones Drive during the 2025–2026 academic year. Due to the high cost and the potential for significant parking disruptions, plans to expand parking in this area have been postponed indefinitely.

2. Extend and pave WSMC parking lot.

+ The engineering design for this lot has been completed. Efforts are underway to receive bids for the project, which includes paving, curbs, storm drainage, landscaping, and lighting. Due to capital funding limitations, this project has been deferred to a future year.

3. Continue expanding outdoor LED lighting and installation of SALTO locks.

- + All 389 Post top lights on campus have been converted to LED as well as 90% of all parking lot lights. Currently, replacing the remaining parking lot lights have started. Additionally, replacing the building wall pack lights have started. Expected completion of the project will occur before classes begin in fall 2025.

4. Complete the remainder of campus beautification projects over multiple years in accordance with administrative priorities.

- + Campus Beautification projects will be an ongoing process as determined by administration.

5. Develop plans for continued campus beautification projects.

- + Plans for continued beautification projects will be an ongoing process as determined by administration.

UNIVERSITY HEALTH CENTER

SR VP for Financial Administration

► **Benchmark:** University Health Center (UHC) will be located on campus at a venue more convenient to students and employees.

1. Determine the best location for the UHC and begin design.

- + This continues to be under consideration.



OURFINANCES

CASH ON HAND

SR VP for Financial Administration

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Obtain at least 135 days of cash on hand in the next five years, dependent on enrollment, changes in expenses, and capital allocations. The long-term target is 180 days.

	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
Days Cash on Hand (by end of FY)	102	110

DEBT

SR VP for Financial Administration

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Reduce the university's long-term debt more quickly than the current 20-year payment schedule by increasing the principal being paid once days cash on hand reaches 120 days.

	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
Debt Balance (beginning of year)	\$12,245,000	\$12,202,435
Additional Debt	\$13,500,000	\$14,000,000
SURF Interest Added to Principal	\$847,500	0
Annual Principal Payments	\$235,261	\$367,427
Additional Debt Payments	0	0
Ending Balance	\$26,357,239	\$25,835,008

+ This benchmark is still on target for the debt projections reflected above.

ENDOWMENT

SR VP for Financial Administration

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Grow endowment to over \$79 million—based on \$7.5 million in contributions and 2% net annual investment growth (after distributions).

	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
Beginning Balance	\$64,734,045	\$59,946,191*
Funds Raised	\$1,500,000	\$3,164,131
Growth (2% net)	\$1,294,681	\$1,608,342
Total Increase	\$2,794,681	\$4,772,473
Ending Balance	\$67,528,726	64,718,664*

* This amount was reduced by removing The Long Term Reserve Fund from the endowment, which totaled \$4,787,855.

COMPOSITE FINANCIAL INDEX

SR VP for Financial Administration

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Build the CFI to greater than 5 and then maintain it at greater than 5 each year thereafter.

	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
CFI at year end	>3.5	5.45

+ We are on track to exceed this benchmark.

DONATION INCOME

SR VP for Financial Administration

- ▶ **Benchmark:** Increase donated income into four channels: annual, capital, endowed, and planned.

1. Involve Advancement Committee in active solicitation of inactive alumni donors.

+ The Advancement Committee raised \$8,780 from 22 alumni donors during April's Giving Day. This was compared to six gifts and \$2,650 raised last year. The response rate was 17%.

2. Initiate directed endowment campaign.

- + A website was created and a mailer sent out to key groups who may be interested in establishing an endowment. An impact report on existing endowments has been sent two years in a row. New endowments and dollars given to endowments are over budget goals (see table).

3. Investigate growth fund as a quasi-endowment initiative.

- + The Advancement Committee and administration are supportive of the idea. Operational steps will need to be developed for next steps. The term "quasi-endowment" has recently been vetted and will not be used.

4. Purchase and integrate personalized thank-you video software into giving communications.

- + The software has been purchased and successfully integrated with thank-you and birthday call campaigns. To date, 1,791 videos have been viewed, with an impressive email open rate of 94%.

5. Define needs and organizational partnerships for church organ renovation.

- + The project has been rescheduled for the 2025–2026 academic year, as the final funding amount is still being determined. In the meantime, a donor is working in collaboration with the Office of Advancement, the School of Music, and the professor of organ to produce a video series. This series will highlight the organ's story and historical significance, and is intended to help raise funds in anticipation of the instrument's 40th anniversary in 2026.

Annual and Total Giving	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
Total Number of Donors (2%↑)	3,553	3,716
Total Amount Given	\$10M	\$14,434,036
Number of Alumni Giving	1,431	1,351
Percentage of Board Giving	100%	84%
Percentage of Employees Giving	70%	63%

Capital	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
School of Business (\$24M)	\$1.5M	\$6,142,392
School of Engineering (\$3.5M)	\$500K	\$433,754
School of Nursing (\$2.5M)	\$1M	\$238,293
Cafeteria	\$300K	\$0
Elementary School Renovation	Planning	Obtaining estimates
Organ Rehabilitation (\$1.2M)	Planning	Fundraising video planning in progress.

Endowments	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
New Endowments	5	6
Donations to Endowments	1,500,000	\$3,279,063

Planned Giving	2024-2025 Goal	2024-2025 Actual
New Legacy Society Members	17	15

FOUNDATIONS AND GRANTS

VP for Academic Advancement

- **Benchmark:** Complete 14-16 federal and private grant dollars funding campus initiatives annually.
The number of grant applications was 7.

1. Establish year-out process for upcoming federal grants with principal internal stakeholders.

- + The year-out planning process has been established, allowing the office to take a more proactive approach in preparing for upcoming grants. Internal stakeholders have also become more familiar with the grant process and its associated requirements. The contract with McAllister and Quinn has been renewed for an additional two years. In addition, a formal policy has been completed to guide the use of the negotiated indirect cost rate.

2. Obtain federal negotiated rate.

- + The indirect cost rate was finalized at 40% and officially completed in August 2024.

3. Investigate related workload buy-out for principal investigators.

- + This task has been completed. Compensation has been addressed within the negotiated indirect cost rate policy.

4. Develop stewardship process for Foundation portfolio.

- + The Vice President for Advancement reviewed and updated the portfolio in collaboration with the Associate Director for Strategic Partnerships.

Grants	2024-2025 Grant Numbers
Federal Grant Dollars Raised DHSI (\$3M 2023-2027) IUSE (\$200K 2024-2026) PPOHA (\$3M applied May 2024)	\$600K annual award allocation \$67K annual award allocation Application declined
Federal Grant Dollars (Applied For) TRIO (\$1.3 applied July 2024) NSF (\$1.9 applied March 2025)	Pending decision in June 2025 Pending decision
Federal Grants Dollars (to apply for in 2025) HRSA NWD HRSA SDS	Both HRSA grants were initially considered but campus goals and consultants' time were more useful for other grant projects (TRIO, NSF) this fiscal year.
Non Federal Grant Dollars Raised	\$1,748,000 with a goal of \$300,000.



