



**HEWLETT FOUNDATION AWARDS RILEY
INSTITUTE AT FURMAN ADDITIONAL \$400,000
TO SUPPORT PUBLIC EDUCATION STUDY**

Grant brings total funding for Furman project to \$1 million

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GREENVILLE, S.C.—The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation has awarded the Riley Institute at Furman University a \$400,000 grant to support its continuing research and policy programming on public education in South Carolina.

The Foundation gave the Riley Institute a \$600,000 grant in 2005 to fund an 18-month study of public education that was unveiled last fall. The newest grant will support additional research that focuses on linking the best practices in education to the findings from the first Riley Institute study.

“Our initial study of public education in the state told us what South Carolinians want in a public education system for their children,” said Don Gordon, director of the Riley Institute at Furman. “The second grant will allow us to link their ideas with the most effective and highly validated best practices in South Carolina and beyond. Policy makers will know not only what our citizens want for our students, but also the best and most efficient ways to get there.”

Gordon said that researchers will highlight programs that are currently working in South Carolina as well as study other regional success stories in public education.

The original Hewlett grant funded what many have called the largest systematic research study of public education ever conducted in South Carolina. The study, involving every county and school district in the state, found a great deal of consensus for a large number of initiatives,

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including emphases on early childhood education, the need to ensure high quality teachers in every classroom, increasing availability of after-school programming, and expanding the number of students who graduate from high school.

More than 1,000 people participated in the original study, including business leaders, parents, students, school board members, teachers of all levels, superintendents, and principals from every county and school district. In addition to answering a 160-item questionnaire, the stakeholders participated in lengthy focus group discussions.

The studies are being conducted by the Riley Institute's Center for Education Policy and Leadership under the direction of Dr. Brooke Culclasure.

The California-based foundation, which has been making grants since 1967 to help solve social and environmental problems at home and around the world, concentrates its resources on activities in education, the environment, global development, performing arts, philanthropy and population.

Findings of the research made possible by the first Hewlett grant can be found at www.rileyinstitute.org/cepl. Furman's original news release can be accessed at <http://www.furman.edu/press/pressarchive.cfm?ID=4063>.

For more information, contact Furman's News and Media Relations office at 864-294-3107.

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