

University to welcome Hollingsworth Scholars

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Keep an eye out for fresh faces this weekend. A select group of incoming freshman will be on campus for the Riley Institute's inaugural South Carolina United conference. The students, members of the second class of Hollingsworth Scholars, may just be the future leaders of South Carolina.

South Carolina United offers the incoming Hollingsworth Scholars three days of lectures, leadership training and small group discussions on current political issues. The agenda includes seminars with University President David Shi, former Vice President of Coca-Cola Juan Johnson and several university professors.

Over the course of the weekend, the students will work in small groups to develop action plans for change. They will also take time out for a scavenger hunt on campus and for dinner and ice cream in downtown Greenville. At the end of the weekend, they will have the option of participating in a Summer Outdoor Experience trip with other members of the Class of 2011.

The Hollingsworth Scholarship, named for the late Greenville businessman and former Furman student John D. Hollingsworth, Jr., offers 20 South Carolina students in each class a \$25,000 annual scholarship to attend Furman. The first 20 scholarships were awarded in the 2006-2007 school year. In addition to the annual scholarship, the Hollingsworth program offers a \$1,000 study abroad stipend, a guaranteed summer internship or research position, and the opportunity to meet state and national leaders through the Hollingsworth Seminars.

Director of Admissions Woody O'Cain says the program's goal is "not to separate [the Hollingsworth Scholars] from the other students." Rather, he says, it should offer "opportunities to get together as a group to experience things that are significant and related to South Carolina."

The program is off to a strong start if the first class of scholars is any indication. In his freshman year, scholar Quentin James founded a Furman chapter of the NAACP, worked for the Barack Obama campaign and helped initiate South Carolina United. James describes the mission of South Carolina United: "By allowing young leaders to come together, engage in dialogue with other concerned and engaged peers, and develop action steps to make a difference now, South Carolina can begin to reap the benefits of a united effort for change."

Another member of the inaugural class of Hollingsworth Scholars, Clarissa Graham, is spending the summer in Ghana, Africa, where she is working with the Institute for Field Research Expeditions to help families affected by HIV/AIDS.

According to Coordinator of Admissions Services Mary Hearne, the Hollingsworth program aims to teach students to give back to their communities just as John D. Hollingsworth gave back to Furman, Greenville and all of South Carolina.