



# Money Matters

by Marjorie Susens

At the beginning of this school year, Andrews University implemented a scholarship program that will inevitably have a profound impact on both current and future student populations. Called the Andrews Partnership Scholarship, the program rewards incoming and returning undergraduate students with a scholarship based on their academic achievement. The Andrews Partnership Scholarship is an ambitious effort by Andrews to overtly invest more funds in capable students, and to offer a more consistent scholarship package for all students.

The significance of the scholarship program's name is not lost on Jerri Gifford, director of Student Financial Services. Gifford believes the name suggests that "Andrews desires to partner with students and families to make an Adventist education at Andrews University affordable. Each of our students is important," she explains, "and we are making a conscious effort to recognize student achievement with monetary rewards."

And those rewards are substantial. Freshmen scholarship amounts are based on

a formula which computes both high school Grade Point Average (GPA) and ACT or SAT results to designate the student's overall "academic rating." Students do not have to apply for the scholarship, because it is automatically awarded once the GPA and test scores have been received. The academic rating is then used to determine how much money will be awarded. Ratings below 60

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receive \$1,000 per year; ratings of 60-74 receive \$3,000 per year; ratings of 75-84 receive \$4,000 per year; and ratings of 85 and higher receive \$6,000 per year, for a total of up to \$24,000 over four years. This year's freshman class, and subsequent incoming classes, will be eligible for these amounts each year they attend Andrews.

The Andrews Partnership Scholarship also encourages returning students to maintain good academic performance during their time at Andrews University. Continuing students from last year—sophomores, juniors

and seniors—are eligible for slightly smaller scholarships. Scholarships for these students range from \$1,500 to \$4,000, depending on the student's GPA. A cumulative GPA of 2.50 to 2.99 nets \$1,500; 3.00 to 3.49 brings in \$3,000; and 3.50 and up pulls in \$4,000. Ultimately, these smaller scholarships will be phased out as these continuing students graduate and are replaced by students who have entered the university after the inception of the scholarship program. Thus, future classes, following this year's freshmen, will be eligible for the full \$6,000 amount.

GPA-based scholarships potentially benefit a broader spectrum of students than do scholarships based entirely on high standardized test scores. They reward those who work hard scholastically and maintain high grades, while removing the stress of competing for a top percentile rank on a particular test. Through the Andrews Partnership Scholarship, students who may have been unable to enjoy the benefits of scholarship funds based solely on high ACT or SAT scores can now receive monetary recognition for their scholastic achievements.

While high ideals of learning are obviously

the goals of any university, Andrews officials anticipate that monetary rewards for good academic performance will likely inspire further and even more commendable academic achievements among the student population.

When asked why the university implemented the Andrews Partnership Scholarship, Stephen Payne, vice president for Enrollment Management, said, "[W]e felt that we wanted to significantly increase the amount of money we invested in our undergraduate students . . . by focusing both on need and academic achievement."

The University's goal was to add between \$1 million and \$1.5 million in financial aid for undergraduate students. And, although other factors may have been involved, the availability of the Andrews Partnership Scholarship has been a primary contributor to the 18% increase in freshman enrollment. "The scholarships are offered over nine semesters for our entering freshmen," noted Payne. A significant scholarship which will likely span a student's entire undergraduate career at Andrews is doubtless a major drawing card for freshmen who choose to attend.

And, indeed, the scholarship program has affected the choices of many students who

selected Andrews for their undergraduate program. When asked if any students who were previously unable to attend Andrews were now able to due to the implementation of

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the scholarship, Payne answered with a hearty affirmative. "On an anecdotal level," he said, "I know several parents have told Dr. Andreasen that this new program has helped make Andrews University affordable for their family." President Andreasen concurs with Payne concerning the crucial impact of the scholarship program. "That is why we instituted it," explains Andreasen. "It is our promise to make Andrews University affordable from the freshman through the senior year."

Gifford also believes the Andrews

Partnership Scholarship has really succeeded in helping students and families pay for the cost of their education. "For many years," says Gifford, "I have listened to parents ineligible for federal financial aid express the desire that 'something' be available to their student to help make an Adventist education affordable. [Now Andrews] provides a tangible solution."

Freshmen themselves also expressed appreciation for the Andrews Partnership Scholarship. When asked how she felt about the scholarship, Katie McDermot, freshman marketing major said, "[T]he money that I received definitely influenced my college decision. Andrews was offering me more per year than other colleges were offering me in total for four years. The scholarship was very helpful."

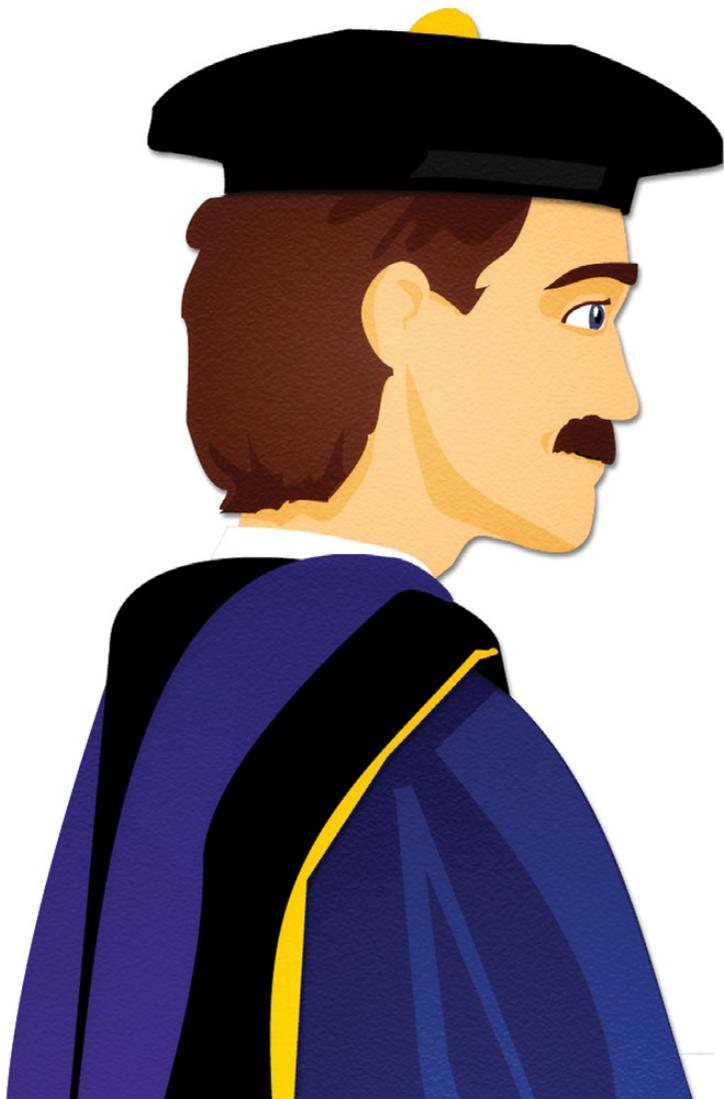
Similarly, Jolene Birney, freshman pre-veterinary major said, "I am very thankful to the Andrews Partnership Scholarship. Even though I had good grades in high school, I didn't get a lot of scholarships, so this scholarship from Andrews was a blessing." She said that although it didn't directly influence her decision to attend Andrews, it did contribute to "mak[ing my] time here at Andrews a little less stressful."

Dr. Malcolm Russell, professor of economics and director of the Society of Andrews Scholars, is also enthusiastic about the new program. Its implementation, combined with a redesigned honors curriculum, resulted in 80 first-year students seeking acceptance into the honors program. "It's a very positive change," Russell noted, "assuming that the university seeks to have the best possible students enrolled. The new policy encouraged last year's freshman to return if they'd done well."

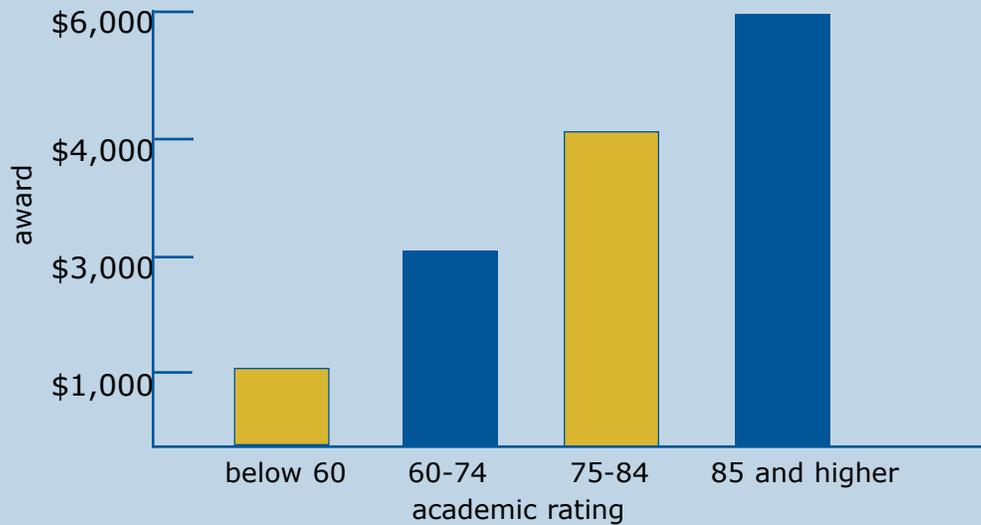
While some students were grateful and enthusiastic about the scholarship, some continuing students expressed confusion as to whether or not it was helping them. Mindy Berlin, senior English major, said she was fairly certain the new scholarship raised her financial aid a little, but she noticed that she had lost other scholarships because of it. She thought it would be nice to get the Andrews Partnership Scholarship in addition to other scholarship money.

Tony Wuerfel, senior theology major, expressed similar sentiments. "Instead of giving me four quarters," he said, "they're giving me a dollar. It's helped me, but I feel like it's not benefiting me a lot."

In response to a question on this particular point, Payne said that although he had not yet formulated statistical evidence, he was fairly certain that the average student had experienced an increase in their financial aid. However, since scholarships were "previously given on more of a 'menu'



## Andrews Partnership Scholarship Awards



### What are the yearly awards?

Entering freshman can estimate their academic rating using the following formula:

$$\text{Academic rating} = (A + B \text{ or } C) / 2$$

A = High School GPA  $\times$  25

B = ACT Composite  $\times$  2.7777

C = SAT Total / 16

The university will issue an official academic rating for transfer students based on their cumulative GPA for all college work for an award of up to \$4,000 per year.

approach," and were now bundled in a package, some students may have appeared to lose money.

The university's intent was certainly not to decrease the scholarship packages of their students. In fact, the new scholarship program provides an overall increase in aid, targeting incoming freshmen in particular. "Our main goal," said Payne, "was to try to be consistent in the aid we gave out...to, in essence, offer the best package price (scholarship package) up front."

Inevitably, changes in the scholarship packages mean that some continuing students receive more aid than they did previously and others receive less than before. Payne did note, however, that "the \$1 million increase [in scholarship funds] was above and beyond scholarship dollars already being awarded."

While the Andrews Partnership Scholarship obviously offers many benefits to the undergraduate student population, Payne also expressed a desire to include graduate students in future financial aid package updates. Although not part of this initial scholarship plan, graduate student scholarship needs will be assessed and their aid will be modified in the future. "They are an important part of our campus too," noted Payne, "and I think we'll need to work as a university to find creative ways to increase the aid available to these students."

The University is obviously very serious about its scholarship goals. The Partnership Scholarship has affected not only students at Andrews, but the overall operation of the university as well. Because the university has directed \$1 million to \$1.5 million toward undergraduate student aid, many programs

on campus have had to reduce their budgets, resulting in a campus-wide tightening of finances. With increased enrollment due to increased potential aid, however, the sacrifice appears to be a positive one.

According to Payne, the future looks bright for the Andrews Partnership Scholarship, "I think we'll want to be sure to continue to focus not only on the academic strength of

our students, but also their financial needs." And really, focusing on student needs—spiritual, mental, moral, physical, and now financial—is what Andrews University is, and should be, all about.

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