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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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SUNO Student and Faculty Housing construction brings promise of economic development Additional projects heighten anticipation of Lake Campus development



SUNO SGA President, Aaron DeGruy (red shirt), chats with (l. to r.) SGA member, Darryl Phillips, Dr. Victor Ukpolo, Ernest "Chip" Verges, II (VergesRome Architects) and Miss SUNO Jakia Clay about the Student and Faculty Housing project.



Framing for the residential complex

NEW ORLEANS, LA. – Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) is looking forward to its campus expansion and creating an economic impact on the community as construction has begun on its Student and Faculty Housing facility. Not long after its June 26, 2008 ground breaking on the Lake Campus, crews arrived on the 17-acre campus to prepare the grounds for construction. Within weeks an air of excitement was created around New Orleans' only public historically black university when frames for the housing started to rise from the lakefront soil.

What excites SUNO, its alumni and supporters the most is that the project is creating economic opportunities for many in the area. VergesRome Architects did the design, and Walton Construction Company, LLC won the construction bid. A majority of the subcontractors and workers bringing the 700-bed project are from South Louisiana.

Tom Reeves, senior Vice President of Operations of Walton Construction Company, LLC comments, "Walton Construction is extremely pleased to be the selected contractor to build this historic project. Being a local construction company, our employees shared the evacuation, return, and recovery struggles that were experienced by everyone. We realized very early that

we had the opportunity to make New Orleans better, and we consider this dormitory project to be a cornerstone of that improvement. We share in SUNO's vision of an improved educational experience and of a better New Orleans."

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The university's enthusiasm was also affirmed by VergesRome. Stopping by for a visit to the construction site on Friday, December 19th, Ernest "Chip" Verges, II commented, "Construction is moving along. The weather is cooperating, so the first phase of building is shaping up nicely. We're looking at the beginning of August (2009) to have the first phase, including the activity building completed."

Verges also compliments SUNO for the location of the facility. "The students are going to have a great view from third floor where one side will be able to see the lake (Pontchartrain) and the other will be able to view the (New Orleans) skyline," he says. "The levee is a great place because of the view."

Dr. Victor Ukpolo, Chancellor of SUNO, cannot contain his excitement about what SUNO Student and Faculty Housing means to the area. "This means many things but most of all SUNO is proud to contribute as a major economic driver with this project," he says. "With a facility that could provide a \$44 million impact on the area our residents will bring new economic life to the area." The facility will be completed in stages with the first stage expected to be completed by fall 2009 and the last phase expected to be completed by fall 2010.

Aaron DeGruy (deh-GROO), President of SUNO's Student Government Association, looks forward to the completion of the project with great anticipation. "We're excited about the progress of our Student and Faculty Housing and we believe this creates a bright future for Southern University at New Orleans," he says. "Being a residential campus really enables us to expand our recruiting efforts, and it lifts the morale of the student body."



Rendering of SUNO's Information Technology Center

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Development of SUNO's Student and Faculty Housing has also created a wealth of anticipation in the surrounding community. Both the Pontilly and Pontchartrain Park neighborhood groups have tightened their relationships with the university.

Victor Gordon, President of the Pontilly Neighborhood Association hopes that the project will spark more growth in the area. "We support SUNO's efforts to develop its Lake Campus and we're hoping that the community grows as SUNO grows."

The excitement hardly stops there for SUNO, which will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of its opening in 2009. A rendering of yet another new construction project, Information Technology Center, has been created by Chenevert Architects. "I was truly pleased when I saw this rendering," says Ukpolo. "The development of our Lake Campus is coming together in a way our students, alumni and friends have always dreamed of." The projected completion of the Information Technology Center is late 2009.

The university is also working on the development of the building for the College of Business and Public Administration. The project is currently at the design phase, and it should be completed by the summer of 2010.

END