

HURRICANE

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Sunday. "It was mostly just Saturday," she said, describing the flow of students into their apartments and dorms. She added that there really hadn't been very much confusion.

Grace Bowls, a first-year journalism student, said that although she had moved into her room in Laborde on Saturday, her roommate hadn't come until Sunday. "My mom and dad saw the warnings," she said. "They called the university and asked, so I knew I was supposed to move in."

She said that most of the students had recognized that the hurricane had missed South Carolina and moved in on the same day and that there hadn't really been any problems for the ones who arrived later.

Reuters reported that as of Thursday the death toll from Charley in Florida was up to 23, and that as many as two million residents had been without power immediately after the storm had hit with the strongest winds of any hurricane in over a decade.

As of Friday night, the national weather service had projected the storm to strike the coast of South Carolina, but it missed the state almost completely.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecocknews@gwm.sc.edu

Despite millions in budget cuts, Sorensen remains optimistic

By **LaDONNA BEEKER**
THE GAMECOCK

USC President Andrew Sorensen reviewed USC in his 2004 president's report as a university looking for opportunity to overcome financial challenges despite budget cuts.

Within a two-year period, USC has lost about \$65 million in state funding, said Russ McKinney, USC spokesman. Many students noticed the rise in their tuition for this semester and some wonder where that money goes, since it was making up for some of the funding not received from the state.

More than 90 percent of the tuition goes toward faculty salaries, research and anything students need to complete their education, McKinney said. The rest goes toward projects on campus, such as the plans for new research building. The money USC does not receive from student tuition comes from private support.

"Last year, USC received more than \$53 million in private support, a level of funding that nearly doubles the university's average annual private support from a decade ago," Sorensen said. A large portion of the funding came from the level of sponsorship created during the \$500 million

Bicentennial Campaign and USC alumna Darla Moore's \$45 million gift to the Moore School of Business, Sorensen said.

Sorensen's report also broke down the improvements that occurred within USC this past year. These improvements included one phase of the Russell House renovations by making over the bookstore and the Grand Marketplace. SodexHo, USC's food services partner, funded \$13 million of the project and will continue to upgrade the dining facilities and equipment as stated in a 15-year contract with USC. Barnes and Noble negotiated funding with USC to upgrade the bookstore.

Other improvements include 15 houses in the Greek Village, which were built and paid for by national fraternity and sorority organizations; West Quad; Strom Thurmond Wellness & Fitness Center and the Colonial Center, which sold about 217,000 tickets and ranked 22nd worldwide in PollStar Magazine, Sorensen said. Academically, Sorensen said "our greatest pride is in this fact: student persistence at USC from the freshman to sophomore years is now 84 percent, compared to a 72-77 percent persistence rate nationally." Last year's freshmen

class was "the most academically accomplished in the University's history," he said.

Some of these students might have chosen to attend USC because of the Educational Foundation, which provided \$5.5 million in scholarships and fellowship funds to more than 1,600 students, also a total of \$14 million was given to support the University, said Susie VanHuss, University Foundation executive director, in the president's report. Funding also comes from the Alumni Association, Business Partnership Foundation and the Development Foundation.

"We are actively engaged in establishing partnerships with private sector industries and businesses that will be mutually beneficial and, in several instances, enhance the state's economic development," Sorensen said. "These partnerships, which will involve the University's Development and Educational Foundations, will allow the university to build new research facilities and broaden our research faculty base without public monies."

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USC creates visual communications major

By **Z'ANNE COVELL**
THE GAMECOCK

After a 2002 survey showed 25 percent of USC journalism students were interested in visual communications, the School of Journalism and Mass Communications is offering a degree program for photojournalism and graphic design students.

The major merges photojournalism and design to satisfy students in the creative and

visual sides of journalism, advertising and public relations program chairman Van Kornegay said.

"Before students would major in something that was in the ball park but was not exactly what they wanted," Kornegay said. "Students will no longer be in classes they don't really want to be in."

Like all journalism majors, visual communications has 90 hours of liberal arts courses and 36 hours of journalism courses. But 18 hours of the journalism portion focus on visual communications

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areas, such as photojournalism, graphic design, informational graphics and Web design.

Kornegay said visual communications students are required to create a portfolio of their work to present to a faculty panel for review before they graduate.

The idea for a concentrated visual communications study originated with the visual area teachers, who believed a demand

for such training existed among students, Kornegay said.

"I wanted a major that would allow me to do the things I love, but also teach me to be financially successful at what I love," said April Adams, a third-year student who switched her major from advertising to visual communications.

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