

## Students rank St. Andrews highly in National Survey of Student Engagement

From: Staff Reports

Findings from a national survey show that taking part in certain activities during college boosts students' performance in many areas, such as thinking critically, solving real world problems, and working effectively with others. These "high-impact" activities include learning communities, undergraduate research, study abroad, internships and capstone projects.

These findings in the 2007 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) support the learning environment created by St. Andrews Presbyterian College. According to the survey results, by their senior year, 72 percent of students have participated in some form of practicum, internship, field experience, co-op or clinical assignment. Community service or volunteer work is also completed by 61 percent of seniors.

"We are intentionally committed to developing the entire student, intellectually, socially, and spiritually, and we have a special emphasis on teaching our students how to think critically and analytically," said President Paul Baldasare Jr. "We are pleased to note from the results of the survey that our achievements with our students are exceptionally good."

In fact, 82 percent of seniors and 85 percent of first-year students credit St. Andrews with helping them think critically and analytically on a frequent basis.

The 2007 report from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is based on information from about 313,000 randomly selected first-year and senior students at 610 four-year colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada. The NSSE study, titled "Experiences That Matter: Enhancing Student Learning and Success," gives schools an idea of how well their students are learning and what they put into and get out of their undergraduate experience.

Now in its eighth year, the survey findings annually provide comparative standards for

determining how effectively colleges are contributing to learning. Five key areas of educational performance are measured: 1) level of academic challenge, 2) active and collaborative learning, 3) student-faculty interaction, 4) enriching educational experiences, and 5) supportive campus environment. This is the fourth year St. Andrews has participated in the survey.

"These national surveys are important to St. Andrews because they show how highly our students value their educational experience and they allow us to compare our performance with other institutions," Baldasare said.

For St. Andrews, the educational experience marks are high. In ranking the quality of academic advising, 88 percent of first-year students and 93 percent of seniors responded with a rating of good or excellent. The entire educational experience was rated good or excellent by 84 percent of first-year students and 86 percent of seniors.

Additional positive ratings include:

☐ 76 percent of seniors said the institution substantially encourages contacts among diverse peers while 68 percent of first-year students said the same.

☐ 72 percent of seniors tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his/her perspective often.

☐ 72 percent of seniors learned something that changed the way they understand an issue or concept on a frequent basis.

☐ 71 percent of seniors and 66 percent of first-year students said the institution emphasized studying and academic work.

☐ 84 percent of first-year students report a favorable image of the college while 66 percent of seniors would choose this school again if they could start their college career over.

"NSSE is an institution's most trustworthy lens for seeing deeply into the quality

of students' experiences because its results can translate directly into plans for action and reform and transformative strategies," says Lee S. Shulman, president of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

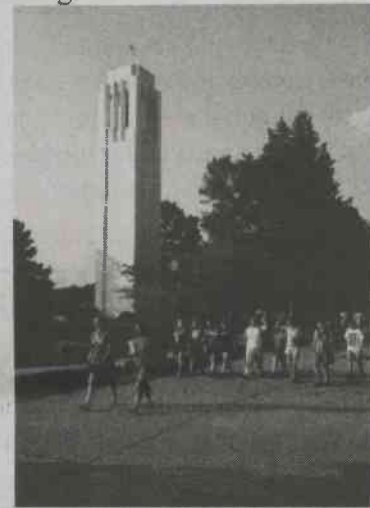
St. Andrews has also received recognition from U.S. News & World Report as one of the nation's top liberal arts colleges. The Princeton Review included St. Andrews in its list of top ranked colleges. St. Andrews was one of 201 liberal arts colleges named to The Washington Monthly list of outstanding schools.

About NSSE:

The National Survey of Student Engagement documents dimensions of quality in undergraduate education and provides information and assistance to colleges, universities and other organizations to improve student learning.

Its primary activity is annually surveying college students to assess the extent to which they engage in educational practices associated with high levels of learning and development.

The NSSE 2007 Report is sponsored by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching



St. Andrews students walking across the lake. Photo courtesy of Rooney Coffman.

## Vardell Gallery to host landscape artist Andy Jones' exhibit

Feb. 12 – March 17

From: Staff Reports

Laurinburg, N.C. - Raleigh native and St. Andrews Presbyterian College graduate Andy Jones will return to his alma mater with the "Selected Works" exhibit beginning Feb. 12 in the Vardell Gallery.

"The paintings are studio and field works in oil and watercolor based on my response to the landscape," said Jones. "The studio allows for size and details while the field demands simplicity. One serves the other for me in these two different approaches."

A review published of his "New England Paintings 1990-2005" exhibit at the Atrium Gallery in Danielson, Conn., praises that response to landscape.

"Jones has a southerner's propensity for the land and the landscape, and love for narrative," said Marion M. Callis, coordinator of gallery and museum services at Eastern Connecticut State University. "With an outdoorsman's instincts, enviable patience, and subtle command, he carves out and defines the space: within that space, he tells a new, old story. The traditional, informal, southern vernacular is perhaps compulsory. One senses the presence of humans, but does not see them."

Such high praise of his work has not prevented Jones from continuing to evolve in his artistic methods.

"Until recently, I used about the same

approach for fieldwork that I used in studio painting," he said. "Whether done inside, outside, or a combination of the two, I wanted all the paintings to be naturalistic, have strong compositions, involved textures, a range of colors, good paint quality, solid form, subtle value changes, space, everything, all of the elements of visual art used in every piece. I came to realize, out of exhaustion, that I could work on location with a limited palette, minimal supplies, simplified subject matter and produce consistent paintings. It was a revelation to me that the two ways of working did not have to look the same in style. I now think of these two approaches as separate and have a much better time with both of them."

With 28 years of art show experience, Jones returns for his second show at St. Andrews.

His exhibitions have been held in Connecticut, California, Maine, North Carolina, New York, Louisiana, Texas and Indiana.

In 2001, Jones received an Award in Recognition of Excellence in Creative and Scholarly Activity at Eastern Connecticut State University. He received a Connecticut General Assembly

Official Citation for winning the competition to design the New Commemorative Quarter for the State of Connecticut in 1998.

He earned back-to-back First Place Purchase Awards at the Annual Maine Maritime Exhibition on Presque Isle in 1993 and 1994.

Jones graduated from St. Andrews in 1980 with a degree in studio art painting and printmaking. He continued his education at Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, La., where he received his MFA in studio art painting and print making. Currently an assistant professor of art at Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic, Conn., his previous teaching experience includes time at Quinebaug Valley Community College, Danielson, Three Rivers Community College, Fayetteville Museum of Art, St. Andrews and Louisiana Tech University. He also spent time as a graphic/industrial designer at Ingraham Time Products, Toastmaster, Inc.

An elected member of the Connecticut Plein Air Society and the Connecticut Academy of Fine Arts, he also serves on the College Art Association, Windham Regional Arts Council, Quiet Corner Artist's Group, and several other art related boards.

"Selected Works" will run through March 17, ending with a closing reception in the Vardell Gallery from 7 – 8 p.m. The Gallery is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There is no cost to view the exhibit.