

Student Leadership Institute: An Experience to Remember

(Rev. Nathan Attwood) - Twenty-seven high school students from congregations throughout the Alabama-West Florida Conference recently participated in the first-ever Student Leadership Institute at Huntingdon College. These students were nominated and received scholarships from their home churches or districts because of the have been recognized as emerging student leaders.



Students were challenged to discern God's call upon their lives and to apply Christian leadership in every area of their lives. John Schmidt of Frazer Memorial UMC offered the opening session. Each morning began with personal prayer and devotions followed by teaching sessions from Huntingdon's religion faculty.

Special speakers included television personality Sofia Lindskog Dickens (formerly of Jeopardy and Channel One News), Toby Roth (former Chief of Staff and campaign director for Alabama Governor Bob Riley), and computer expert Daniel Joye. Musical guests included Christian recording artists Shane and Shane, Grace Campus Ministries' Encounter Band, and Brian Gates. The students had opportunity for interaction and question and answer with each speaker and musical guest.

The students also enjoyed off-site teaching opportunities such as a tour of the Alabama State Capitol, a presentation on Christian Leadership in Public Life at the Civil Rights Memorial Center with director Lecia Brooks, and a day of service at Adullam House, a children's home for children of incarcerated parents. The event closed with communion at Montgomery First UMC and a challenge to consider God's call to ministry presented by First UMC's Patrick Quinn. Many of the students responded to calls to full-time vocational ministry.

Student Leadership Institute (SLI) is a joint project of The AWF Conference Resource Center, Huntingdon College, and Blue Lake Assembly.